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|  | **Third Inter-Regional Meetings (IRM-3) to prepare for WTDC**  **Geneva, Switzerland, 10-11 March 2022** | | A close up of a sign  Description automatically generated |
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|  | | **Document** **IRM21-3/72-E** | |
|  | | **19 April 2022** | |
|  | | **Original: English** | |
| Chairman, IRM-3 | | | |
| Report by the IRM-3 Chairman | | | |
|  | | | |

**Introduction and highlights**

The World Telecommunication Development Conference (WTDC) will take place from 6 to 16 June 2022 at the Kigali Convention Centre following the kind invitation of the Government of Rwanda and the approval by the Council with the concurrence of a majority of the Member States of ITU. It will be preceded by the first-ever ITU Generation Connect Global Youth Summit on 2-4 June. WTDC will also feature a Partner2Connect Digital Development Roundtable on 7-9 June 2022: another first for ITU.

The third and final Interregional Meeting (IRM-3) to prepare for WTDC took place on 10 March 2022, chaired by Her Excellency, **Ms Paula Ingabire, Minister** of Information Communication Technology and Innovation of Rwanda, and Chairman Designate for WTDC; attended by 136 participants.The list of participants is available [here](https://www.itu.int/dms_ties/itu-d/md/18/rpmirm/c/D18-RPMIRM-C-0071!!PDF-E.pdf).

High on the meeting agenda were updates on the WTDC preparations by the ITU Telecommunication Development Bureau (BDT) and by the six principal regional telecommunication organizations (listed here in the order of their presentations): the African Telecommunications Union (ATU); the Inter-American Telecommunication Commission (CITEL); the Asia-Pacific Telecommunity (APT); the Regional Commonwealth in the Field of Communications (RCC); the European Conference of Postal and Telecommunications Administrations (CEPT); and the League of Arab States (LAS). Sections 2 and 3 of the report highlight the status of those preparations. Seven written contributions were also presented to the meeting, of which four were submitted by membership and the remainder by BDT.

The work of the ITU Telecommunication Development Sector (ITU-D) is mainly guided by the decisions of world telecommunication development conferences. Throughout all three IRMs, much emphasis has been placed on building consensus on the key issues to be discussed at the Kigali conference, and which will constitute its major outcomes. Indeed, under the theme of **“Connecting the unconnected to achieve sustainable development”**, WTDC is expected to examine and approve:

1. A Declaration based on proposals by Member States and ITU-D Sector Members, taking into account suggestions by the Telecommunication Development Advisory Group (TDAG) and new trends in the development of telecommunications/information and communication technologies (ICTs) and emerging issues, particularly in developing countries. These include the least developed countries (LDCs), landlocked developing countries (LLDCs), small island developing States (SIDS) and countries with economies in transition.
2. An Action Plan based on proposals by Member States and ITU-D Sector Members, also taking into account suggestions by TDAG and paying special attention to the needs of developing countries. The plan includes:
   1. Regional initiatives proposed by Member States and ITU-D Sector Members, and covering Africa, the Americas, the Arab States, Asia and the Pacific, the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) and Europe. Regional initiatives are intended to address specific telecommunication/ICT priority areas, through partnerships and resource mobilization to implement projects that are part of the Action Plan.
   2. New and revised resolutions and Recommendations.
   3. New and revised Questions to be studied by ITU-D study groups.

Both the Declaration and the Action Plan are usually named after the conference venue. So the world is looking forward to a robust Kigali Declaration and a results-based Kigali Action Plan that will foster meaningful universal connectivity and sustainable digital transformation.

The following is a summary of the meeting.

1. **Setting the tone**

**BDT** Director, **Ms Doreen Bogdan-Martin, welcoming participants said:“**Solid preparation is how we will ensure that our efforts deliver maximum impact, through clear, concrete, implementable and measurable outcomes that transform not just tomorrow’s digital landscape, but the lives of us all.”

The Director extended a warm welcome to Her Excellency Minister Paula Ingabire and thanked her for the commitment that the Republic of Rwanda has shown to the work of ITU in offering to host such a large and important conference at a very short notice. Speaking of the ITU Generation Connect Global Youth Summit, the Director observed that: “With its young tech‑savvy demographic, Rwanda is the ideal venue for our young delegates to come together to engage with the many emerging issues around digital technologies and their potential to drive development.” On the Partner2Connect Digital Development Roundtable, the Director said:“I am greatly encouraged by the initial response from ITU members, which I hope will translate into serious and substantive commitments and pledges when we formally open our P2C pledging platform on 16 March 2022.”

Her Excellency Ms Paula Ingabire said she felt honoured to have been elected to chair IRM-3 and to be Chairman Designate of WTDC. She underlined that IRMs are intended to provide a forum to improve the preparatory process and deliver real results by fostering consensus on key issues that have been put forward for discussion and decision at WTDC. In this regard, she thanked her colleague Minister from Ethiopia, His Excellency Dr Ahmedin Mohammed, State Minister, Ministry of Innovation and Technology; and the Chairman of TDAG, Ms Roxanne McElvane Webber (United States), for having chaired the first and second IRMs,respectively. “Their work today is appreciated and recognized,” the Minister stated.

Highlighting the major anticipated outcomes of WTDC, the Minister commented that the Action Plan to be adopted by the conference will provide the thematic framework within which BDT will be expected to deliver meaningful interventions in the coming years; and that the Declaration will commit members to their vision of connecting the unconnected to achieve sustainable development. The Minister recounted that when Rwanda offered itself as the host of WTDC, it did so out of an enduring commitment to digital transformation for all developing countries and its belief that hosting an African WTDC was an idea whose time was well overdue. “It is our hope that this WTDC will not be hosted in Rwanda alone, but will showcase Africa's commitment to ITU and cement our contribution to the global development of ICT in the years to come,” the Minister concluded.

The agenda in [Document 63](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-RPMIRM-C-0063/en) was approved.

1. **Where BDT stands with preparations for WTDC**

BDT informed participants that following up on a letter ([DM-21/1025](https://www.itu.int/dms_pub/itu-s/md/21/dm/cir/S21-DM-CIR-01025!!PDF-E.pdf)) that was sent to Member States of the Council on 6 December 2021, councillors from those Member States held an informal consultation meeting on 21 January 2022. In their discussions councillors agreed that hosting WTDC in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, was no longer a feasible option. And united in their wish to maintain the conference in Africa, they sought proposals for a new venue from African Member States. On 30 January 2022, the Secretary-General received an official invitation from the Government of Rwanda to hold WTDC in Kigali from 6 to 16 June 2022, preceded by the Youth Summit. Council Member States were consulted again by letter of 2 February 2022 ([DM-22/1000](https://www.itu.int/md/S22-DM-CIR-01000/en)), and the majority supported this change of place and dates. Following this decision, all Member States of the Union were consulted via a circular letter of 9 February 2022 ([CL-22/4](https://www.itu.int/md/S22-SG-CIR-0004/en)), with the majority responding positively to Rwanda’s offer.

Invitations to participate in WTDC were sent out on 22 Februay 2022 to ITU Member States, ITU-D Sector Members, Academia, United Nations organizations and regional organizations.

The first planning mission to Kigali will take place in mid-March 2022, where the ITU delegation will continue discussions. The practical information to help delegations plan their participation will be issued after clearance with the host country.

The final deadline for submission of membership contributions is 16 May 2022 in line with Resolution 165 (Rev. Dubai, 2018) of the Plenipotentiary Conference on, deadlines for the submission of proposals and procedures for the registration of participants for conferences and assemblies of the Union.

In May 2021, TDAG approved the conference structure shown in Figure 2.1 (see terms of reference in [Document TDAG-21/17](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-TDAG28-C-0017/en)) and the draft conference agenda, which has been submitted to the Council (21-31 March 2022) for approval.

**Figure 2.1: WTDC Conference structure, as approved by TDAG-21, 24-28 May 2021**

Table

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The ITU secretariat will consult with membership on the vice-chairmen of the conference and the chairmen and vice-chairmen of the committees and working group(s) of the Plenary. Each region is invited to submit its proposals for these positions by 16 May 2022.

Fellowships for WTDC are available to delegates from eligible Member States, which include LDCs, LLDCs, SIDS and countries with economies in transition. Applications for fellowships must be received by [fellowships@itu.int](mailto:fellowships@itu.int) by 22 April 2022.

ITU Protocol ([protocol.service@itu.int](mailto:protocol.service@itu.int)) will coordinate the social events calendar for WTDC. Social event options (coffee breaks, lunches, cocktail receptions and dinners) are scheduled based on the time management plan. Social-event slots are allocated on a first-come, first-served basis.

* 1. **What’s new @ WTDC?**

The **Generation Connect Global Youth Summit** will provide youth representatives from around the world with the opportunity to debate and network with global decision-makers of the ICT sector. Young people will brainstorm on how technologies can be harnessed to advance progress towards the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and on how their participation can help change the world. Youth aged 18‑29 are invited to participate physically in Kigali and youth aged 15‑29 may also participate virtually. The BDT Director encouraged all delegations to consider including Youth Summit participants as part of their national or Sector Member delegations to build the next generation of budding ITU delegates.

The **Partner2Connect Digital Development Roundtable** **is an integral part of WTDC, with s**everal planned high-level panels, complemented by breakout sessions, spotlight sessions and networking opportunities. It will offer Member States, ITU-D Sector Members and other stakeholders an opportunity to engage in high-level discussions around the challenges and opportunities related to digital development, make concrete pledges and forge new partnerships.

The digital divide continues to be a challenge, particularly for LDCs, LLDCs and SIDS. In response to this challenge, the [Partner2Connect Digital Coalition](https://itu.int/itu-d/sites/partner2connect/) (P2C) was launched on 20 September 2021, and its work is built around four focus areas:

* **Access: Connecting people everywhere**
* **Adoption: Empowering communities**
* **Value creation: Building digital ecosystems**
* **Accelerate: Incentivizing investments**

High-level participants, including ministers and chief executives can make their commitments and pledges around these areas. Already, on 24 February 2022, Inmarsat announced that it is donating USD 1.2 million worth of satellite airtime to “Connecting people everywhere”.

Another first for WTDC is the **Network of Women (NoW)**, which was launched in 2021 and has six very active regional groups. NoW aims to promote the active participation of women in the activities of ITU and the ICT sector in general; and to give visibility to women and empower them for bigger responsibilities in their delegations at WTDC and in future similar events.

* 1. **Comments from the floor**

All participants who took the floor following the opening remarks and these presentations by BDT expressed gratitude to the Government of Rwanda for the generous offer to host WTDC and said they were very much looking forward to the milestone moment of being in the wonderful city of Kigali.

Canada announced that its administration would fund 12 young people to participate in the Youth Summit, and was mobilizing additional funds to increase this number.

Kuwait thanked Rwanda and the Minister for the efforts made to advance development and partnership in ITU, and asked whether Member State administrations would be given the official invitation to circulate to interested universities and academic institutions. The Minister responded in the affirmative.

The Russian Federation thanked the Government of Rwanda for extending the conference duration by an extra day and stressed that the final conference programme should place the necessary emphasis on the core objective of WTDC, which is to examine the main documents such as resolutions and Recommendations, the Action Plan and study group matters. In so doing, these new, clearly important events will not impinge on the substantive part of the conference. The Chairman responded that every effort would be made to find ways of engaging with Member States and Sector Members to get their feedback and input in these key areas of discussion beforehand.

ATU thanked Rwanda for “being avalaible for Africa”; expressed gratitude to Member States of the Council and to all the Member States for supporting Rwanda's kind offer. ATU said it is committed to working with BDT and with the Minister to ensure that this WTDC becomes well and truly an African event. Accepting this pledge, the Minister said she counts on the support of ATU and, indeed, on that of all the Member States for a successful conference.

Tunisia thanked Rwanda for making every effort to keep this conference in Africa, saying: “We will not forget this generosity.” With regard to the Youth Summit, Tunisia wants to see administrations play an active role and suggested that they be given the priority to send invitations directly to youth in Academia, which includes institutes and universities, as they are better placed to coordinate the composition of their delegations.

The BDT secretariat responded that the ITU invitation will go to the ITU Member States and ITU-D Sector Members. For in-person participation in the conference, designated focal points for ITU conferences will approve and finalize the composition of their delegations. So the expectation is that all administrations will play an essential role in coordinating participation from their countries.

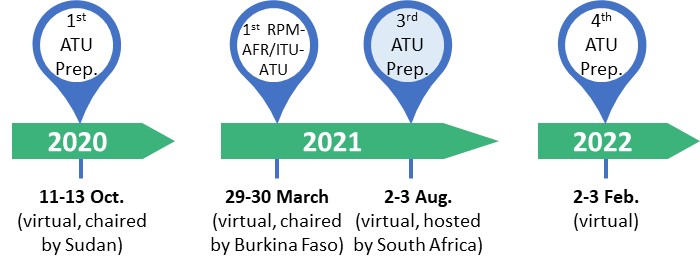
* 1. **The way forward**

IRM‑3 noted with appreciation the overall preparations for WTDC, with the Minister commenting that Partner2Connect is already an exciting programme and that beyond making pledges, it is all about mobilizing the much‑needed resources to create impact and bridge the gap of the unconnected. “Beyond having a successful conference, we can have concrete action items, and partnerships that we will spearhead as ITU-D going forward,” she stated.

1. **Status of WTDC preparations by regional telecommunication organizations (RTOs)**
   1. **African Telecommunications Union (ATU)**

ATU has held four preparatory meetings (see Figure 3.1) and has agreed on Africa’s priorities for WTDC; revised regional initiatives for Africa; approved 12 African Common Proposals on existing WTDC resolutions and one new draft resolution on digital transformation (see Table 3.1). In addition, Africa has nominated candidates for several leadership positions in TDAG, ITU-D study groups (see Table 3.2) and WTDC committees (see Table 3.3).

**Figure 3.1: ATU Preparatory meetings**



**African priorities for WTDC**

Broadband connectivity, including in rural and remote areas; digital inclusion; cybersecurity and building confidence in the use of ICTs; spectrum management and bridging digital and standardization gaps; enabling environment for digital transformation and implementation of Sustaible Development Goals; promoting innovation ecosystems and using emerging technologies for development; and review of the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS).

**Revised regional initiatives for Africa**

* AFR1: Supporting digital transformation to usher a rapid transition to digital economy while accelerating innovation in Africa.
* AFR2: Implementation and expansion of broadband infrastructures, connectivity and emerging technologies.
* AFR3: Building trust, safety and security in the use of telecommunications/information and communication technology and protection of personal data.
* AFR4: Fostering emerging technologies and innovation ecosystems.

Note: A capacity-building component is included in each initiative.

# Table 3.1: African Common Proposals (AFCPs)

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **MOD: Resolution 1 (Rev. Buenos Aires, 2017)** | Rules of procedure of the ITU Telecommunication Development Sector |
| **MOD: Resolution 2 (Rev. Buenos Aires, 2017)** | Establishment of study groups |
| **MOD: Resolution 8 (Rev. Buenos Aires, 2017)** | Collection and dissemination of information and statistics |
| **MOD: Resolution 9 (Rev. Buenos Aires, 2017)** | Participation of countries, particularly developing countries, in spectrum management |
| **MOD: Resolution 11 (Rev. Buenos Aires, 2017)** | Telecommunication/information and communication technology services in rural, isolated and poorly served areas and indigenous communities |
| **MOD: Resolution 17 (Rev. Buenos Aires, 2017)** | Implementation of and cooperation on regionally approved regional initiatives at the national, regional, interregional and global levels |
| **MOD: Resolution 34 (Rev. Buenos Aires, 2017) Move this up in chronological order** | The role of telecommunications/information and communication technology in disaster preparedness, early warning, rescue, mitigation, relief and response |
| **MOD: Resolution 36 (Rev. Buenos Aires, 2017)** | Support for the African Telecommunications Union |
| **MOD: Resolution 45 (Rev. Buenos Aires, 2017)** | Mechanisms for enhancing cooperation on cybersecurity, including countering and combating spam |
| **MOD: Resolution 63 (Rev. Buenos Aires, 2017)** | IP address allocation and facilitating the transition to IPv6 deployment in the developing countries |
| **MOD: Resolution 82 (Rev. Buenos Aires, 2017)** | Preserving and promoting multilingualism on the Internet for an inclusive information society |
| **MOD: Resolution 85 (Rev. Buenos Aires, 2017)** | Facilitating the Internet of Things and smart cities and communities for global development |
| **ADD: Draft new Resolution** | Digital transformation |

*Source:* Adapted from the ATU presentation at IRM-3, 10 March 2022.

**Table 3.2: Africa’s candidates for leadersip positions in TDAG and ITU-D study groups**

|  | **Nominations from ATU** | |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Group and position** | **Candidature** | **Country** |
| **TDAG Vice-Chairman   TDAG Vice-Chairman** | Mr Christopher Kemei (second term)  Mr Abdulkarim Oloyede (second term) | Kenya  Nigeria |
| **Study Group 1 Chairman** | Ms Regina Bessou-Assoumou (second term) | Côte d’Ivoire |
| **Study Group 1 Vice-Chairman** | Ms Caecilia Nyamutswa | Zimbabwe |
| **Study Group 2 Vice-Chairman  Study Group 2 Vice-Chairman** | Mr Roland Yaw Kudozia (second term)   Mr Henry Nkemadu (second term) | Ghana  Nigeria |

*Source:* Adapted from the ATU presentation at IRM-3, 10 March 2022.

**Table 3.3: Africa’s candidates for leadership positions in WTDC**

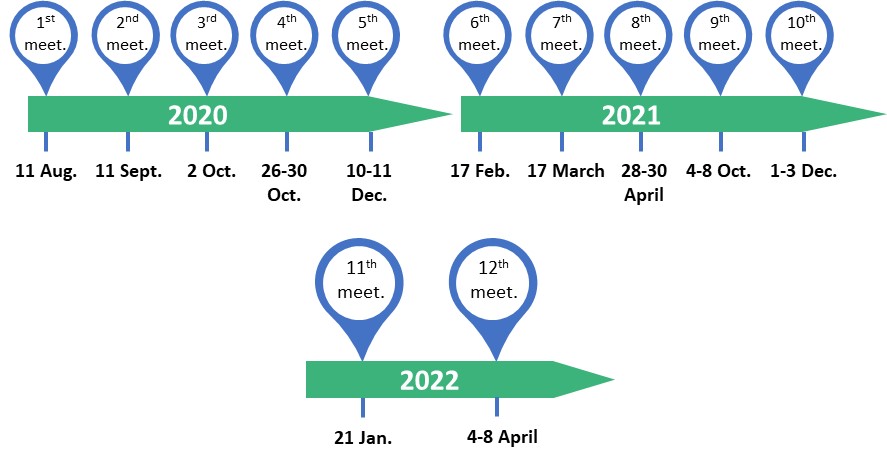
|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Group and position** | **Candidature** | **Country** |
| 1. | **Committee 1 - Steering Committee: Vice-Chairman** | (Name TBA) | Tunisia |
| 2. | **Committee 2 – Budget Control: Vice-Chairman** | Mr Biggie Chiripanhura  [biggie.chiripanhura@potraz.gov.zw](mailto:biggie.chiripanhura@potraz.gov.zw) | Zimbabwe |
| 3. | Committee 3 – Objectives: Chairman | Ms Regina Assoumou  [bessou.regina@artci.ci](mailto:bessou.regina@artci.ci) | Côte d’Ivoire |
| 4. | **Committee 4 – ITU-D Working Methods: Vice-Chairman** | Mr Mohamed Benziane | Algeria (TBC) |
| 5. | **Committee 5 – Editorial Committee: Vice-Chairman** | Ms Sharon Bosire  [bosire@ca.go.ke](mailto:bosire@ca.go.ke) | Kenya |
| 6. | **Working Group of the Plenary: ITU-D Strategic Plan and WTDC Declaration** | Mr Richard Anago  [anago.richard@gmail.com](mailto:anago.richard@gmail.com) | Burkina Faso |

*Source:* Adapted from the ATU presentation at IRM-3, 10 March 2022.

* 1. **Inter-American Telecommunication Commission (CITEL)**

The United States, on behalf of CITEL, presented the status of preparations in the Americas region. CITEL's preparations are conducted through the Working Group on the follow‑up of WTDC, WTSA and WCITof the Permanent Consultative Committee I –Telecommunications/ICTs. This Working Group is chaired by Mr Santiago Reyes-Borda (Canada), with Mr Greg Ratta (United States) as Vice-Chairman. CITEL has held 11 meetings and plans to hold its final meeting on 4‑8 April 2022 (see Figure 3.2) to finalize its proposals to WTDC.

**Figure 3.2: CITEL preparatory meetings**



*Source:* Adapted from the ATU presentation at IRM-3, 10 March 2022.

The listing in Table 3.4 shows what has already been concluded in the region as inter‑American Proposals (IAPs), with seven resolutions proposed for modification (MOD) and two for suppression (SUP). Table 3.5 shows resolutions, where negotiations are still ongoing, along with a draft new study Question on broadband. CITEL has agreed on candidatures for leadership positions in TDAG and in ITU-D study groups for the period 2022-2025, as shown in Table 3.6.

**Priorities for CITEL**

CITEL has been working in the spirit of a Fit4Purpose ITU and collaborating with the BDT Director, TDAG and other Member States on how to make WTDC a propulsive environment that fosters the design and implementation of concrete and effective solutions for the expansion and use of ICTs in developing countries, in particular LDCs, LLDCs and SIDS.

For CITEL, it is important to increase the participation of these countries in the work of ITU-D, particularly stakeholders (e.g. small-and medium-sized enterprise – SMEs – and Academia) from the Americas region.

The Americas want a WTDC that effectively addresses critical ICT for development priorities identified by the regions and focused on closing digital divides, reaching marginalized communities, promoting community networks, ensuring gender equity and equality and an ongoing engagement with young people. CITEL is determined to ensure that WTDC outcomes reflect concrete and coordinated efforts and policies among all stakeholders (i.e. Member States, Sector Members, Associates, civil society, NGOs, international financial institutions, the private sector and development banks) and believes that the Partner2Connect Digital Coalition initiative is an excellent example of how to achieve connectivity for all. CITEL wants a bottom-up approach with policies targeted to beneficiaries or recipients, whose views are fundamental in identifying where to focus ITU collective efforts. Increased cooperation with all ITU regions and RTOs is also a priority for CITEL.

**Americas regional initiatives [priorities]**

* AMS1: Deployment of modern, resilient, secure and sustainable telecommunication/ICT infrastructure.
* AMS2: Enhancement and expansion of digital literacy, digital skills and digital inclusion programmes, especially among vulnerable populations.
* AMS3: Effective support for the digital transformation and innovation ecosystems through scalable, funded and sustainable connectivity projects.
* AMS4: Development of enabling policy and regulatory environments to connect the unconnected through accessible and affordable telecommunications/ICTs that support the achievement of SDGs and the progress towards the digital economy.

**Table 3.4: CITEL inter‑American proposals (IAPs)**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **MOD: Resolution 11 (Rev. Buenos Aires, 2017)** | Telecommunication/information and communication technology services in rural, isolated and poorly served areas and indigenous communities |
| **MOD: Resolution 24 (Rev. Dubai, 2014)** | Authorization for the Telecommunication Development Advisory Group to act between world telecommunication development conferences |
| **MOD: Resolution 46 (Rev. Buenos Aires, 2017)** | Assistance to indigenous peoples and communities through information and communication technology |
| **MOD: Resolution 58 (Rev. Buenos Aires, 2017)** | Telecommunication/information and communication technology accessibility for persons with disabilities and persons with specific needs |
| **SUP: Resolution 61 (Rev. Dubai, 2014)** | Appointment and maximum term of office for chairmen and vice-chairmen of study groups in the ITU Telecommunication Development Sector and of the Telecommunication Development Advisory Group |
| **MOD: Resolution 64 (Rev. Buenos Aires, 2017)** | Protecting and supporting users/consumers of telecommunication/information and communication technology services |
| **MOD: Resolution 78 (Rev. Buenos Aires, 2017)** | Capacity building for countering and combating misappropriation and misuse of ITU Telecommunication Standardization Sector numbering resources |
| **SUP: Resolution 81 (Rev. Buenos Aires, 2017)** | Further development of electronic working methods for the work of the ITU Telecommunication Development Sector |
| **MOD: Resolution 86 (Rev. Buenos Aires, 2017)** | Use in the ITU Telecommunication Development Sector of the languages of the Union on an equal footing |

Source: Adapted from the CITEL presentation at IRM-3, 10 March 2022.

**Table 3.5: CITEL draft inter‑American proposals still under negotiation**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **MOD: Resolution 1 (Rev. Buenos Aires, 2017)** | Rules of procedure of the ITU Telecommunication Development Sector |
| **MOD: Resolution 8 (Rev. Buenos Aires, 2017)** | Collection and dissemination of information and statistics |
| **MOD: Resolution 22 (Rev. Buenos Aires, 2017)** | Alternative calling procedures on international telecommunication networks and identification of origin in providing international telecommunication services |
| **MOD: Resolution 37 (Rev. Buenos Aires, 2017)** | Bridging the digital divide |
| **MOD: Resolution 47 (Rev. Buenos Aires, 2017)** | Enhancement of knowledge and effective application of ITU Recommendations in developing countries, including conformance and interoperability testing of systems manufactured on the basis of ITU Recommendations |
| **MOD: Resolution 59 (Rev. Buenos Aires, 2017)** | Strengthening coordination and cooperation among the three ITU Sectors on matters of mutual interest |
| **MOD: Resolution 62 (Rev. Buenos Aires, 2017)** | Assessment and measurement of human exposure to electromagnetic fields |
| **MOD: Resolution 66 (Rev. Buenos Aires, 2017)** | Information and communication technology and climate change |
| **MOD: Resolution 73 (Rev. Buenos Aires, 2017)** | ITU centres of excellence |
| **MOD: Resolution 79 (Rev. Buenos Aires, 2017)** | The role of telecommunications/information and communication technologies in combating and dealing with counterfeit telecommunication/information and communication devices |
| **MOD: Resolution 82 (Rev. Dubai, 2014)** | Preserving and promoting multilingualism on the Internet for an inclusive information society |
| **MOD: Resolution 84 (Rev. Buenos Aires, 2017)** | Combating mobile telecommunication device theft |
| **MOD: Resolution 85 (Rev. Buenos Aires, 2017)** | Facilitating the Internet of Things and smart cities and communities for global development |
| **ADD: Draft new Resolution** | ITU-D study Questions Broadband |

*Source:* Adapted from the CITEL presentation at IRM-3, 10 March 2022.

**Table 3.6: CITEL candidates for leadersip positions in TDAG and ITU-D study groups**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Nominations of CITEL** | |
| **Group and position** | **Candidature** | **Country** |
| **TDAG Chairman** | Ms Roxanne McElvane Webber | United States |
| **TDAG Vice-Chairman** | Ms Agustina Brizzio | Argentina |
| **TDAG Vice-Chairman** | Ms Andrea Grippa | Brazil |
| **Study Group 1 Vice-Chairman  Study Group 2 Vice-Chairman** | Mr Roberto Mitsuake Hirayama  Mr Victor Antonio Martinez Sanchez | Brazil  Paraguay |

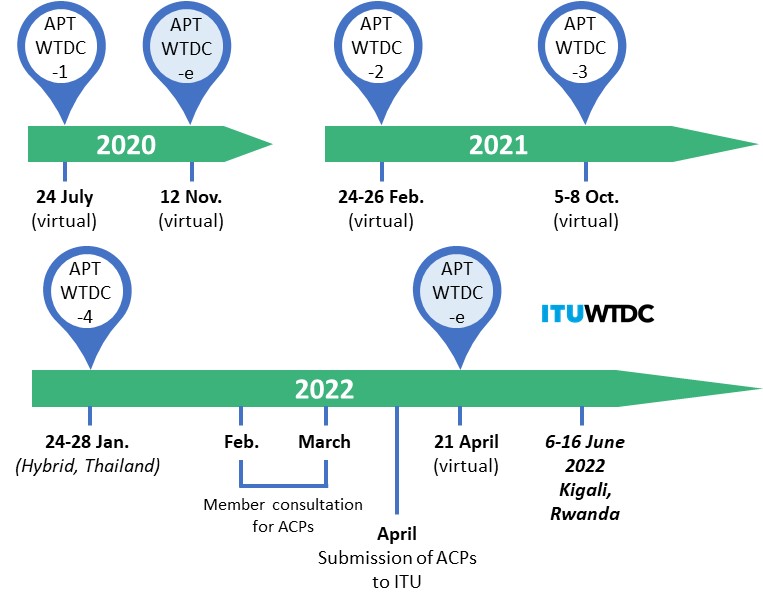
*Source:* Adapted from the CITEL presentation at IRM-3, 10 March 2022.

* 1. **Asia-Pacific Telecommunity (APT)**

The Islamic Republic of Iran, on behalf of APT, presented the status of preparations in the Asia-Pacific region, but first congratulated the Minister on her election to chair IRM-3 and for accepting to be the Chairman Designate for WTDC. “It is a great opportunity for Africa as a whole to play a role on the world scene in the development of telecommunications and ICTs. We are confident that under your very able and wise chairmanship, WTDC , to be held in your country, will be a memorable success.”

APT has held five preparatory meetings, with a final one planned for 21 April 2022 (see Figure 3.3) to finalize its Common Proposals and submit them to the conference.

**Figure 3.3: APT Preparatory Group meetings**



*Source:* Adapted from the APT presentation at IRM-3, 10 March 2022.

The APT Preparatory Group for WTDC has three working groups (seeTable 3.7) and three objectives, which are to: help APT members prepare for WTDC; develop proposals from APT members reflecting the interests of the Asia-Pacific region as inputs to WTDC; and assist APT members during WTDC.

**Table 3.7: Office bearers of the APT Preparatory Group for WTDC**

|  |
| --- |
| **Plenary: Chairman: Dr Ahmad Sharafat (Islamic Republic of Iran)** |
| Vice-Chairmen: Mr Norifumi Yamaguchi (Japan), Mr Sung Joon Choi (Republic of Korea) |
| **Working Group 1 (WG1): Programme, Study Groups and Associated Questions** |
| Chairman: Ms Mina SeonminJun (Republic of Korea)  Vice-Chairmen: Ms Yapeng Wang (China), Ms Maryam Espandar (Islamic Republic of Iran) |
| **Working Group 2 (WG2): Working Methods, Declaration and Action Plan** |
| Chairman: Ms Alexandra Borthwick (Australia)  Vice-Chairmen: Ms Thasawan Samorwong (Thailand) |
| **Working Group 3 (WG3): General ICT Development Issues including Regional Initiatives** |
| Chairman: Ms Memiko Otsuki (Japan)  Vice-Chairmen: Ms Anna AmalinaImam Baweh (Malaysia) |

*Source:* Adapted from the APT presentation at IRM-3, 10 March 2022.

So far, 15 Preliminary APT Common Proposals (PACPs) have been agreed upon.These PACPs include a draft WTDC Declaration; a proposal to add new Asia‑Pacific regional initiatives and suppress the existing ones; a proposal for ITU‑D thematic priorities; modifications to WTDC Resolutions 1, 8, 37, 45, 48, 64, 67 and 69; a new WTDC Resolution on use of ICTs to combat pandemics; and a proposal to modify Questions 1, 6, and 7 of Study Group 1 (seeTable 3.8).

**Table 3.8: List of Preliminary APT Common Proposals (PACPs)**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **MOD: Question 1/1, ITU-D Study Group 1** | Strategies and policies for the deployment of broadband in developing countries |
| **MOD: Question 6/1, ITU-D Study Group 1** | Consumer information, protection and rights: Laws, regulations, economic bases, consumer networks |
| **MOD: Question 7/1, ITU-D Study Group 1** | Access to telecommunication/information and communication technology services by persons with disabilities and other persons with specific needs |
| **MOD: Resolution 1 (Rev. Buenos Aires, 2017)** | Rules of procedure of the ITU Telecommunication Development Sector |
| **MOD: Resolution 8 (Rev. Buenos Aires, 2017)** | Collection and dissemination of information and statistics |
| **MOD: Resolution 37 (Rev. Buenos Aires, 2017)** | Bridging the digital divide |
| **MOD: Resolution 45 (Rev. Dubai, 2014)** | Mechanisms for enhancing cooperation on cybersecurity, including countering and combating spam |
| **MOD: Resolution 48 (Rev. Buenos Aires, 2017)** | Strengthening cooperation among telecommunication regulators |
| **MOD: Resolution 64 (Rev. Buenos Aires, 2017)** | Protecting and supporting users/consumers of telecommunication/information and communication technology services |
| **MOD: Resolution 67 (Rev. Buenos Aires, 2017)** | The role of the ITU Telecommunication Development Sector in child online protection |
| **MOD: Resolution 69 (Rev. Buenos Aires, 2017)** | Facilitating creation of national computer incident response teams, particularly for developing countries, and cooperation between them |
| **Draft new Resolution** | Using information and communication technologies to combat pandemics |

*Source:* Adapted from the APT presentation at IRM-3, 10 March 2022.

APT has agreed on the six views highlighted below.An “APT View” is a view approved by a plenary of the APT Preparatory Group for WTDC on matters, which can be submitted to an international organization by the APT Secretary-General on behalf of members participating at that plenary.

1. APT View on Draft Regional Initiatives of Asia-Pacific.These initiatives are:

* ASP1: Addressing special needs of least developed countries, small island developing States, including Pacific island countries, and landlocked developing countries
* ASP2: Harnessing information and communication technologies to support the digital economy and inclusive digital societies
* ASP3: Fostering development of infrastructure to enhance digital connectivity and connecting the unconnected
* ASP4: Enabling policy and regulatory environments to accelerate digital transformation
* ASP5: Contributing to a secure and resilient ICT environment.

1. APT view on Thematic Priorities (already presented to IRM-2).
2. APT view on Asia‑Pacific vision for ITU‑D (already presented to IRM-2).
3. APT view on WTDC Declaration (see [Document 65](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-RPMIRM-C-0065/en), and page 20 of this report) .
4. APT view on Action Plan outcomes and outputs (see [Document 66](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-RPMIRM-C-0066/en), and page 20 of this report).
5. APT view on Resolution 1 (see [Document 67](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-RPMIRM-C-0067/en), and page 20 of this report).
   1. **Regional Commonwealth in the Field of Communications (RCC)**

The Russian Federation, giving an update on behalf RCC, recalled that a substantial package of draft RCC Common Proposals had been submitted to the second Interregional Meeting in December 2021. So the presentation focused principally on further refinements to those proposals and on a new proposal on Resolution 2 (Establishment of study groups). The RCC package is organized around the following topics: rules of procedure; ITU-D study groups; ICT statistics and WSIS, regional issues; membership; digital divide; emergency communications; consumer protection and accessibility; Internet of Things; along with a draft new resolution on using ICTs and telecommunications in combating COVID‑19. Table 3.9 lists the 20 resolutions to be modified or suppressed. RCC has agreed on candidates for leadership positions in TDAG and ITU-D study groups (see Table 3.10), and candidates for leadership positions in WTDC (see Table 3.11).

# Table 3.9: List of draft RCC Common Proposals

**Rules of procedure**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **MOD: Resolution 1 (Rev. Buenos Aires, 2017)** | Rules of procedure of the ITU Telecommunication Development Sector |
| **SUP: Resolution 61 (Rev. Dubai, 2014)** | Appointment and maximum term of office for chairmen and vice-chairmen of study groups in the ITU Telecommunication Development Sector and of the Telecommunication Development Advisory Group |
| **SUP: Resolution 81 (Rev. Buenos Aires, 2017)** | Further development of electronic working methods for the work of the ITU Telecommunication Development Sector |
| **SUP: Resolution 86 (Rev. Buenos Aires, 2017)** | Use in the ITU Telecommunication Development Sector of the languages of the Union on an equal footing |

**ITU-D study groups**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **MOD: Resolution 2 (Rev. Buenos Aires, 2017)** | Establishment of study groups |

**ICT statistics and World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS)**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **MOD: Resolution 8 (Rev. Buenos Aires, 2017)** | Collection and dissemination of information and statistics |
| **MOD: Resolution 30 (Rev. Buenos Aires, 2017)** | The role of the ITU Telecommunication Development Sector in implementing the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society, taking into account the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development |

# Regional issues

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **MOD: Resolution 17 (Rev. Buenos Aires, 2017)** | Implementation of and cooperation on regionally approved regional initiatives at the national, regional, interregional and global levels |
| **MOD: Resolution 21 (Rev. Buenos Aires, 2017)** | Coordination and collaboration with regional and subregional organizations |
| **MOD: Resolution 31 (Rev. Buenos Aires, 2017)** | Regional preparations for world telecommunication development conferences |

**Membership**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **SUP: Resolution 27 (Rev. Hyderabad, 2010)** | Admission of entities or organizations participate as Associates in the work of the ITU Telecommunication Development Sector |
| **MOD: Resolution 71 (Rev. Buenos Aires, 2017)** | Strengthening cooperation between Member States, Sector Members, Associates and Academia of the ITU Telecommunication Development Sector and the evolving role of the private sector in the ITU Telecommunication Development Sector |

**Digital divide**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **MOD: Resolution 15 (Rev. Buenos Aires, 2017)** | Applied research and technology transfer |
| **MOD: Resolution 37 (Rev. Buenos Aires, 2017)** | Bridging the digital divide |

**Emergency communications**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **MOD: Resolution 34 (Rev. Buenos Aires, 2017)** | The role of telecommunications/information and communication technology in disaster preparedness, early warning, rescue, mitigation, relief and response |

# Consumer protection and accessibility

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **MOD: Resolution 58 (Rev. Buenos Aires, 2017)** | Telecommunication/information and communication technology accessibility for persons with disabilities and persons with specific needs |
| **MOD: Resolution 64 (Rev. Buenos Aires, 2017)** | Protecting and supporting users/consumers of telecommunication/information and communication technology services |
| **MOD: Resolution 67 (Rev. Buenos Aires, 2017)** | The role of the ITU Telecommunication Development Sector in child online protection |

# Internet of Things

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **MOD: Resolution 85 (Rev. Buenos Aires, 2017)** | Facilitating the Internet of Things and smart cities and communities for global development |

**Telecommunication/ICT4COVID-19**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Draft new Resolution** | The use of telecommunications/information and communication technologies in combating the COVID-19 pandemic, mitigating and eliminating its consequences |

*Source:* Adapted from the RCC presentation at IRM-3, 10 March 2022.

**Table 3.10: RCC candidates for TDAG and ITU-D study group leadersip positions (second term)**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **RCC nominations** | |
| **Group and position** | **Candidature** | **Country** |
| **TDAG Vice-Chairman** | Mr Arseny Plossky | Russian Federation |
| **Study Group 1 Vice-Chairman** | Ms Anastasia Konukhova | Russian Federation |
| **Study Group 2 Vice-Chairman** | Ms Maria Bolshakova | Russian Federation |

*Source:* Adapted from the RCC presentation at IRM-3, 10 March 2022.

**Table 3.11: RCC candidates for leadership positions in WTDC**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Group and position** | **Candidature** | **Country** |
| 1. | **Committee 1 - Steering Committee: Vice-Chairman** | Mr Andrey Zhivov | Russian Federation |
| 2. | **Committee 2 – Budget Control: Vice-Chairman** | Mr Masud Azimov | Uzbekistan |
| 3. | Committee 3 – Objectives: Vice-Chairman | Ms Umida Musaeva | Uzbekistan |
| 4. | **Committee 4 – ITU-D Working Methods: Vice-Chairman** | - |  |
| 5. | **Committee 5 – Editorial Committee: Vice-Chairman** | Mr Dmitry Cherkesov | Russian Federation |
| 6. | **Working Group of the Plenary: ITU-D Strategic Plan and WTDC Declaration: Vice-Chairman** | Ms Sahiba Hasanova | Azerbaijan |

*Source:* Adapted from the RCC presentation at IRM-3, 10 March 2022.

* 1. **European Conference of Postal and Telecommunications Administrations (CEPT)**

Lithuania, on behalf of CEPT, presented the status of preparations in the Europe region, but first congratulated Rwanda as host for WTDC and the Minister for being appointed Chairman Designate of the conference.

Established in May 2020, the Com-ITU CEPT Project Team on WTDC prepares and coordinates CEPT positions and contributions; and develops draft European Common Proposals (ECPs) through nominated topic coordinators. The Project Team has mainly focused on coordinating work with TDAG and its working groups; and to this end had appointed focal points to participate in all the meetings of these groups. The positions or views of CEPT on the draft declaration and thematic priorities remain those expressed during the TDAG meetings.

At the time of this writing, eight ECPs had been agreed upon. The first ECP is on Europe’s vision for ITU‑D; the second is on regional priorities for Europe, the others are on modifications to Resolutions 15, 21, 30, 31 and 45 and a related suppression of Resolution 69; and modification of Resolution 23 and suppression of Resolution 63, as shown in Table 3.12. These proposals will soon be made available on the WTDC website for all to see their essence.

There is also a set of new ECPs on modifications to eight resolutions and suppression of three resolutions as shown in Table 3.13.

**Table 3.12: Finalized European Common Proposals**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **ECP 01: Vision for ITU-D** |  |
| **ECP 02: Regional Priorities for Europe (2022-2025):** | RP-EUR 1: Digital infrastructure development  RP-EUR 2: Digital transformation for resilience  RP-EUR-3: Digital inclusion and skills development  RP-EUR-4: Trust and confidence in the use of digital technologies  RP-EUR-5: Digital innovation ecosystems |
| **ECP 03: MOD Resolution 15 (Rev. Buenos Aires, 2017)** | Applied research and transfer of technology |
| **ECP 04: MOD Resolution 21 (Rev. Buenos Aires, 2017)** | Coordination and collaboration with regional and subregional organizations |
| **ECP 05: MOD Resolution 30 (Rev. Buenos Aires, 2017)** | Role of the ITU Telecommunication Development Sector in implementing the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society, taking into account the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development |
| **ECP 06: MOD Resolution 31 (Rev. Buenos Aires, 2017)** | Regional preparations for world telecommunication development conferences |
| **ECP 09: MOD Resolution 45 (Rev. Dubai, 2014)** | Mechanisms for enhancing cooperation on cybersecurity, including countering and combating spam  **SUP Resolution 69 (Rev. Buenos Aires, 2017)**  Mechanisms for enhancing cooperation on cybersecurity, including countering and combating spam and facilitating the creation of computer incident response teams |
| **ECP 10: MOD Resolution 23 (Rev. Buenos Aires, 2017)** | Internet access and availability for developing countries and charging principles for international Internet connection  **SUP Resolution 63 (Rev. Buenos Aires, 2017)**  IP address allocation and facilitating the transition to IPv6 deployment in the developing countries |

*Source:* Adapted from the CEPT presentation at IRM-3, 10 March 2022.

**Table 3.13: New European Common Proposals**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **ECP 07 REV: MOD Resolution 34 (Rev. Buenos Aires, 2017)** | The role of telecommunications/information and communication technology in disaster preparedness, early warning, rescue, mitigation, relief and response |
| **ECP 08: MOD Resolution 37 (Rev. Buenos Aires, 2017)** | Bridging the digital divide |
| **ECP 11: SUP Resolution 61 (Rev. Dubai, 2014) OK** | Appointment and maximum term of office of chairmen and vice-chairmen of study groups in the ITU Telecommunication Development Sector and of the Telecommunication Development Advisory Group |
| **ECP 12: SUP Resolution 81 (Rev. Buenos Aires, 2017)** | Further development of electronic working methods for the work of the ITU Telecommunication Development Sector |
| **ECP 13: MOD Resolution 71 (Rev. Buenos Aires, 2017)** | Strengthening cooperation between Member States, Sector Members, Associates and Academia of the ITU Telecommunication Development Sector and the evolving role of the private sector in the ITU Telecommunication Development Sector  **SUP Resolution 27 (Rev. Hyderabad 2010)**  “Admission of entities or organizations to participate as Associates in the work of the ITU Telecommunication Development Sector” |
| **ECP 14: MOD Resolution 66** | Information and communication technology and climate change |
| **ECP 15: MOD Resolution 85** | Facilitating the Internet of Things and smart cities and communities for global development |
| **ECP 16: MOD Resolution 67** | The role of the ITU Telecommunication Development Sector in child online protection |

*Source:* Adapted from the CEPT presentation at IRM-3, 10 March 2022.

CEPT has agreed on candidates for leadership positions in TDAG and in ITU-D study groups as shown in Table 3.14. CEPT has started discussions and nominations for the chairmen and vice‑chairmen of WTDC Committees. The nominations made so far can be found in Table 3.15. CEPT is aware that Africa has also proposed a chairman for Committee 3, and will discuss and coordinate to find a way forward.

CEPT is yet to finalize its discussions on the ECP on WTDC Resolution 1; its brief for the conference; and its list of topic coordinators. Many changes have occurred in the last two years, with a number of people moving to other positions and new ones joining. So CEPT has to revise its list and nominate new people, if needed.

CEPT plans to hold three meetings before WTDC: a meeting on 7 April 2022 to work on the brief and also discuss WTDC Resolution 1; a hybrid (physical/virtual) meeting on 17‑20 May 2022 in London, to which all the regions have been invited; and if needed, a meeting will be held on 30 May 2022 to finalize any pending issues.

**Table 3.14: CEPT candidates for leadersip positions in TDAG and ITU-D study groups**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **TDAG and study group leadership positions** | **CEPT nominations** | |
| **Group and position** | **Candidature** | **Country** |
| **TDAG Vice-Chairman** | Ms Blanca Gonzalez | Spain |
| **TDAG Vice-Chairman  Study Group 1 Vice-Chairman** | Ms Inga Rimkeviciene  Mr Mehmet AlperTekin Mr Anthony Giannoumis | Lithuania  Turkey Norway |
| **Study Group 2 Chairman  Study Group 2 Vice-Chairman Study Group 2 Vice-Chairman** | Mr Istvan Bozsoki Mr Dominique Wurges Ms Alina Modan | Hungary France Romania |

*Source:* Adapted from the CEPT presentation at IRM-3, 10 March 2022.

**Table 3.15: CEPT candidates for leadership positions in WTDC**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **WTDC leadership positions** | **CEPT nominations** | |
| **Committee/Group and position** | **Candidature** | **Country** |
| **Committee 3 (Objectives): Chairman or Vice-Chairman** | Mr Istvan Bozsoki | Hungary |
| **Committee 5 (Editorial): Vice-Chairman** | Ms Blanca Gonzalez | Spain |

*Source:* Adapted from the CEPT presentation at IRM-3, 10 March 2022.

* 1. **League of Arab States (LAS)**

Saudi Arabia, on behalf of LAS, presented the status of preparations in the Arab States region, but first thanked the Minister for Rwanda’s offer to host WTDC and expressed the confidence that it will be a successful conference.

The Arab Preparatory Group for WTDC was established by the Council of Arab Ministers of Communications and Information in December 2019, with Mr Mansour Alqurashi as its Chairman. It is composed of three working groups, each with a chairman (see Table 3.16).It coordinates with other regions and among Arab countries on nominations for WTDC and follows up on the work and progress of WTDC.

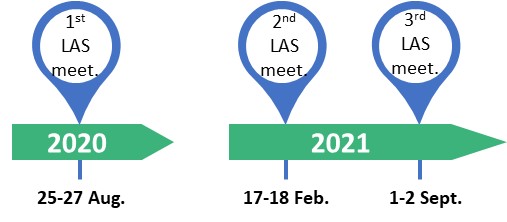
**Table 3.16: Office bearers and structure of the Arab Preparatory Group for WTDC**

|  |
| --- |
| **Arab Preparatory Group for WTDC** |
| Chairman: Mr Mansour Alqurashi (Saudi Arabia) |
| **Working Group on Action Plan, Strategic and Operational Plans, and Regional Initiatives** |
| Chairman: Mr Salem Almawali (Oman) |
| **Working Group on Declaration and Streamlining Resolutions and Thematic Priorities** |
| Chairman: Ms Sameera Belal (Kuwait) |
| **Working Group on Preparations for WTDC** |
| Chairman: Mr Alansari Almashagbah (Jordan) |

*Source:* Adapted from the LAS presentation at IRM-3, 10 March 2022.

The Arab Preparatory Group has held three meetings (see Figure 3.4), and plans to have a final one in April 2022 to wrap up its preparations.

**Figure 3.4:** **Meetings of the Arab Preparatory Group**



*Source:* Adapted from the LAS presentation at IRM-3, 10 March 2022.

So far, the Arab Preparatory Group has agreed to modify Resolutions 8, 9, 22, 34, 45, 67 and 71 and to suppress Resolutions 27 and 61. In addition, the group has put forward two new resolutions: one on pandemics and the other on the promotion of digital transformation for sustainable development (see Table 3.17).

**Table 3.17: Arab Group resolutions under modification, suppression or new**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **MOD: Resolution 8 (Rev. Buenos Aires, 2017)** | Collection and dissemination of information and statistics |
| **MOD: Resolution 9 (Rev. Buenos Aires, 2017)** | Participation of countries, particularly developing countries, in spectrum management |
| **MOD: Resolution 22 (Rev. Buenos Aires, 2017)** | Alternative calling procedures on international telecommunication networks and identification of origin in providing international telecommunication services |
| **MOD: Resolution 34 (Rev. Buenos Aires, 2017)** | The role of telecommunications/information and communication technology in disaster preparedness, early warning, rescue, mitigation, relief and response |
| **MOD: Resolution 45 (Rev. Dubai, 2014)** | Mechanisms for enhancing cooperation on cybersecurity, including countering and combating spam |
| **MOD: Resolution 67 (Rev. Buenos Aires, 2017)** | The role of the ITU Telecommunication Development Sector in child online protection |
| **MOD: Resolution 71 (Rev. Buenos Aires, 2017)** | Strengthening cooperation between Member States, Sector Members, Associates and Academia of the ITU Telecommunication Development Sector and the evolving role of the private sector in the ITU Telecommunication Development Sector |
| **SUP: Resolution 27(Rev. Hyderabad, 2010)** | Admission of entities or organizations to participate as associates in the work of the ITU Telecommunication Development Sector |
| **SUP: Resolution 61 (Rev. Dubai, 2014)** | Appointment and maximum term of office for chairmen and vice-chairmen of study groups in the ITU Telecommunication Development Sector and of the Telecommunication Development Advisory Group |
| **Draft new Resolution** | The role of telecommunications/ICTs in pandemic situations (such as COVID-19), especially in developing countries |
| **Draft new Resolution** | Digital transformation for sustainable development, including establishing data and cloud computing centres in developing countries |

*Source:* Adapted from the LAS presentation at IRM-3, 10 March 2022.

**Regional initiatives of the Arab group**

The Arab Preparatory Group has agreed on five priorities focused on:

* Promoting digital transformation for a rapid transition to the digital economy and enabling digital inclusion.
* Enhancing trust, security and privacy in the use of telecommunications/ICTs in the era of new and emerging digital technologies.
* Developing digital infrastructure, promoting universal access, and supporting smart cities and communities.
* Building capabilities, encouraging digital innovation and entrepreneurship.
* Developing digital and collaborative regulation and harmonizing ICT policy and regulatory frameworks.

**Thematic Priorities**

With regard to the final Thematic Priorities, the Arab Preparatory Group is still looking forward to having five instead of four priorities as follows: Connectivity; Digital Transformation; Enabling Environment; Resource Mobilization and International Cooperation; with the addition of [Building confidence, trust and security in the use of ICTs].

**WTDC Declaration**

With regard to the final WTDC Declaration: the Arab Preparatory Group believes that the proposed draft Declaration by TDAG could serve as the basis for further discussion and refinement by ITU Member States in preparation for WTDC, where it will be finalized.

The Arab Preparatory Group has agreed on the following nominations for leadership positions in TDAG and ITU-D study groups, and in the WTDC Editorial Committee (seeTable 3.18).

**Table 3.18: Candidates for leadersip positions in WTDC, TDAG and ITU-D study group**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Nominations from the Arab Group** | |
| **Group** | **Position** | **Country** |
| **TDAG** | Vice-Chairman | Saudi Arabia |
| **Study Group 2** | Chairman | Egypt |
| **Study Group 2** | Vice-Chairman | United Arab Emirates |
| **WTDC-Editorial Committee** | Vice-Chairman | Kuwait |

*Source:* Adapted from the LAS presentation at IRM-3, 10 March 2022.

1. **Contributions from members and from BDT**
   1. **APT views**

[Document 65](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-RPMIRM-C-0065/en): This contribution contains an **APT view on the draft WTDC Declaration**, and was presented by the Islamic Republic of Iran. At the 4th meeting of the APT Preparatory Group for WTDC, held on 24-28 January 2022, the following 15 countries lent full support to the draft WTDC Declaration, which had been discussed at the TDAG meeting in November 2021: Australia, Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, China, India, Indonesia, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Japan, Republic of Korea, Lao P.D.R., Malaysia, Myanmar, Samoa, Singapore and Thailand. The draft WTDC Declaration is in two parts: the “*We declare*” part and the “*We commit*” part, each with six paragraphs.

The “We declare part” addresses:

1. **the unconnected**, for whom the transformative power of ICTs remains untapped;
2. **COVID-19**, which has changed the way we live, work, learn, and do business;
3. **digitally skilled human resources** between regions, between and within countries in urban and rural areas, and between women and men;
4. **Digital inclusion, digital transformation** and digital economy;
5. **Sustainable Development Goals** and **World Summit on the Information Society**;
6. **Developing countries**, and in particular **least developed countries**, **landlocked developing countries and small island developing States**.

The “We commit part” responds to these priorities.

[Document 66](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-RPMIRM-C-0066/en): This contribution contains an **APT view on WTDC Action Plan Outcomes and Outputs**, and was presented by Australia. It reports on how the 15 countries listed under [Document 65](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-RPMIRM-C-0065/en) above discussed and agreed on the modifications to the WTDC Action Plan Outcomes and Outputs. In its deliberations, APT had sought to link references to digital-economy activities more clearly to telecommunications/ICTs and, similarly, link proposals from TDAG with the ITU mandate as set out in existing resolutions.

[Document 67](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-RPMIRM-C-0067/en): This contribution contains an **APT view on modification to WTDC Resolution 1**, and was presented by the Republic of Korea. It highlights the modifications made to WTDC Resolution 1 by the 15 countries listed under [Document 65](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-RPMIRM-C-0065/en) above. The modifications were made mainly to update references in this resolution to reflect current ITU practices and activities such as timing of meetings; virtual and remote participation in meetings; and interim deliverables. In addition, APT members proposed to delete “working parties” from this resolution. The APT meeting further agreed to adopt these revisions to WTDC Resolution 1 as a preliminary APT Common Proposal (PACP).

**4.1.1 Comments from the floor**

Nigeria, on behalf of the African group, expressed support for all three APT documents and asked where they go from here. The BDT secretariat clarified that the documents were for discussion and noting purposes only, considering that IRM is not a decision‑making meeting. Its purpose is to foster collaboration between the regions, allowing them to align their proposals ahead of the conference.

The Islamic Republic of Iran, thanking Nigeria for the support, added that the objective of submitting these documents was to share the outcomes of APT discussions with the other RTOs, providing them the opportunity to coordinate their views on these matters so that delegations are better prepared and that they arrive at consensus more quickly in Kigali.

The IRM-3 Chairman agreed that while IRM is not meant to make decisions, it nevertheless gives participants the opportunity to share their opinions. As she put it: “It is useful to understand where everyone is coming from. Because in the end, all will benefit from having better resolutions that everyone feels represent their views on what they are trying to achieve in the different regions.”

**4.1.2 The way forward**

IRM-3 noted all three contributions with appreciation and thanked APT for sharing the views and feedback from the Asia-Pacific region.

* 1. **Proposed revision of Resolution 2**

[Document 68](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-RPMIRM-C-0068/en): This contribution contains a revision of Resolution 2 (Rev. Buenos Aires, 2017) on the establishment of study groups, and was presented by the Russian Federation, on behalf of RCC. The proposed revision seeks to create the terms of reference of ITU-D study groups on the basis of two Thematic Priorities: “Connectivity and Digital Transformation”.

The proposals in Annex 1 of this document are linked with those put forward by the study groups themselves, and according to which Study Group 1 would fall under “Connectivity” and Study Group 2 would fall under “Digital Transformation”. RCC is proposing to move the Question on human exposure to electromagnetic fields to Study Group 1; and the Question of access to telecommunication/ICT services by persons with disabilities and other persons with specific needs to Study Group 2, while also rewording this Question to: “Telecommunications/ICT accessibility to enable inclusive communication.”

The proposals in Annex 2 are based on documents submitted by study groups to the November 2021 meeting of TDAG and approved for further consideration at WTDC. RCC is proposing:

1. To move Question 3/1 (Emerging technologies, including cloud computing, m-services and OTTs: Challenges and opportunities, economic and policy impact for developing countries) to Study Group 2 and make it Question 5/2.
2. To move Question 5/2 (Utilizing telecommunications/information and communication technologies for disaster risk reduction and management) to Study Group 1 and make it Question 3/1.
3. To move Question 7/2 (Strategies and policies concerning human exposure to electromagnetic fields) to Study Group 1 and make it Question 7/1.
4. To move Question 7/1 (Access to telecommunication/information and communication technology services by persons with disabilities and other persons with specific needs) to Study Group 2 and reword it as: “Telecommunications/ICT accessibility to enable inclusive communication”.

**4.2.1 Comments from the floor**

The RCC proposals sparked an interesting debate. Hungary called the document a good starting point, but said it had difficulty on the proposals to move the Question on human exposure to electromagnetic fields to Study Group 1, believing it is more linked to smart-city activities, for example; and that the issue of accessibility is closer to Study Group 1 activities. Brazil asked if RCC had given some thought to merging or reducing the number of Questions in each study group (currently seven in each study group). The reason for this question is that in the Americas region, discussions were well under way on how to make the work on Questions more efficient and how to build synergies not just within the Questions, but also within the study groups. The United States added that CITEL was indeed looking at possible efficiencies and gaps that need to be filled, or areas that need to be emphasized.

Responding to these questions, RCC explained that with regard to human exposure to electromagnetic fields, account must be taken of such exposure at the planning stages of network deployment and not later. Hence the direct link with connectivity. On potential mergers, RCC said it had looked into further streamlining and merging of Questions – an exercise that started at WTDC-17, where Questions were reduced from nine to seven per study group. RCC in its analysis (when preparing this contribution) had tried to align the structure of study groups to five Questions, but quickly realized that such an alignment would undermine significantly the existing structure. Moreover, with the postponement of WTDC from 2021 to 2022, the Kigali conference is likely to shorten the study period. Under these conditions, RCC believes it would make better sense to use proposals on Questions already developed by the study groups.

RCC further suggested that Resolution 2 should be allocated to Committee 3, and commented that the guiding principles for document allocation, as set out in [Document 69](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-RPMIRM-C-0069/en), were precisely what caused some of the difficulties faced at WTDC-17.

The Islamic Republic of Iran, thanking RCC, Brazil and the United States for focusing on this all-important issue, underlined that the “number of study Questions and the number of topics are of utmost importance to many of us in developing countries. And as such, we have to be prepared to have adequate discussions on both of them.”

Backing this view, the Chairman of TDAG advised that the time had come for members to have a discussion on what the study groups will work on in the period 2022-2025. As things stand, the Questions that had been adopted have the blessing of the study groups. But while it is crucial to have first-hand feedback from people who have worked closely on those Questions over the past four years, it is necessary to also look at the Questions through fresh eyes. Should WTDC have been postponed significantly such that it does not take place before the Plenipotentiary Conference, scheduled to take place in Bucharest (Romania) from 26 September to 14 October 2022, then it would have made sense to continue with the current set of Questions. But that is not the case. And members should not be expected to simply rubber stamp the current Questions. So, there is adequate time to ensure that membership is fully on board with the Questions, the methodology and the issues. Moreover, technological changes are happening at breakneck speed, making four years a long time in telecommunications.

A long discussion then ensued on the future of output documents from the three working groups set up by TDAG in June 2020 to prepare the conference: the TDAG Working Group on WTDC Preparations (TDAG-WG-Prep); the TDAG Working Group on Resolutions, Declaration and Thematic Priorities (TDAG-WG-RDTP); and the TDAG Working Group on Strategic and Operational Plans (TDAG-WG-SOP).

Aware that these groups had completed their work, as had TDAG itself on 8-12 November 2021, Kuwait sought clarification on what will become of the output documents from these groups, and in particular from TDAG-WG-RDTP.

The BDT secretariat clarified that those outputs had been made available on the TDAG website under the relevant meetings and also under the webpages of each working group as potential background information. The Chairman of TDAG-WG-RDTP added that for lack of time, his group could not conclude its discussion on Resolution 2. Similarly, joint meetings between Study Group 1 and Study Group 2 could not conclude their work on Resolutions 1 and 2, also for lack of time.So, divergent views still persist. As a way forward, the Chairman of TDAG-WG-RDTP proposed that focal points of RTOs hold informal consultations on Resolution 2 and on the number of topics and the number of study Questions.

Participants welcomed this proposal. Nigeria, on behalf of the African group, informed the meeting that Africa had given some thought to reducing the number of Questions in anticipation of a shorter study cycle; and has developed a document on Resolution 2 and on study Questions. RCC recalled that its presentation to this meeting contains a list mentioning under each resolution who the coordinator is and their contact details.

The Chairman of Study Group 1 (Côte d'Ivoire) stressed that in the informal discussions, study Questions must be considered in close alignment with Resolution 2, and agreed with RCC that Resolution 2 should be addressed in Committee 3 in order to avoid the confusion and loss of time witnessed at WTDC-17.

Brazil added that informal consultations on Resolution 2 should start without delay and should aim to reach some agreement ahead of the conference. With regard to the allocation of resolutions to Committees 3 and 4, Brazil also acknowledged there had been some difficulties at WTDC-17; and underlined the need to strike the right balance in the allocation of resolutions to these two committees. Above all, every effort must be made to avoid assigning too many topics to Committee 3, which has become the most overburdened committee in WTDCs.

**4.2.2 The way forward**

IRM-3 noted the document from RCC with appreciation, and agreed that RTOs should appoint focal points to carry out informal consultations on Resolution 2 and on the number of topics and the number of study Questions, with a view to arriving in Kigali with a better understanding and, hopefully, closer to consensus on these issues.

**4.2.3 What is the status of TDAG output documents?**

Back to the discussion on output documents, the Chairman of TDAG observed that Kuwait had raised an important issue that many people were wondering about. And this has to do with the final outputs from TDAG on the traditional elements that constitute the outcomes of WTDC, for example, the declaration, the Action Plan, the study Questions and BDT programmes. She explained that the outputs from the TDAG working groups were considered in full TDAG meetings. TDAG opined on these outputs and, in some cases, made changes to them.

What is needed now is a one-stop place, where people can find the work that has been done, rather than having to search through all the meeting archives of the various groups. The Chairman of TDAG requested that BDT find the best way to consolidate all TDAG outputs in one place, with the understanding that only the draft declaration, as agreed at the November 2021 meeting, may serve as the basis for further proposals for revision and refinement by membership in preparation for WTDC, where it will be finalized. The other documents may be used by membership to at least understand the discussions that have taken place and where they stopped. Supporting this request, the Chairman of Study Group 1 (Côte d'Ivoire) called for the TDAG report in [Document 34](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-RPMIRM-C-0034/en) to be made widely available to membership.

RCC recalled that TDAG had indeed agreed and approved a number of documents which clearly cannot be mandatory for Member States and their RTOs, but nevertheless can serve as helpful background information in their preparations for WTDC.

The Bahamas, calling the proposal of the TDAG Chairman “a great step in the right direction”, commented that sometimes it is taken for granted that everyone has been at the discussion table many times; and familiar not just with the jargon, the acronyms, but also with the methods.

Responding to the comments, BDT presented the following status of TDAG-approved documents, highlighting those that have already been published in the Conference Proposal Interface (CPI) for membership to incorporate their proposals of revision and refinement:

1. The draft WTDC Declaration.
2. The draft WTDC Action Plan as revised and approved by the November 2021 meeting of TDAG.   
   **Note:** Considering that the work in progress in the the Council Working Group on the strategic and financial plans for the Union for 2024-2027 would have an impact on some of the information in this draft WTDC Action Plan, the BDT secretariat sought guidance from this meeting on how to move forward. In a later discussion, the meeting agreed that [Document 70](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-RPMIRM-C-0070/en) will be the base document (see pages 25 and 26) and would thus replace the version currently on the CPI.
3. The revised terms of reference of Study Group 1 and Study Group 2 Questions agreed at the TDAG meeting in November 2021 have been published on the CPI as Annexes 1 and 2, respectively, to the Report of the TDAG Chairman to WTDC.

Further, the BDT secretariat committed to making all the TDAG output documents available in one place (potentially on the WTDC website).

**4.2.4 The way forward**

IRM-3 thanked the secretariat for the steps already taken to publish some of the base documents, welcomed its readiness to create a one-stop location, and highlighted the need to indicate clearly the status of each document.

* 1. **WTDC draft proposals on changes to resolutions and study group Questions**

[Document 64](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-RPMIRM-C-0064/en) +Ann.1: This contribution from the BDT secretariat contains a compilation of proposals to modify or suppress certain WTDC resolutions or add new ones. It is intended as a living document to be updated continuously, and includes a list of regional focal points for that purpose.

**4.3.1 Comments from the floor**

The United States called the document an incredibly useful tool that will guide how alignments can be achieved across the regions, especially as they head into their final weeks of preparations. Botswana requested that it be shared online. The Islamic Republic of Iran added that it be updated first to the extent possible, notably with respect to Resolution 2. Nigeria suggested uploading the file to Google Docs for regular updating and continuous access by membership, with all three countries describing the contribution as a fantastic document.

Kuwait sought clarification on why the document referred to five or six thematic priorities, recalling that the discussions to date had focused on four or five. The Chairman of TDAG-WG-RDTP, where ITU-D thematic priorities were developed, confirmed that four priorities had been agreed upon in his group,with a fifth priority having been left in square brackets for lack of consensus. It was noted that the reference was certainly to the new overall ITU strategic framework for 2024-2027.

The IRM-3 Chairman agreed that the document would continue to be populated with additional input from the different RTOs, and invited any region whose inputs or proposals were missing to inform the BDT secretariat.

**4.3.2 The way forward**

IRM-3 noted the document, along with the comments, and requested the BDT secretariat to update and post it in an online repository, where it can be accessed and updated regularly by the focal points involved in WTDC preparations.

* 1. **Basis for document allocation and committee workload at WTDC**

[Document 69](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-RPMIRM-C-0069/en): This contribution from the BDT secretariat is based on the terms of reference decided and endorsed by TDAG in May 2021 for the five WTDC committees (see [Document TDAG-21/17](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-TDAG28-C-0017/en)).

**4.4.1 Comments from the floor**

The Russian Federation suggested that the whole of Resolution 2 (Establishment of ITU-D study groups), including study Questions, should be allocated to Committee 3 (Objectives) – arguing that this resolution has nothing to do with procedures and working methods, all of which are set out in WTDC Resolution 1. That delegation stressed the need to do this work in a single committee to avoid the back and forth exchanges of notes from committee chairmen. Hungary supported these proposals.

**4.4.2 The way forward**

IRM‑3 noted the document and requested the BDT secretariat to review and adjust its proposed allocation, taking on board the comments above in a way that ensures a balanced distribution of work among the committees to avoid any bottlenecks that could jeopardize the smooth running of the conference.

* 1. **WTDC Action Plan as a base document**

[Document 70](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-RPMIRM-C-0070/en): This contribution was prepared by BDT to seek the views and guidance of the meeting on whether to use it or not as a base document. At its meeting in November 2021, TDAG discussed and revised a list of outcomes and outputs contained in the draft WTDC Action Plan submitted by its Working Group on Strategic and Operational Plans. TDAG had agreed that the revised outcomes and outputs may serve as the basis for further proposals for revision and refinement by membership in preparation for WTDC. Aware that the first draft of the ITU strategic plan for 2024-2027 would become available in January 2022, BDT had indicated at that November meeting that it would provide an updated Action Plan reflecting any adjustments needed to align the plan to the new framework of the ITU strategic plan. [Document 70](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-RPMIRM-C-0070/en), therefore, reflects the discussions at the second meeting of CWG‑SFP in January 2022, based on the secretariat’s input to Annex 1 of Resolution 71 of the Plenipotentiary Conference, on the draft ITU strategic plan for 2024-2027.

**4.5.1 Comments from the floor**

Saudi Arabia, commending BDT, urged the secretariat to disseminate the document widely to all those to whom it may benefit.

The United States described the document as a good baseline for determining how some of the discussions that took place in TDAG and the strategic planning process could be mapped with the new action plan.

The Russian Federation commented that the square brackets, particularly in section 4.4 [Implementation of Cybersecurity Thematic Priority], coupled with the highlighting in yellow gives rise to confusion. Could square brackets in the document be simply removed and replaced with a reference?

The United Arab Emirates asked whether there would be changes to the proposed WTDC Action Plan once the results of the 20 March 2022 meeting of CWG‑SFP are published for the Council session (21-31 March 2022). The BDT secretariat responded that if the meeting accepts Document 70 as a contribution to the work of the conference, then it would produce an updated version to reflect any changes made to the draft ITU strategic plan that have implications for the proposed WTDC Action Plan.

Describing [Document 70](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-RPMIRM-C-0070/en) as an extremely important document, the Islamic Republic of Iran said it is no secret that there are disagreements among ITU members about the draft WTDC Action Plan. It is important to find a way to minimize or resolve those disagreements. This document provides a snapshot of where those disagreements lie, and that is very helpful for further negotiations.

Responding to Saudi Arabia, the BDT secretariat explained that its approach would be to publish the document generally for information purposes only, or to make it available in the Conference Proposal Interface for further proposals and refinement.

Saudi Arabia stressed that the document cannot be given official status, but that the best solution would be to distribute it to all regions after the Council session (21-31 March 2022) so that they are well informed. The United States emphasized that the WTDC Action Plan has to be adopted at WTDC, adding that some of the differences, for example, in terms of the proposal to make cybersecurity a thematic priority, could be resolved through further negotiations among the members.

Considering that ultimately, the work of ITU-D is driven by the decisions of WTDC, the Chairman of TDAG propsed that [Document 70](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-RPMIRM-C-0070/en) should be sent to the conference as a base document. RTOs and Member States can then amend it, while also taking into account the ongoing discussions in CWG‑SFP on the overall ITU strategic framework and strategic plan for 2024-2027.

Supporting this proposal, the Islamic Republic of Iran added that the document could also be circulated to other meetings, in particular the 20 March 2022 meeting of CWG‑SFP. The Russian Federation agreed with the Saudi proposal to distribute the document as background information reflecting the discussions that had taken place and the priorities that have been identified at regional level. It noted that the United States proposal to send the document to the conference was also a good one, but added that: “Clearly it is to be treated as a background information document, not a contribution.” It still wondered how the document would be forwarded to the conference with square brackets: “Is that going to help the conference?”

Zimbabwe observed that a lot of effort had gone into preparing the document, first in TDAG-WG-SOP, then in TDAG itself; and that many compromises had been made. Zimbabwe suggested that with very few areas left in square brackets, where no consensus was reached, it would be best to transmit the document to the conference, either as an annex to the TDAG report or as a base document. Furthermore, Member States should be encouraged to look at the square-bracketed texts and submit contributions addressing those areas in a bid to assist the conference in reaching consensus on them.

The Chairman of TDAG agreed with Zimbabwe and stated that BDT has always prepared a draft Action Plan for WTDC for members to comment on. She noted that consensus had been reached on a number of things and recommended that [Document 70](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-RPMIRM-C-0070/en) be accepted as a base document, which simply means it is a starting point. She requested the BDT secretariat to add this document to the one-stop place that it has committed to creating for the output documents discussed earlier, and indicate clearly that people can make further changes to it. She advised that the Action Plan always comes out of WTDC and that practice should be continued.

**4.5.2 The way forward**

IRM‑3 noted the document and agreed for the BDT Director to submit it to WTDC as a base document for further proposals for revision and refinement by membership. The areas highlighted in yellow signify areas that lack consensus, and will remain in square brackets to be identified as such to facilitate negotiations in the run-up to WTDC.

1. **Closing**

Ms Bogdan-Martin reflecting on the progress made at this meeting, stated that WTDC will be a landmark event. “Together we will rewrite the digital connectivity roadmap so that all people can reap the benefits of the digital world.” She noted that more work needs to be done in terms of content and encouraged the regional groups to keep going and to keep speaking to each other. She thanked Ms Ingabire for her very skilful leadership in guiding the discussions. “I am sure with your leadership, you will help keep things moving smoothly at WTDC.”

Ms Ingabire thanked the Director for her kind words and for being a great host for the meeting; the participants for their constructive inputs and feedback during the discussions; and the BDT secretariat and staff and interpreters for making it easy for the meeting to deliberate and debate on the documents presented to the meeting. She commended all for starting the preparations early, which has led to constructive discussions and to a smooth meeting (only lasting a day and not two as scheduled). She expressed gratitude to all the countries for the overwhelming support in selecting Rwanda as the host country for WTDC. To conclude, Minister Ingabire said: “Between now and the conference, a lot of discussions will take place to ensure that concrete results come out of the conference. I look forward to continuing the preparations and seeing you all in Kigali in June 2022. Most importantly, I do count on all of the Member States and all colleagues in making WTDC a success.

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