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| Chairman, RPM Coordination Meeting | | | |
| Report of the Chairman of the RPM Coordination Meeting to TDAG | | | |
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| **Summary:**  This document provides the main conclusion of the WTDC-21 Regional Preparatory meetings. It addresses all the issues discussed during RPMs.  **Action required:**  TDAG is invited to note this document.  **References:**  RPM-EUR21/34, RPM-ASP21/15, RPM-AFR21/26, RPM-AFR21/DT/2, RPM-ARB21/15, RPM-ARB21/9, RPM-CIS21/37, RPM-AMS21/14 | | | |

# 1. Introduction

In line with Resolution 31 (Rev. Hyderabad, 2010), the RPM Coordination Meeting took place in view of the World Telecommunication Development Conference 2021 (WTDC-21) which will be held from 8 to 19 November 2021, in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

In view of the current COVID-19 pandemic, all Regional Preparatory Meetings (RPMs) were held virtually and recorded excellent levels of participation.

The six RPMs were held as follows:

| **Dates** | **Region** | **Link to report** |
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| 18-19 January 2021 | Regional Preparatory Meeting for Europe (RPM-EUR) | [Report](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-RPMEUR-C-0034) |
| 9-10 March 2021 | Regional Preparatory Meeting for Asia and the Pacific (RPM-ASP) | [Report](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-RPMASP-C-0015) |
| 29-30 March 2021 | Joint ITU/ATU Regional Preparatory Meeting for Africa (RPM-AFR) | [Report](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-RPMAFR-C-0026/en) |
| 4-8 April 2021 | Regional Preparatory Meeting for the Arab States (RPM-ARB) | [Report](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-RPMARB-C-0015/en) |
| 21-22 April 2021 | Regional Preparatory Meeting for the CIS region (CIS) (RPM-CIS) | [Report](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-RPMCIS-C-0037/en) |
| 26-27 April 2021 | Regional Preparatory Meeting for the Americas (RPM-AMS) | [Report](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-RPMAMS-C-0014/en) |

The meeting elected His Excellency Mr Petr Ocko, Deputy Minister for Industry and Trade of the Czech Republic, as Chairman and adopted the agenda as presented in Document TDAG21/CM/1-E.

The outcome of each RPM followed the same structure is detailed by region, in the chronological order in which the meetings took place.

# 2. Conclusions from the Regional Preparatory Meetings for WTDC-21

**Europe**

RPM-EUR, after considering all input documents and discussions, came to the following conclusions:

* RPM-EUR considered the final Report of **TDAG Working Group on WTDC Preparations (TDAG-WG-Prep)** welcoming all innovations proposed so far and reiterating the importance of involvement of youth and equal participation of women in WTDC.
* RPM-EUR considered the final Report of **TDAG Working Group on Resolutions, Declaration and Thematic Priorities (TDAG-WG-RDTP)** underlining the importance of the outcomes and proposals therein, considering strengthened involvement of Europe facilitated by CEPT.
* RPM-EUR considered the final Report of **TDAG Working Group on Strategic and Operational Plans (TDAG-WG-SOP)** drawing the attention to the importance of aligning BDT activities with the goals of the Union.
* RPM-EUR recognized that the ITU-D regional priorities constitute an effective mechanism for fostering implementation of the WSIS outcomes and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, including achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.
* RPM-EUR welcomed the “Digital trends” report as the new series of BDT, highlighting of developments at the regional level in field of ICTs.
* RPM-EUR launched the Network of Women (NoW) for the ITU Telecommunication Development Sector, paving the way for involvement in WTDC-21.
* RPM-EUR recognized that RPM-EUR was the first meeting to have a majority of women participating.
* RPM-EUR welcomed the Youth Declaration developed by the Generation Connect – Europe Youth Group as meaningful engagement, empowerment and participation of youth in the work of ITU.
* RPM-EUR recognized the important work of the ITU Centres of Excellence in capacity building in Europe region and noted the launch of the 2021 CoE training catalogue providing over 20 training opportunities in the field of broadband, cybersecurity and digital services.
* RPM-EUR approved five regional priorities for Europe for the period 2022-2025 that will be submitted to the CEPT Com-ITU meeting, taking place virtually on 20-21 January 2021, for comments, if any.

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| **EUR1:** Digital Infrastructure development |
| **EUR1**: Digital infrastructure development  **Objective:** To facilitate attainment of Gigabit connectivity through resilient and synergistic infrastructure development and an enabling environment ensuring ubiquitous coverage.  **Expected results:** *Assistance to the countries in need on the following:*   1. Development and update of plans and feasibility studies for the deployment of ubiquitous resilient high-speed connectivity with all relevant components including legislation, standards, organizational set-up, capacity building and cooperation mechanisms, as needed. 2. Assessment of dynamics, challenges and opportunities in respect of the roll-out thereof and sharing of best practices and case studies on various above-mentioned possibilities via organizing regional workshops, conferences or webinars. 3. Sharing of guidelines on collaborative regulation between the telecommunication sector and other synergistic sectors such as energy, railway and transportation. 4. Mapping of ubiquitous infrastructure and services, fostering harmonization of approaches across the region and taking into account infrastructure-sharing approaches applied by countries, including development of broadband mapping systems for broadband networks and related facilities and promoting innovative solutions for meaningful connectivity. 5. Initiatives on wider deployment of ICT broadband services and contributing to the environmental sustainability. 6. Initiatives to raise the state of awareness and education of citizens on new and emerging telecommunications/ICTs and topics such as human exposure to electromagnetic fields (EMF) originating from wireless radio systems. |
| *BDT Thematic Priorities:* Network and Infrastructure Development, Policy and Regulation.  *SDGs:* 9, 17  *WSIS Action Lines: C2, C9, C6*  *Connect 2030 Agenda:* Goal 1, Goal 2 |

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| **EUR2:** Digital transformation for resilience |
| **Objective:** To facilitate the digitalization processes of services in different sectors (agriculture, health, government, education), including those of public administrations, to ensure greater resilience in responding to critical situations, including pandemic challenges.  **Expected results:** *Assistance to the countries in need in the following areas:*  1. Creation of an experience- and knowledge-exchange platform between countries.  2. Development of technical and service infrastructure (data centres, networks, secure gateways, authentication, interoperability, standards and metadata) as well as capacity building within the national administrations and institutions.  3. Fostering the development of, and increase in, types of online transactional services, including applications for administration-to-administration (A2A) and administration to-customer (A2C) services.  4. Building the capacities necessary for accelerating the process of national and regional digitization, through development of national strategies and dedicated programmes.  5. Raising public trust through security enhancements in e-government services, digitization processes and awareness-raising campaigns, including promotion of application-based solutions for e-government by national administrations and other institutions.  6. Identification of areas for improvement and key horizontal factors for the successful implementation of e-government services and digitization, such as secure and accessible digital identification, tools for data analysis, integrating workflow solutions, approach to re-use of data, and fostering their development. |
| *BDT Thematic Priority:* Digital Services and Applications  *SDGs:* 2,3  *WSIS Action Lines:* C7  *Connect 2030 Agenda: N/A* |

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| **EUR3:** Digital inclusion and skills development |
| **Objective:** To facilitate equitable access to ICTs and necessary digital skills to all groups of society, including persons with disabilities and persons with specific needs, as well as women and youth, in order to take advantage of telecommunications/ICTs.  **Expected results:** *Assistance to the countries in need in the following areas:*   1. Leveraging digital accessibility for persons with disabilities and persons with specific needs as a priority to the countries and supporting them through creation and update of strategies and policies, taking into account regional or global standards, capacity building, fostering the innovation, monitoring of the implementation of digital accessibility, and creating new or strengthening existing partnerships such as Accessible Europe – ICT for All. 2. Improving gender equality in all groups in the telecommunications/ICTs sector and beyond by providing opportunities for collaboration; maximizing impact and supporting the set up of new projects and the scaling up of ongoing successful projects. 3. Meaningful empowerment, engagement and participation of youth in the telecommunications/ICTs sector and beyond, and creating new career schemes and opportunities. 4. Assessment of national and regional approaches for digital skills development, elaboration of national and regional strategies or action plans, development of necessary digital skills, knowledge, and literacy programmes, and providing support for educators. 5. Building and/or strengthening partnerships with private sector, regional and sub-regional organizations, UN system organizations, academia and other possible stakeholders for the benefit of digital inclusion in the European region and globally. |
| *BDT Thematic Priority:* Digital Inclusion, Capacity Development  *SDGs: 4, 5, 8, 10, 17*  *WSIS Action Lines:* C3, C4, C7  *Connect 2030 Agenda:* Goal 2 |

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| **EUR4:** Trust and confidence in the use of digital technologies |
| **Objective:** To support the deployment of resilient infrastructure and secure services allowing all citizens, especially children, to use telecommunications/ICTs in their daily lives with confidence.  **Expected results:** *Assistance to the countries in need in the following areas:*  1. Providing regional platforms and tools for building human capacities to enhance trust and confidence in the use of telecommunications/ICTs, including establishing common approaches to cybersecurity capacity-building for European countries with cross-sectoral cybersecurity skills curriculum, guidelines promoting skills related to multiple sectors, such as law, psychology, social sciences, economics, security and risk management, diplomacy and interdisciplinary skills.  2. Sharing national and regional best practices and case studies, conducting surveys on enhancing confidence and trust in the use of ICTs, including trainings, and creating other opportunities for sharing knowledge and experience.  3. Elaboration or review of national cybersecurity strategies, including promotion of online safety, ensuring a multi-stakeholders' engagement (government, children and young people, parents, guardians and educators, industry and connectivity providers, research and academia, non-governmental organizations, law enforcement, health, and social services).  4. Setting up or improving the capabilities of national computer security incident response teams (CSIRTs) and the corresponding networks to support these CSIRTs in cooperating with each other.  5. Conducting simulation or educational exercises such as cyberdrills or other events at national and regional level in cooperation with international and regional organizations, and assisting countries in developing tools through synergies and resource optimization.  6. Creation of the safer online environment for children and young people by raising awareness and education about cybersecurity, implementation and promotion of available COP Guidelines and other educational resources, encouraging the governments to identify risks and vulnerabilities to children in cyberspace, promoting the media literacy on cybersecurity. |
| *BDT Thematic Priority:* Cybersecurity, Capacity Building  *SDGs:* 9, 16, 17  *WSIS Action Lines:* C5  *Connect 2030 Agenda: N/A* |

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| **EUR5:** Digital innovation ecosystems |
| **Objective:** To foster environments that are conducive to innovation and entrepreneurship through systemic approaches based on digital telecommunications/ICTs, aimed at closing the growing digital innovation divide in the region.  **Expected results:** *Assistance to the countries in need in the following areas:*   1. National digital innovation strategies and policies such us country profiles and reviews, sectoral innovation assessments to provide an accurate assessment of the digital innovation gaps. 2. Capacity building and knowledge-sharing platforms such as Regional Innovation Forums, Open Innovation Competitions, ecosystem development trainings to empower stakeholders. 3. Ecosystem building initiatives and projects such as technology sandboxes, programmes supporting tech start-ups and entrepreneurship to create concrete impact. 4. Promoting multistakeholder and multisectoral partnerships between and within different ecosystems, for sustainability and scale-up. 5. Fostering inclusion by sharing, twinning best practices and connecting different ecosystems with special attention to gender and youth. |
| *BDT Thematic Priority:* Digital Innovation Ecosystems  *SDGs:* 9, 17, 8  *WSIS Action Lines:* C1  *Connect 2030 Agenda:* Goal 4 |

**Asia and the Pacific**

RPM-ASP, after considering all input documents and discussions, came to the following conclusions:

* RPM-ASP welcomed the report on “Digital trends in Asia and the Pacific in 2021” as an important contribution to developing the regional initiatives taking into account the developments and challenges at the regional level in field of ICTs.
* RPM-ASP noted the implementation of the Asia-Pacific regional initiatives with appreciation.
* RPM-ASP considered the final report of the TDAG Working Group on WTDC Preparations and noted the document.
* RPM-ASP considered the progress report of the TDAG Working Group on Resolutions, Declaration and Thematic Priorities and noted the contribution.
* RPM-ASP considered the progress report of the TDAG Working Group on Strategic and Operational Plans and noted the contribution.
* RPM-ASP recognized that the ITU-D regional initiatives constitute an effective mechanism for fostering implementation of the WSIS outcomes and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, including achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.
* RPM-ASP launched the Network of Women (NoW) for the ITU Telecommunication Development Sector, paving the way for the involvement of more women in WTDC-21.
* RPM-ASP welcomed the creation of the GC-ASP Youth Group, which could serve as a means for meaningful engagement, empowerment and participation of youth in the work of ITU. RPM-ASP also welcomed the ongoing work of the Youth Group towards the development of a Generation Connect Asia and the Pacific action plan for 2022-2025.
* RPM-ASP discussed five regional priorities for Asia and the Pacific region for the next cycle 2022-2025, for submission to WTDC-21 as follows:

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| **ASP1**:Addressing special needs of least developed countries, small island developing states, including Pacific island countries, and landlocked developing countries |
| **Objective**: To provide special assistance to least developed countries (LDCs), small island developing states (SIDS), including Pacific island countries, and landlocked developing countries (LLDCs) in order to meet their priority telecommunication/information and communication technology (ICT) requirements.  **Expected results**:   1. Development of policy and regulatory frameworks for broadband infrastructure and ICT applications and cybersecurity, taking into account the special needs of LDCs, SIDS, including Pacific island countries, and LLDCs, and strengthening of human capacity to address future policy and regulatory challenges. 2. Promotion of affordable and meaningful broadband universal access in LDCs, SIDS, including Pacific island countries, and LLDCs. 3. Assistance to LDCs, SIDS, including Pacific island countries, and LLDCs in adopting telecommunication/ICT applications in disaster management relating to disaster prediction, preparedness, adaptation, monitoring, mitigation, response, rehabilitation and recovery of telecommunication/ICT networks based on their priority needs. 4. Assistance to LDCs, SIDS, including Pacific island countries, and LLDCs in their efforts to achieve internationally agreed goals, such as the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, the Istanbul Programme of Action for LDCs, the Samoa Pathway for SIDS and the Vienna Programme of Action for LLDCs. |

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| **ASP2:** Harnessing information and communication technologies to support the digital economy and inclusive digital societies |
| **Objective**: To assist Member States in utilizing information and communication technologies (ICTs) and emerging technologies to reap the benefits of the digital economy by addressing the human and technical capacity challenges, including improving and expanding digital skills to reduce the gender gap, and assisting vulnerable groups[[1]](#footnote-1) to bridge the digital divide.  **Expected results**:   1. Planning and elaboration of national strategic frameworks on the digital economy as well as associated toolkits for selected ICT applications and services. 2. Establishment and annual updating of a repository of all work done within ITU relating to the digital economy since the World Telecommunication Development Conference (Buenos Aires, 2017). 3. Development of policies, strategies and guidelines for efficient and timely implementation of the digital economy including the use of the Internet of Things (IoT), ICT-centric applications and platforms, AI, 5G and big data. 4. Acceleration of digital infrastructure readiness by timely deployment of optical fibre, 4G and 5G technologies as well as that of ICT/mobile applications to improve the delivery of value-added services in sectors such as health, education, environment, agriculture, governance, energy, financial services, and e-commerce. In doing so, economic recovery funds and resources of development banks can also be utilized. 5. Identification, collation and sharing of knowledge, best practices and case studies on various telecommunication/ICT applications. 6. Development of cross-sectoral national/regional programmes on digital literacy and skills for inclusiveness, especially for women, youth, older persons and persons with specific needs. 7. Enhancement of international cooperation related to new and emerging technologies pertaining to telecommunications/ICTs to ensure that all countries on the global value chain can benefit from digital transformation. |

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| **ASP3**: Fostering development of infrastructure to enhance digital connectivity and connecting the unconnected |
| **Objective**: To assist Member States in the development of telecommunication/ICT infrastructure in order to facilitate the provision of services and applications taking into consideration the availability, affordability and accessibility of the infrastructure for connecting the unconnected.  **Expected results**:   1. Migration/transition of analogue networks to appropriate digital networks, application of affordable wired and wireless technologies (including interoperability of ICT infrastructure) and optimized use of the digital dividend. 2. Maximized use of new and emerging technologies for the development of communication networks, including 5G and smart grid infrastructure and services. 3. Review and revise, if necessary, existing national broadband objectives and enhance capacity to develop and implement national broadband plans (including support to study the status of national broadband networks and international connectivity) in order to provide broadband access to unserved and underserved areas; promote affordable access, especially for youth, women, indigenous peoples and children; select appropriate technologies; develop and use universal service funds effectively; and develop business models that are financially and operationally sustainable. 4. Promotion of Internet exchange points (IXPs) as a long-term solution to advance connectivity and deployment of IPv6-based networks and applications and facilitation of the transition from IPv4 to IPv6. 5. Strengthening of the capacity to implement conformance and interoperability (C&I) procedures and facilitating the establishment of common regional/subregional C&I regimes (including the adoption and implementation of mutual recognition arrangements). 6. Paying attention to spectrum-management issues, including radio-frequency planning, harmonization of the use of spectrum allocated and identified for International Mobile Telecommunications (IMT), enhancement of spectrum monitoring systems, and facilitating implementation of WRC decisions. 7. Building of skills for the development and use of terrestrial and space services. 8. Enhancing regional ICT connectivity and strengthening cooperation with international/regional organizations in programmes such as the Asia-Pacific Information Superhighway (AP-IS). |

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| **ASP4:** Enabling policy and regulatory environments to accelerate digital transformation |
| **Objective**: To assist Member States in developing appropriate policy and regulatory frameworks, digital services across various sectors of the economy, fostering innovation, enhancing skills, increasing information sharing and strengthening regulatory cooperation, thereby contributing to a supportive regulatory environment for all stakeholders.  **Expected results**:   1. Sharing of information on developments in policy, legal and regulatory frameworks as well as market developments in the information and communication technology (ICT) sector and the digital economies it enables. 2. Development, implementation and review of strategies, policies and legal and regulatory frameworks, including for next-generation universal service obligation (USO), consumer protection, transformation of small; and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) to digital enterprises, and innovation and entrepreneurship. 3. Encouraging inclusive dialogues and strengthening cooperation among national and regional regulators, policy-makers and other telecommunication/ICT stakeholders, as well as with other sectors of the economy, on topical policy, legal, regulatory and market issues. 4. Strengthening institutional, human and technical capacity on topical policy, legal and regulatory issues, as well as on economic and financial issues and market developments. 5. Improved awareness of policy and regulatory frameworks relating to data privacy and cross-border data. 6. Development of strategic frameworks to support research and development activities in ICT in developing countries. |

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| **ASP5:** Contributing to a secure and resilient ICT environment |
| 1. Compilation of national/regional cybersecurity strategies, establishment of national/regional cybersecurity capabilities such as computer incident response teams (CIRTs), and sharing of good practices to nurture a culture of cybersecurity. 2. Strengthening of institutional cooperation and coordination among key actors and stakeholders at the national, regional and global levels (including through organizing cyberdrills) and enhancing the capacity to address issues related to cybersecurity. 3. Development of national emergency telecommunication plans and ICT-based initiatives for providing medical (e-health) and humanitarian assistance in disasters and emergencies. 4. Incorporation of disaster-resilient features in telecommunication networks and infrastructure, and development of ICT-based solutions (including the use of wireless and satellite-based technologies) to enhance network resilience. 5. Development of standards-based monitoring and early-warning systems linked to national and regional networks, and enhanced use of active and passive terrestrial/space-based sensing systems for disaster prediction, detection and mitigation. 6. Formulation of comprehensive strategies and measures to help mitigate and respond to the devastating effects of climate change, including e-waste policy. |

**Africa**

RPM-AFR, after considering all input documents and discussions, came to the following conclusions:

* RPM-AFR welcomed the “Digital trends Africa” report as part of the new series prepared by BDT;
* RPM-AFR noted the implementation of the region’s regional initiatives with appreciation and commended the effort made by the ITU Regional Office for Africa for its sincere reporting on progress and obstacles faced;
* RPM-AFR recognized that the ITU-D regional initiatives constitute an effective mechanism for fostering implementation of the WSIS outcomes and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, including achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals;
* RPM-AFR raised the issue of matching the regional initiatives to the budget required and the process of ITU that requires partners to deposit their contribution to ITU, and noted that this topic may need to be further discussed in Council;
* RPM-AFR thanked Ethiopia for kindly hosting WTDC-21, the first WTDC in Africa, and appreciated the update on host country preparation;
* RPM-AFR noted with thanks the presentation from ATU with details on the structure of preparations for WTDC and commended ATU on the good progress made to date;
* RPM-AFR considered the final report of **TDAG Working Group on WTDC Preparations (TDAG-WG-Prep)** and noted the contribution;
* RPM-AFR considered the progress report of **TDAG Working Group on Resolutions, Declaration and Thematic Priorities (TDAG-WG-RDTP)** and noted the contribution and agreed to share with this group a draft African Comon Proposal on WTDC Resolution 1;
* RPM-AFR considered the progress report of **TDAG Working Group on Strategic and Operational Plans (TDAG-WG-SOP)** and noted the contribution and agreed to share with this group a draft African Comon Proposal on the ITU-D contribution to the ITU Strategic Plan. RPM-AFR encouraged participation from the region in the work of the TDAG-WG-SOP given Africa’s interest in keeping the review of the ITU-D contribution to the ITU Strategic Plan at WTDC, instead of at TDAG;
* RPM-AFR welcomed with appreciation the side event on I-CoDI;
* RPM-AFR launched the Network of Women (NoW) for the ITU Telecommunication Development Sector, paving the way for involvement in WTDC-21;
* RPM-AFR agreed the following five draft African regional initiatives, which will require further elaboration in ATU Working Group 1:

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| **AFR1:** Supporting digital transformation to usher a rapid transition to digital economy while accelerating innovation in Africa |
| **Objective**: To assist Member States in the Africa region to reap the full benefits of digital transformation by addressing the existing policy and regulatory challenges, and formulating strategies to encourage the development and the use of digital technologies in various sectors of the economy and foster innovation.  Taking into consideration the enormous potential of digital technologies to contribute to the acceleration of the socio-economic development of countries and its vital role to assist in realizing the 2030 sustainable development agenda and the 17 global SDGs, ITU is called upon to support Member States in the Africa region to build, develop and sustain digitally based economies.  **Expected results**   1. Assistance in the development of national digital transformation strategies focusing on enabling policies and regulations to enhance the use of digital technologies in the economy. 2. Assistance in developing action plans with digital key performance indicators (KPIs) encompassing the adoption of e-applications geared to sustainable development in various aspects of African economies and e-government services. 3. Assistance in conducting research on the current digitization state of industries in Africa, trends and needs, at the regional level. 4. Building partnership among ITU Membership to encourage the exchange of best practices and knowledge sharing in the implementation of digital transformation projects. 5. Assistance in the adoption and implementation of relevant standards that are targeted at addressing challenges of interoperability stemming from the disruptive and transformative spread of digital innovation. 6. Help in designing models and facilitate the finance of digital transformation of economies in Africa, and identification of partnership opportunities to establish sustainable innovation frameworks. 7. Support for the designing and implementation of a comprehensive and inclusive human and institutional capacity building long term plan as a fundamental pillar to transform the economy to be digitally oriented and to guarantee its effective functioning that takes into consideration upskilling and reskilling of citizens on aspects related to emerging technologies 8. Support the establishment of centres of excellence and incubation entities to help in the nourishing and development of innovative ideas and start-ups in Africa. 9. developing Member States' capability to promote accessibility in order to ensure improved specialized skills development to meet the ICT needs of persons with disabilities and thus enhance their use of digital applications. |

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| **AFR2:** Implementation and expansion of broadband infrastructures, connectivity and emerging technologies |
| **Objective**:To promote the deployment of broadband infrastructure to assist Member States in Africa to ensure that no one is left behind to leverage the full benefits of high-speed and high – quality connectivity and the ramifications of emerging technologies.  **Expected results**   1. Assistance in the development of national and regional strategic plans, focusing on enabling policies and regulations addressing high-speed, high-quality broadband networks in the region. 2. Provide support and share best practices on national broadband strategies and strengthen capacity development, implement and monitor national broadband plans to use universal service funds effectively and develop financial and operational sustainable business models in order to provide affordable broadband access to unserved and underserved areas. 3. Benefiting from development programmes in expanding connectivity to SMEs and businesses to support jobs, business growth and economic development 4. Benefiting from development programmes in expanding connectivity to education and health related entities; SMEs and businesses; and homes and communities to enable access to relevant digital content 5. Providing support that will enable the sharing of best practices on financing models as well as the identification of partnership opportunities to enhance high-speed, high-quality broadband. 6. Assistance in promoting the harmonization of subregional broadband plans so as to ensure equitable access to high-speed, high-quality broadband for all. 7. Assistance with human capacity development resources, through training programmes, workshops and such like, to exchange expertise and to provide persons with disabilities with the platform to participate in and benefit from the emergence of new broadband technologies. 8. Assistance in extending the regional and continental backbone initiatives to ensure the resilience of submarine cables. 9. Improved awareness of policy and regulatory frameworks relating to spectrum-management issues in line with ITU decisions, including radio-frequency planning, trading, re-farming, and sharing along with spectrum licensing frameworks for competition, obligations and pricing. 10. Development, implementation and review of policies, legal and regulatory frameworks, including for network infrastructure protection, construction codes, regulations and technical standards for FTTH infrastructure, collaborative construction in civil works, next-generation universal service obligation (USO), infrastructure sharing, and facilitation of right-of-way and site acquisition. 11. Undergoing the necessary feasibility studies and setting roadmaps at national and regional levels for deployment of emerging technologies with high speed connectivity such as 5G related technologies; capacity building and ecosystem development to support 5G use. 12. Designing and executing awareness raising and measurement campaigns on EMF exposure and safety as well as on benefits of wireless backed technologies by science and medical recommendations. |

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| **AFR3:** Building trust, safety and security in the use of telecommunications/information and communication technology and protection of personal data |
| **Objective**: To assist Member States in developing and implementing policies, strategies, standards and mechanisms as well as human capacity building to enhance the security of information systems and networks, protection of data and people including vulnerable groups such as children and guarantee digital trust. To protect information and communication technology (ICT) and its applications.  **Expected results**   1. Assistance to Member States in improving their cybersecurity readiness status in respect to the ITU Global Cybersecurity Index pillars and the goal of the Connect 2030 Agenda 2. support member states in assessing adopting developing and the implementation of a regulatory and legislative framework, at national and regional level, related to cybersecurity 3. Development of a global framework for collaboration and awareness at regional and sub-regional levels for nurturing a global culture of cybersecurity and to help consumers better understand and protect against risks. 4. Assistance in developing content for educating consumers on their rights and responsibilities related to data protection while performing electronic and physical transactions as well as execution of campaigns to raise the awareness of cyberthreats, cybersecurity measures and quality of service in the use of ICTs. 5. Encourage the sharing of best practices and exchange of knowledge between Member States on the mechanisms to combat cybercrimes and cyber threats. 6. Support member states in the establishment and the development of national computer emergency/incident response teams (CERT/CIRTs), and strengthening cooperation mechanisms between them, at regional and sub-regional levels. |

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| **AFR4:** Fostering Emerging Technologies and Innovation Ecosystems |
| **Objective**  To foster an enabling digital innovation ecosystem that can navigate technological revolutions and establishment of a sustainable conducive environment for the utilization of emerging technologies and development of SMEEs and start-ups.  **Expected results**   1. Assistance in undertaking a comprehensive assessment of the human and institutional capacity and regulatory environment related to digital innovation, emerging technologies, and SMMEs at national and regional levels. 2. Support Member States in developing the necessary legislative and regulatory framework to encourage digital industries and innovation development and the establishment of SMMEs. 3. Assistance in the designing and adoption of national strategies and infrastructures such as innovation and Research Labs to usher the utilization of emerging technologies in the different sectors of the economy. 4. Support in scaling up digital entrepreneurship and SMMES through global partnerships focused on achieving national development priorities and elaborating financing models to ensure the necessary investments for the continuous development and deployment of emerging technologies. 5. Designing a comprehensive human capacity-building framework to upskill and reskill the human factor on emerging technologies and digital innovation related material. 6. Raising awareness on the importance of the protection of Intellectual Property (IP) and developing relevant regulatory frameworks. |

**Arab States**

RPM-ARB, after considering all input documents and discussions, came to the following conclusions:

* RPM-ARB considered the final report of **TDAG Working Group on WTDC Preparations (TDAG-WG-Prep)** and noted the contribution;
* RPM-ARB noted the implementation of the Arab regional initiatives with appreciation;
* RPM-ARB considered the progress report of **TDAG Working Group on Resolutions, Declaration and Thematic Priorities (TDAG-WG-RDTP)** and noted the contribution;
* RPM-ARB considered the progress report of **TDAG Working Group on Strategic and Operational Plans (TDAG-WG-SOP)** and noted the contribution;
* RPM-ARB recognized that the ITU-D regional initiatives constitute an effective mechanism for fostering implementation of the WSIS outcomes and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, including achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals;
* RPM-ARB welcomed the report on “Digital trends in the Arab Region in 2021” as an important contribution to developing the regional initiatives, taking into account the developments and challenges at the regional level in the field of ICTs;
* RPM-ARB welcomed the report titled “Gap Analysis on the Status of Thematic Priorities of the Development Bureau of the International Telecommunication Union in the Arab Region” and invited the ITU to share this information with other ITU field offices. Moreover, Member States are invited to provide feedback on the report to ensure that the analysis depicts an accurate status of the gaps pertaining to the thematic priorities in all the countries of the Arab region;
* RPM- ARB launched the Network of Women (NoW) for the ITU Telecommunication Development Sector, paving the way for the involvement of more women in WTDC-21;
* RPM-ARB welcomed the creation of the GC-ARB Youth Group, which could serve as a means for meaningful engagement, empowerment and participation of youth in the work of ITU;
* RPM-ARB invites the League of Arab States Preparatory Working Group for WTDC-21 to continue the work to elaborate and enhance the regional initiatives in [Document RPM-ARB21/9](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-RPMARB-C-0009/en) and consider in their work the contributions received in the RPM, specifically under agenda items 4 and 8. Moreover, the working group should target to elaborate and enhance the regional initiatives by identifying clear KPIs and targets, including identifying the targeted countries to implement each of the identified regional initiatives. Also, the Arab Preparatory Working Group for WTDC-21 will also consider the suggestion made by the ITU Arab Regional Office to organize deep-dive workshops for each of the identified priority areas using the proposed I-CoDI methodology. This suggestion is to be considered one of several options available to the working group in their efforts to formulate the regional initiatives. The text of the regional initiatives that will serve as basis for the work of the LAS Preparatory Group for WTDC-21 is as follows:

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| **ARB1:** Promote digital transformation and enable digital inclusion, especially for rapid response to epidemics and emergencies |
| **Objective:**Enabling digital transformation and developing digital services using telecommunications/ ICTs and by establishing an advanced infrastructure to support digital transformation and achieve high levels of digital inclusion, especially for rapid response in the face of epidemics and emergencies. |

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| **ARB2:** Building confidence and security in the use of telecommunications/ICTs in the era of new and emerging digital technologies, including the protection of children online |
| **Objective:**To enhance confidence and security in the use of telecommunications/ICTs by supporting the deployment of flexible infrastructure, safe services, protection of children online and combating all forms of cyber threats, including misuse of telecommunications/ICTs. |

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| **ARB3:** Developing digital infrastructure, promoting universal access, and supporting smart cities and communities |
| **Objective:**To facilitate universal access to high-speed connectivity by developing flexible and synergistic infrastructure and creating an enabling environment that ensures coverage everywhere and in a manner that ensures dealing with new and emerging technologies, and taking the necessary measures to ensure the rapid transformation into smart cities and societies. |

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| **ARB4:** Digital Innovation and Entrepreneurship |
| **Objective: To**build capacity and raise awareness about a culture of digital innovation and entrepreneurship, especially for youth, and empower women, in order to harness communications/ICT tools in launching projects and economic activities that focus on providing job opportunities. |

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| **ARB:** Developing digital and collaborative regulation and harmonization of policy and regulatory frameworks for information and communication technology and the digital economy |
| **Objective:**To enhance cooperation between regulators, policymakers in various sectors and other stakeholders in telecommunications/ICTs and to create an enabling environment in the context of digital and collaborative regulation. |

**CIS region**

RPM-CIS, after considering all input documents, arrived at the following outcomes:

* RPM-CIS recognized that the ITU-D regional initiatives constitute an effective mechanism for fostering implementation of the WSIS outcomes and 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, including achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.
* RPM-CIS also supported the work of TDAG and all its correspondence groups. In addition, it examined and supported the proposals for the revision and abrogation of WTDC resolutions.
* The following two side events were held as part of RPM-CIS:
  + [ITU infrastructure planning tools: ITU Interactive Transmission Maps, Giga broadband calculation tool, ICT Infrastructure Business Planning Toolkit](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Conferences/WTDC/WTDC21/Pages/RPM/CIS/Side-Event/ITU-IPT.aspx) (21 April 2021). It was proposed to hold the session within the framework of the RCC working bodies concerned.
  + [Special session: International Girls in ICT Day and Network of Women (NoW4WTDC21)](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Conferences/WTDC/WTDC21/NoW/Pages/Events/Regional/CIS/2021_04.aspx) (22 April 2021).
* RPM-CIS agreed the five draft CIS regional initiatives, as follows:

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| **CIS1:** Infrastructure development to foster innovation and partnerships in the implementation of new technologies – the Internet of Things, including the Industrial Internet, 5G/IMT-2020 and NET-2030 next-generation networks, quantum technologies, artificial intelligence, digital health, digital education, environmental protection, smart cities, digital skills, etc. |
| **Objective:** Assist ITU Member States of the region in telecommunication operators’ adoption of innovative technologies (in their introduction as new services), while ensuring the stability and enhanced performance of telecommunication networks, including 5G/IMT-2020 and NET-2030 next-generation networks, within the context of ubiquitous implementation of the concept and technologies of Internet of Things, Industrial Internet, quantum technologies, artificial intelligence, digital health, digital education, environmental protection, smart cities, digital skills, etc.  **Expected results:**   1. Development of recommendations on new technologies; 2. Creation of telecommunication/ICT infrastructure to foster innovation and partnerships in the implementation of new technologies; 3. Raising of the technological level of organizations developing solutions and the general level of well-being of the region’s population; 4. Development of recommendations for the measurement of parameters for digital data transmission via telecommunication channels, the Internet and telephony in modern and future communication systems, ensuring that monitoring results are reproducible and traceable; 5. Bridging of the digital divide in the countries of the CIS region. |

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| **CIS2:** Cybersecurity and personal data protection |
| **Objective:** Provide assistance to ITU Member States of the region in developing and maintaining secured, reliable and stable digital networks and services and in solving problems related to personal data protection.  **Expected results:**   1. Establishment and enhancement of national cybersecurity incident response teams (CIRTs); 2. Building of capacity and enhancing communication and incident response capabilities and ensuring of a continued collective effort among the regions’ national computer incident response teams (CIRTs) to combat cyberthreats through global, interregional, regional and national cybersecurity drills; 3. Training and retraining of specialists with technical and management profiles through targeted regional and national training programmes; 4. Coordination of the gathering and sharing of best practices in the development of national strategies and cybersecurity and measurement of countries’ commitment to cybersecurity. |

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| **CIS3:** Creating an enabling legal and regulatory environment to accelerate digital transformation |
| **Objective**: Provide assistance to ITU Member States of the region in developing related laws and regulations and digital services in various economic sectors, fostering innovation, increasing information sharing and strengthening cooperation in regulation, thereby contributing to the creation of an enabling regulatory environment for all stakeholders.  **Expected results**:   1. Creation of an interconnected innovation ecosystem for start-up development and digital transformation in the countries of the region; 2. Expert assistance in the creation of digital public services based on open innovation; 3. Expert assistance in the creation of regulatory and legal frameworks and coordination mechanisms for the fostering of innovation in the finance and education sectors (Fintech and Edtech); 4. Sharing of information on changes in the legal and regulatory framework and market developments in the ICT sector and digital economy; 5. Building of institutional, human and technical capacity in relevant issues of sector legislation, regulatory matters, economic and financial issues and market developments. |

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| **СIS4:** Digital skills and ICT accessibility for the population, in particular for persons with disabilities |
| **Objective:** Provide assistance to ITU Member States of the region in formulating recommendations for the development of citizens’ digital skills, paying particular attention to persons with disabilities.  **Expected results:**   1. A detailed study of the needs of persons with disabilities in terms of digital-skill training methodology; 2. Recommendations on the development and improvement of digital literacy for persons with disabilities; 3. Creation of a network of training centres for persons with disabilities, including in remote areas of countries; 4. Methodological guidance and training for teachers of training centres for persons with disabilities; 5. Recommendations on the development of citizens’ digital skills in art and culture and the reduction of barriers in public access to museum collections; 6. Cooperation with museums for the development of special programmes for public access to museum exhibits; 7. Professional development courses, forums, training and seminars on matters related to the development of the public’s digital skills in art and culture. |

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| **CIS5:** Development of smart cities and communities |
| **Objective**: Assist ITU Member States of the region in developing legal and regulatory frameworks, creating necessary infrastructure, introducing modern services and applications in different aspects of smart cities and communities (education, healthcare, tourism, transport, energy, security, the environment, etc.) and raising the digital literacy of the population, business and authorities.  **Expected results**:   1. Recommendations on the development of a legal and regulatory framework for smart city and community development at all architectural levels, as well as the organizational aspect of smart city and community development; 2. Recommendations on the development of necessary infrastructure, including the use of telecommunications and other connective media to support and facilitate sustainable smart city and community development in developing countries; 3. Pilot projects for different aspects of smart city and community development (education, healthcare, tourism, transport, energy, security, the environment, etc.); 4. Rating and key performance indicator system for the smart city and community domain; 5. Further training courses, training sessions and seminars on issues relating to smart city and community development and raising the digital literacy of the population, business and authorities. |

**Americas**

RPM-AMS, after considering all input documents and discussions, came to the following conclusions:

* RPM-AMS considered the report of **TDAG Working Group on WTDC Preparations (TDAG-WG-Prep)** welcoming all innovations proposed so far and reiterating the importance of involvement of youth and equal participation of women in WTDC;
* RPM-AMS considered the report of **TDAG Working Group on Resolutions, Declaration and Thematic Priorities (TDAG-WG-RDTP)** underlining the importance of the outcomes and proposals therein, considering strengthened involvement of Americas facilitated by CITEL;
* RPM-AMS considered the report of **TDAG Working Group on Strategic and Operational Plans (TDAG-WG-SOP)** drawing the attention to the importance of aligning BDT activities with the goals of the Union;
* RPM-AMS recognized that the ITU-D Regional Priorities constitute an effective mechanism for fostering implementation of the WSIS outcomes and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, including achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals;
* RPM-AMS welcomed the “Digital trends Americas” report as part of the new series prepared by BDT;
* RPM-AMS launched the Network of Women (NoW) for the ITU Telecommunication Development Sector, paving the way for involvement in WTDC-21;
* RPM-AMS welcomed the creation of the GC-AMS Youth Group, which could serve as a means for meaningful engagement, empowerment, and participation of youth in the work of ITU.
* RPM-AMS approved four regional priorities for Americas for the period 2022-2025. These Regional Priorities will be submitted to COM-CITEL meeting, taking place online from 1 to 3 December 2021, for comments and further processing towards submission to the WTDC-21 as an Inter-American Proposal (IAP). The text of the approved regional priorities is as follows:

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| **AMS1:** Deployment of modern, resilient, secure and sustainable telecommunication/ICT infrastructure |
| **Expected results:**   1. Assistance in the design, funding and implementation of national, regional and sub-regional broadband plans and resilient networks, including support to community networks, with special attention to indigenous communities, underserved and unserved areas, critical environment areas and vulnerable populations, taking into account innovative connectivity solutions that can be locally deployed and managed, including access to spectrum and high-speed networks; 2. Assistance in the development, funding and implementation of national emergency telecommunication plans and network infrastructure; 3. Enhanced and strengthened confidence and security in the use of ICTs, including capacity building and support for the development of national cybersecurity strategies; 4. Effective use of sustainable telecommunications/ICTs to mitigate climate change and enhance environmental sustainability; 5. Assistance in the design of effective spectrum management plans, enabling affordable access to backbone facilities, development of IXPs, and appropriate use of universal service funds. |

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| **AMS2:** Enhancement and expansion of digital literacy, digital skills and digital inclusion programs, especially among vulnerable populations |
| 1. Support for the development of human capacity through national, regional and sub-regional capacity building projects, such as training programs or workshops, to exchange expertise and knowledge, as well as national and international experiences to provide practical skills and tools to bridge digital divides, including the gender digital divide, in order to contribute to the development of sustainable telecommunications/ICTs, enhancing competition, investment and innovation; 2. Provision of diligent assistance in the planning, implementation and evaluation of projects and programs on digital literacy, digital skills and digital inclusion. |

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| **AMS3:** Effective support for the digital transformation and innovation ecosystems through scalable, funded and sustainable connectivity projects |
| **Expected Results:**   1. Assistance in the planning and implementation of foundational infrastructure and special purpose e-services; 2. Increased capacity building and multi-stakeholder cooperation to facilitate and enhance innovation in telecommunications/ICTs in support of digital transformation in the region, with special focus on all developing countries in the region, including LDCs, LLDCs, and SIDS, indigenous communities, in particular youth and women in rural, remote, unserved or underserved areas and communities; 3. Promotion of the active engagement of civil society, international financial institutions, industry partners, academia and other relevant stakeholders. |

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| **AMS-4:** 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 |
| **Expected Results:**   1. Support and promotion of sustainable telecommunications/ICTs in all developing countries in the region, including LDCs, LLDCs, and SIDS, and protected areas for emergency communications and to protect, restore and promote a sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems; 2. Support for the development of an enabling policy and regulatory environment and to facilitate investment and innovation to connect the unconnected and achieve the SDGs; 3. Support for Member States in the implementation of policy and regulatory strategies to connect the unconnected with a focus on affordability, including support of small operators and community networks; 4. Enhanced outreach to all developing countries in the region, including LDCs, LLDCs and SIDS, for greater participation in ITU processes and access to finance and expertise; 5. Support for digital financial inclusion and fostering implementation of electronic transactions. |

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1. Refers to people with specific needs, including children, women, older persons and persons with disabilities. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)