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| C:\Users\comas\AppData\Local\Temp\Rar$DRa0.735\jpg\ITU official logo_blue_RGB.jpg**TDAG Working Group on Resolutions, Declaration and Thematic Priorities**  **16 July 2020, Virtual** | | |
|  | | **Document TDAG-WG-RDTP/5-E** |
|  | | **27 July 2020** |
|  | | **English only** |
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| **Title:** | Report on TDAG Working Group on Resolutions, Declaration and Thematic Priorities | |

1. **Opening of the meeting and welcome remarks**

Welcoming participants to the TDAG Working Group on Resolutions, Declaration and Thematic Priorities, ITU Telecommunication Development Bureau (BDT) Director, Ms Doreen Bogdan-Martin, emphasized the important role of this group in helping assess if the Bureau has the right building blocks to be able to deliver the impact that members want from ITU in the development of information and communication technologies.

Recalling that the World Telecommunication Development Conference in 2017 (WTDC-17) provided BDT with the “building blocks” to enable the vision of connecting the remaining half of the world’s population, Ms Bogdan-Martin, shared the achievements since she started her mandate at the beginning of 2019.

“Taking the building blocks you gave us at WTDC‑17: our four objectives, our 66 resolutions, our five recommendations, our 30 initiatives, our 11 programmes, and of course, our Study Group Questions, we embarked on a journey to deliver on the Buenos Aries Action Plan. Noting that much of our work was a bit scattered with many activities in each of these areas distributed across teams, across offices, it limited the opportunity, the ability to take advantage of synergies. It also made it somewhat difficult for our members to be able to benefit from our services or even to have a full picture of what was happening in terms of our work in BDT,” the Director told participants, adding that that is when BDT started looking at how to deliver by clustering or through thematic priorities, as they are called now.

The next phase in this exercise has been (and still is) to strengthen results-based management (RBM), carry out theories of change, integrate it with the operational plan, improve reporting mechanisms, strengthen tools and reinforce the BDT value proposition. The results of this work are starting to show, the Director said, adding that “As we look to the future we hope that we have the necessary building blocks that will take us through so that we can meaningfully connect the other half of the world’s population.”

The Chairman of the TDAG Working Group on Resolutions, Declaration and Thematic Priorities, Dr Ahmad Reza Sharafat, introduced the following documents:

* [Document 2](https://www.itu.int/dms_pub/itu-d/md/18/tdag26.rdtp/c/D18-TDAG26.RDTP-C-0002!!PDF-E.pdf) on “Overview of ITU-D thematic priorities.”
* [Document 3](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-TDAG26.RDTP-C-0003/en) on “Mapping of WTDC and PP Resolutions.”
* [Document 4](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-TDAG26.RDTP-C-0004/en) on “Mapping of projects and ITU-D thematic priorities.”

The meeting attracted 97 participants.

1. **Approval of the agenda**

The agenda in [Document 1](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-TDAG26.RDTP-C-0001/en) was approved without modification.

1. **Working methods**
2. **Virtual meetings with or without interpretation?**

The method chosen for the first block of virtual meetings (16-17 July 2020) of the three TDAG working groups was to provide interpretation based on requests from Member States, consistent with Resolution 1 (Rev. Buenos Aires, 2017) of WTDC. Based on the requests received, interpretation was provided in English, French and Spanish.

According to the process in Resolution 1, delegates are invited to indicate the language they require and are given a deadline by which the decision on the languages to be used will be taken. The deadline is usually 45-calendar days prior to the opening of the meeting in order to secure interpretation in the requested languages. For non-statutory meetings, a minimum of five requests must be received to service the meeting in the requested language.

**Recommendation:** For future virtual meetings of the working group, interpretation should be provided in the six official languages (Arabic, Chinese, English French, Russian and Spanish) within the budgetary limitations of the Union. If funds are not available, the meetings will be conducted in English only.

**Recommendation on document submission and language of documents:** Contributions are to be submitted in English, or in the language of the contributing Member State, provided it is one of the official languages of the Union and that the document is received within a specified deadline. In such a case, the contribution will be translated into English only.

Any reports produced by the working group will be translated into all six languages

**E-mail correspondence/mailing list/Sharepoint site**

**Recommendation:** The mailing list will be the only additional, but informal tool to be used to work constructively. Written contributions are the only formal documents for discussions.

**RTOs to designate focal points for regional coordination**

**Recommendation:** The Director of BDT will send a circular letter to all regional telecommunication organizations (RTOs) inviting them to designate focal points for regional coordination.

1. **Work plan**

**Deadlines for submission of written contributions**

Contributions are subject to deadlines set out in WTDC Resolution 1. Consistent with this resolution, “contributions must be received not later than 45 days before the opening of a meeting if they are to be translated for the meeting. Beyond this 45-day deadline, the contributor may submit the document in the original language and in any official language into which it may have been translated by the author. Contributions that do not meet this 45-day deadline but are received at least 12 days before the opening of the meeting shall be published, but not translated.”

**Dates of next meetings**

The meeting discussed the proposed work plan in [Document DT/1](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-TDAG26.WP-200716-TD-0001/en), which outlines four blocks of meetings for all three TDAG working groups. The first block of meetings being 16 and 17 July 2020, followed by a second block of meetings in September, a third block also in September and a fourth block in October 2020.

Participants agreed that this working group needs a different schedule and time-frame for its meetings, compared with the TDAG Working Group on WTDC Preparations. As the Chairman of TDAG put it, by the very nature of its [terms of reference](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Conferences/TDAG/Pages/TDAG_WG_WTDC.aspx), the TDAG Working Group on Resolutions, Declaration and Thematic Priorities has a longer time-frame and “we would certainly expect that it would go all the way until the final TDAG meeting before the conference.”

Much of the work will be contribution-driven, with some of the input expected from ITU-D study groups. It was pointed out that because of the tight schedule and heavy workload in ITU-D study groups, it may not be possible to get any official feedback from these groups until their meetings listed below are over.

* [ITU-D Study Group 1 Rapporteur Group e-meetings](https://www.itu.int/net4/ITU-D/CDS/sg/blkmeetings.asp?lg=1&sp=2018&blk=24968), 21 September - 2 October 2020.
* [ITU-D Study Group 2 Rapporteur Group e-meetings](https://www.itu.int/net4/ITU-D/CDS/sg/blkmeetings.asp?lg=1&sp=2018&blk=24969), 5-16 October 2020.
* Study Group 2, 15- 19 March 2021.
* Study Group 1, 22-26 March 2021.

Participants noted that the secretariat had gone through an extensive search for different possibilities before proposing the second, third and fourth block of meetings. To remain within these blocks, it was proposed to hold the next working group meeting on 21 October 2020. But preference was also expressed to have the meeting earlier. The Chairman in consultation with the secretariat will propose another date earlier than 21 October 2020, with the understanding that there will be no inputs from the study groups.

Interms of reporting to the extraordinary meeting of TDAG, tentatively scheduled for 23 November 2020, the Chairman of TDAG indicated that they would welcome any progress, and in particular, a work plan for each key area of the working group’s mandate: resolutions, declaration and thematic priorities.

**Resolutions**

The mandate is “to review WTDC resolutions, examine their number and subject matter, and consider streamlining, to avoid repetitions and duplication with the Resolutions of the Plenipotentiary Conference.  The streamlining should take into account that some Sector resolutions are integrations of PP resolutions and therefore these resolutions should not be considered as repetition.”

It was proposed to set aside, at least for the time being, WTDC Resolutions 1 (Rules of procedure of the ITU Telecommunication Development Sector) and 2 (Establishment of study groups), which may need to be improved in the light of the experience of study groups during the present study cycle. Participants noted the steps under way to align terminology in Resolution 1 across all three ITU Sectors. Alignments were done at WTDC-17 and WTSA-16. The Radiocommunication Assembly will make similar alignments to Resolution 1 of the Radiocommunication Sector. Meanwhile, the Telecommunication Standardization Advisory Group (TSAG) has started receiving proposals to consider modifying WTSA Resolution 1. The group was encouraged to consider a similar approach in amending WTDC Resolution 1.

Noting that the Chairman of the working group has an experienced hand in streamlining resolutions, participants expressed the confidence that he will bring his considerable experience to bear. He was in charge of the TDAG Working Group on streamlining resolutions leading to WTDC-17; and ITU-D is the only Sector to have tried the streamlining exercise from start to finish. It was agreed to build on the principles developed in the previous cycle of ITU-D for the streamlining process and on the progress achieved for WTDC-17. In this regard, the secretariat was requested to update the report presented to WTDC-17 and to make it available to participants for their use. [Document 3](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-TDAG26.RDTP-C-0003/en) on “Mapping of WTDC and PP Resolutions”, submitted to this meeting, contains important input.

**Recommendation:** Build upon the work done in streamlining resolutions in the previous cycle, in particular, the report presented to WTDC-17. Put to good use [Document 3](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-TDAG26.RDTP-C-0003/en) on “Mapping of WTDC and PP Resolutions”.

**Declaration**

The mandate is “to propose elements and make recommendations to ITU membership for the future draft Declaration.” Participants made several comments and suggestions in this regard.

For some, the Buenos Aries Declaration is comprehensive, but lengthy. It may be more desirable to have a much shorter declaration. Similar declarations by other international organizations, such as UNESCO, are more concise, focused and to the point.

It was suggested that it would be beneficial to have a discussion about what people really want to see in a declaration. Is it a declaration in which members are speaking to themselves about what they believe, what they want to work on, and what they believe the Development Sector stands for as a part of the whole ITU? Or is the declaration to be written for the outside world?

For others, there are too many declarations in every single organization, that sometimes people do not even remember what the previous declaration was about, or even the title of the declaration because these declarations are generally aspirational in nature. A more streamlined declaration is needed, and should focus on a particular theme. Such a theme could, for example, be built around connecting the remaining 3.6 billion people, drawing on the PowerPoint presentation produced for the TDAG Working Group on WTDC preparations, and should reflect connectivity clearly as an essential tool for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The declaration should be short, and to the extent possible, written in such a way that is easily understood by people outside ITU.

**Thematic priorities**

The mandate is “to align the ITU-D thematic priorities, proposed regional initiatives and proposed study group questions, taking into account proposals of ITU-D Study Groups, outcomes of the Regional Preparatory Meetings for WTDC-21, relating to the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals and taking into consideration the WSIS Action Lines for which ITU has lead responsibility.”

It was suggested that the group could start with all the documents BDT has so far put together on thematic priorities. [Document 2](https://www.itu.int/dms_pub/itu-d/md/18/tdag26.rdtp/c/D18-TDAG26.RDTP-C-0002!!PDF-E.pdf) on “Overview of ITU-D thematic priorities”, submitted to this meeting, was considered a good starting point.

**Recommendation**: One subgroup should be established for each of the following areas: resolutions, declaration and thematic priorities. The Chairman invited all interested stakeholders to come forward and indicate their availability, willingness and interest to lead the discussions in these areas.

1. **Conclusion**

The Chairman and the secretariat will prepare a summary record of the meeting (i.e. this report) reflecting the decisions taken during the discussions. The summary record will be circulated to all Member States and Sector Members.

It was agreed that this working group has more time to consider its terms of reference and to provide TDAG with input on its progress in an extended time-frame, as compared to the Working Group on WTDC preparations.

The date of the next meeting will be announced in a circular letter to all Member States and Sector Members.

For future virtual meetings, interpretation should be provided in the six official languages of the Union within the budgetary limitations of the Union.

The Chairman thanked all participants for their contributions and their very positive attitude towards the work the group has been entrusted with.

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