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|  | **Document TDAG-21/39-E** |
|  | **19 July 2021** |
|  | **Original:** **English** |
| Chairman, Telecommunication Development Advisory Group (TDAG) |
| Report of the 28th TDAG Meeting |
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**Introduction and highlights**

The 28th meeting of the Telecommunication Development Advisory Group (TDAG) was conducted virtually from 24 to 28 May 2021, under the chairmanship of Ms Roxanne McElvane Webber (**United States**). The meeting attracted **295** participants: **223** delegates representing **82** Member States, **36** participants from ITU-D Sector Members, **1** participant from Academia, **7** participants from regional organizations and **25** guests*.* TDAG Vice-Chairmen Mr Christopher Kemei (**Kenya**), Mr Abdulkarim Oloyede (**Nigeria**), Mr Nicolás Karavaski (**Argentina**), Mr Neil Checo Valera (**Dominican Republic**), Mr Al-ansari Almashakbeh (**Jordan**), Mr Kishore Babu Yerraballa (**India**), Mr Arseny Plossky (**Russian Federation**), Mr Wim Rullens (**Netherlands**) and Ms Blanca Gonzalez (**Spain**) were present for the meeting, as were the chairmen of the ITU-D study groups: Ms Regina Fleur Assoumou Bessou (**Côte d’Ivoire**) Chairman of Study Group 1,and Dr Ahmad Sharafat (**Islamic Republic of** **Iran**) Chairman of Study Group 2. TDAG participants considered 37 written contributions, of which 12 were submitted by membership.

With regard to recommendations to the BDT Director on plans for continuity of operations in view of the postponement of WTDC, TDAG agreed that the study groups and the TDAG Working Groups on Strategic and Operational Plans (TDAG-WG-SOP) and on WTDC Resolutions, Declaration and Thematic Priorities (TDAG-WG-RDTP) would continue their work and report to an extraordinary meeting of TDAG in November 2021. TDAG approved proposed dates for the meetings of these groups and adjusted the dates for interregional meetings. Further details and all relevant contributions can be found in Section 7 of this report.

**Address by the Secretary-General**

**Mr Houlin Zhao, ITU Secretary-General**, opened the 28th meeting of TDAG and highlighted two reasons why this meeting was so important for the Telecommunication Development Sector (ITU-D), the Telecommunication Development Bureau (BDT) and ITU as a whole. “First, because it will consider issues relating to BDT’s future and the continued process of reform and improvement that has been ongoing in BDT and ITU. And second, because it will help us better prepare for the upcoming World Telecommunication Development Conference in 2022, a year that will see not one but three global ITU conferences,” the Secretary-General said. He informed participants that the Council had agreed to the Government of Ethiopia’s request, received in April 2021, to postpone WTDC from 8-19 November 2021 to 6-15 June 2022. Following the Council’s agreement, a circular letter seeking the views of the entire ITU Member States had been issued, and he encouraged participants to ensure that their administrations provide their responses to this consultation by 22 June 2021.

The Secretary-General went on to state that: “The theme of WTDC, ***Connecting the unconnected to achieve sustainable development***, has never been more important. And holding such an important conference for the first time in Africa could not be more timely. The African continent has the highest proportion of global least developed countries and a youthful and engaged population that can benefit hugely from the work of the Development Sector.”

He praised the work of the three TDAG working groups established in June 2020 by TDAG to prepare for WTDC and acknowledged their chairmen: Ms Blanca Gonzalez (Spain), Mr Santiago Reyes Borda (Canada), and Dr Ahamad Sharafat (Islamic Republic of Iran) for the great progress they had made in recommending concrete initiatives to TDAG.

Turning to the hosting of three global conferences in the same year: the World Telecommunication Standardization Assembly (WTSA), the Plenipotentiary Conference, and potentially, WTDC, the Secretary-General noted that this would require the careful coordination of ITU’s work over the coming year and a half. He reported that the preparations for WTSA were progressing at a good pace. “We are working through challenging circumstances, but ITU members are finding practical ways forward.” He thanked India, the host country for WTSA, for its committed work to ensure a successful assembly. He expressed ITU’s solidarity with India, as the country reeled from cyclones and earthquakes and a disastrous second wave of COVID-19.

To conclude his remarks, the Secretary-General thanked the Chairman of TDAG, Ms Roxanne McElvane Webber, “for her excellent leadership of TDAG in these difficult and complicated times.”

1. **Address by other Elected Officials**

**Mr Mario Maniewicz, Director of the ITU Radiocommunication Bureau** (BR), informed participants that in the last two years,the Radiocommunication Sector (ITU-R) and ITU-D had been closer than ever before. “In 2020, we completely revised and updated the Spectrum Management Training Programme, a joint project of BR and BDT. The new training now includes WRC-19 decisions and updates from the 2020 Edition of the Radio Regulations,” Mr Maniewicz stated.

BR also worked closely with BDT to deliver radio spectrum seminars and spectrum monitoring workshops. BR participated in relevant meetings of ITU-D study groups and rapporteur groups, where liaison activities involved topics such as spectrum management; digital broadcasting and migration from analogue systems; the transition towards, and implementation of, IMT; and broadband wireless access technologies.

BR collaborated with BDT to identify study topics in ITU-R that are of particular interest to developing countries. Mr Maniewicz, who had worked in BDT for many years, both at headquarters and in the field offices before becoming Director of BR said that he was well aware of development challenges. In this regard, he reassured TDAG of BR’s readiness to support the work of ITU-D on all fronts: providing expert knowledge, developing training, or delivering projects with BDT. “Our goal, as One ITU, is to enable ICT services and applications that can be used for the benefit of all people, in all nations.”

**Mr Chaesub Lee, Director of the ITU Telecommunication Standardization Bureau (TSB)**, highlighted that the Telecommunication Standardization Sector (ITU-T) and ITU-D benefit from a shared vision and complementary expertise. ITU members work together in standardization discussions to establish the technical foundations for ICTs worldwide. At the same time, ITU members work together in development to ensure that ICT advances follow a course able to benefit everyone, everywhere.

He underlined that the COVID-19 pandemic had highlighted the importance of this work. A trusted ICT environment built on reliable ICT infrastructure is essential to social and economic development worldwide, Mr Lee stated, adding that: “The challenges we have faced over 2020 and 2021 have delivered a range of valuable lessons affecting our future. ITU continues to welcome new members and partners. All online ITU meetings and open events are welcoming a great number and diversity of participants than ever before. So we are uncovering new opportunities to increase the impact and inclusivity of ITU's work. We have mastered new ways of working as ITU meetings have continued online.”

1. **Address by the Director of the ITU Telecommunication Development Bureau**

Ms Doreen Bogdan-Martin, Director of BDT, presented the work of the Bureau giving a brief glimpse of the journey over the past year, and the work that lies ahead. From projects to publications and toolkits, from events to study groups, over the last 450 days BDT has run more than 150 virtual meetings, including six regional preparatory meetings for WTDC, study group meetings, webinars, training sessions, and even full-scale multi-day events such the Global Symposium for Regulators (GSR).

Highlighting these services and activities, the Director said: “This has been a year in which the urgency of connecting the unconnected has been dramatically brought to the fore, along with the critical role that digital solutions can play in building resilient societies.”

The Director underlined that Sector Members are a key group of stakeholders in supporting **technical assistance** activities: “Our team has also been focused on **building strong engagement with our members**… we have done this through a series of Tech Talk webinars, as well as a ‘getting to know your members’ series with Academia”

In terms of providing an impactful WTDC, the Director highlighted that: “The need to more effectively engage our traditional constituency and to bring in new key players from an increasingly complex digital ecosystem is why we have placed so much importance on delivering the most inclusive WTDC preparatory process ever undertaken.”

The Director also mentioned that BDT had continued to advance its multi-stakeholder initiatives, such as Giga, Connect2Recover, PRIDA and the Digital Transformation Centres. “Although these initiatives have a global or regional scope, they have been designed with a focus on on-the-ground support, and are already benefiting over 30 countries across almost every ITU region, involving key partners such as UNICEF, the European Commission, the African Union Commission, Cisco, and the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation,” the Director explained.

Turning the spotlight on capacity development, the Director reported that **The ITU Academy**, with a network offering more than 100 courses delivered over its platform, doubled its users and participants over the past 12 months; the **ITU Digital Transformation Centres**, with nine centres already operational in all ITU regions, had the first 80 000 users trained by the end of 2020; and the **ITU Centres of Excellence** programme, which had reached its mid-cycle review had delivered 66 courses and trained more than 5 000 people in 2020. In addition, BDT is teaming up with UNDP to further strengthen digital capacity building in countries around the world.

To conclude, the Director stressed that the challenge ahead is: “To connect the remaining 3.7 billion people to safe, affordable, accessible and meaningful connectivity…to drive human-centric digital transformation that delivers on the promise of a better, fairer and more prosperous future for all. This, she said, is our goal... “And the urgency has never been greater. Together we can make it happen.”

1. **Opening remarks by the Chairman of TDAG**

Ms Roxanne McElvane Webber **(United States**), Chairman of TDAG, on behalf of the membership and all participants, thanked the BDT Director and team for the comprehensive and impressive on-going work to make the Bureau fit for purpose, and shared her view that TDAG was supportive of the innovation occurring. She underscored the importance of this meeting for WTDC preparations, and outlined the key items on the agenda, noting upcoming items featuring youth and the network of women (NOW) which would present valuable and fresh perspectives for TDAG’s deliberations and decisions. The TDAG Chairman stated her personal appreciation for the WTDC theme developed by the membership under the leadership of the TDAG-WG-PREP and its Chairman, Santiago Reyes-Borda, *Connecting the unconnected to achieve the sustainable development*, as it defines a wonderful mission for ITU, the importance of which cannot be understated. Of all international organizations, she commented, it is the ITU – and principally through its Development Sector – that in singularly working to advance global telecommunication development, focuses on ICTs for those underserved or unserved *as a priority*. Improving connectivity in these areas multiplies benefits for all, and allows us to connect and exchange the best of what we have to offer so that together we can increase the global good.

Noting that she is pleased to continue working together over the next year to ensure this is a reality, the TDAG Chairman outlined three broad goals for what is now the second fully virtual meeting in the history of TDAG:

1) recognize the BDT Director, staff, and all membership for the immense amount of work undertaken in these extraordinary circumstances since TDAG 2020; 2) attain a common understanding of membership consensus on WTDC issues from which to define and launch future work; and 3) with WTDC likely to be postponed to June 2022, agree on a recommendation for the Director on a clear path forward for ITU-D that includes a workable timeline with processes that capture the voice of all membership and facilitate a strong and successful WTDC. In concluding these remarks, she introduced the full [TDAG Bureau](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Conferences/TDAG/Pages/TDAG23/Bureau.aspx).

1. **Adoption of the agenda and Time Management Plan**

The meeting agenda and time management plan are contained in [Document 1](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-TDAG28-C-0001/en) and [Document DT/1](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-TDAG28-210524-TD-0001/en), respectively; and were considered and approved.

**ITU-D four-year rolling Operational Plan 2022-2025**

The General Secretariat presented [Document 4](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-TDAG28-C-0004/en) on the “ITU draft Operational Plan for 2022-2025” highlighting the implementation of the Union’s five strategic goals and 18 strategic objectives broken down as follows: six inter-Sectoral objectives; three Radiocommunication Sector objectives; five Telecommunication Standardization Sector objectives; and four Telecommunication Development Sector objectives.

The plan comprises three parts. Part 1 provides a synthesis. Part 2 covers the 2020 performance report and the 2022-2025 Operational Plan at the objectives level. Part 3 contains additional information on outputs. The four ITU-D objectives foreseen in 2022-2025 represent 34.08 per cent of the total planned resources of the Union for that period.

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| TDAG thanked the General Secretariat for an excellent document. Some Member States sought to know why the document had not been translated into all ITU official languages, given its importance for ITU-D. TDAG was informed that the document was originally prepared for the Council and was being translated and would be available in due course in the six languages of the Union. The document has since been further translated and posted and can be found [**here**](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-TDAG28-C-0004/en).A further question sought clarity on the relationship between the draft four-year rolling operational plan for 2022-2025 presented in [Document 4](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-TDAG28-C-0004/en), and the work that will be undertaken by the Council Working Group on the draft strategic and financial plans for 2024-2027. The General Secretariat responded that since the 2022-2025 operational plan is based on the current ITU strategic plan for 2020-2023 and follows the the objectives in that plan, there are no direct links between the current operational plan and the strategic plan for 2024-2027 which will be developed in the future by Council. Further, the General Secretariat explained, the 2024-2027 strategic plan is expected to incorporate new features and concepts, such as thematic priorities, that mirror the changes introduced in ITU-D, along with some of the same goals and activities featured in the current plan. TDAG then endorsed the ITU-D four-year rolling Operational Plan for 2022-2025. |

1. **Reporting on the implementation of the WTDC-17 Buenos Aires Action Plan (including the Regional Initiatives), and contribution to the implementation of the WSIS Plan of Action and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**

[Document 2](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-TDAG28-C-0002/en) reports on the implementation of the Buenos Aires Action Plan (BaAP) adopted at WTDC-17, and its contribution to the implementation of the Plan of Action of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) and the SDGs. It highlights the changes that BDT has undergone to ensure that it is able to keep pace with the fast-changing environment in which it serves. The COVID-19 pandemic, which is affecting every country in the world, has underscored the fundamental importance of ICTs and their role of promoting social and economic development and facilitating the path to economic recovery. This has also underlined the need for a more agile and responsive BDT that can lead efforts to ensure that all people in all countries are connected.

The report provides details on the progress and achievements made within each one of the 10 thematic priorities and the two study groups, and how these have contributed to implementing the regional initiatives between 2018 and April 2021.

In addition to the results achieved within each thematic priority, the report describes the new initiatives launched between 2018 and 2020: Giga, Connect2Recover and I-CoDI. These initiatives are global, they cut across multiple thematic priorities, and have the potential to scale across multiple countries and regions.

The report describes how today's digital era needs strong collaboration based on cooperation, resource-sharing and win-win arrangements that benefit governments, industry and users alike. It looks at how BDT is increasing its efforts to forge win-win strategic partnerships, including with other United Nations organizations. BDT continues to nurture relationships with existing partners, and to identify and engage new partners, retain existing and attract new ITU-D Sector Members aiming to attract resources to finance large-scale projects, including the regional initiatives, to support an impactful implementation of the BaAP at global, regional, and national levels.

Annex 1 to Document 2 provides a map showing the links between thematic priorities, study groups, ITU resolutions, BDT projects, BDT regional initiatives, the SDGs, WSIS action lines, and the ITU Connect 2030 Agenda.

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| TDAG underlined the importance of the report in Document 2, which is structured around the current 10 thematic priorities, and noted the ongoing discussions reflected principally in the TDAG-WG-RDTP to reduce that number for the next four-year period. |

**Reporting on the Youth Strategy implementation**

TDAG endorsed the Youth Strategy in June 2020 and it aims to ensure meaningful participation of youth in ITU as key stakeholders in implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. [Document 23](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-TDAG28-C-0023/en) provided a summary of activities undertaken within the scope of the strategy designed around three pillars:

EMPOWER: Supporting youth empowerment by creating a community of young leaders.

ENGAGE: Bringing young people together to engage with ITU and its members.

PARTICIPATE: Fostering youth dialogue and participation in ITU activities and decision-making processes.

Youth from each region were called upon to contribute to the preparatory process for WTDC and the regional preparatory meetings (RPMs). In this regard, six Generation Connect Regional Youth Groups were established and presented at all six RPMs. Members of each Regional Youth Group were selected through a competitive and open process and were tasked to develop a document providing their views on priorities of relevance to each region as input to RPMs. The competitive process involved each ITU regional office issuing a call for nominations targeting youth aged between 18 and 24. Youth in each region were thus invited to submit their candidatures online. Each region then carried out an in-depth analysis of candidatures received, made its selection and announced the composition of its Youth Group.

**In addition, the Generation Connect Visionaries Board has been established to offer strategic high-level guidance to ITU youth-related work, and held its first meeting in April 2021.**

Significant progress has been made in implementing the strategy, but there is a need to strengthen resource mobilization; and BDT expressed the hope that this brief update will encourage ITU members to express interest in the strategy and invest in youth. The presentation of this document ended with an invitation to TDAG to participate in a side event for youth.

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| TDAG noted the report and the related presentations by the youth representatives with enthusiasm and appreciation, welcomed the youth initiatives as refreshing, and underscored the importance of investing in youth, in including them in TDAG activities and taking their perspectives into account in the work of ITU. |

1. **ITU-D projects**

ITU-D projects are demand-driven, people-centred and focused on the development of digital solutions in support of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda. [Document 11](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-TDAG28-C-0011/en) offered an overview of the work undertaken by BDT in project development and implementation in the six ITU-D regions: Africa, Americas, Arab States, Asia and the Pacific, Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) and Europe, as well as multi-regionally. As of 31 December 2020, the ITU project portfolio stood at 75 ongoing projects, valued at CHF 86.1 million. These projects include:

* The Giga initiative (a joint ITU-UNICEF programme aimed at connecting every school to the internet).
* The Digital Transformation Centre Initiative (a programme co-funded by ITU and NORAD that seeks to create a global network of centres, whose main purpose is to develop digital skills at the basic and intermediate levels).
* The Connect2Recover initiative (a global initiative co-funded by the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communication (MIC) of Japan and the King Salman Relief and Aid Center of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia that aims to reinforce the digital infrastructure and ecosystems of beneficiary countries to provide means to support the COVID-19 recovery efforts and preparedness for the “new normal” and potential future pandemics).

The intense work in attracting new partners continued in the first quarter of 2021, during which BDT signed 11 projects valued at around CHF 5.5 million. Efforts made in the last 12 months to strengthen project management practices in ITU include the establishment of the BDT Projects Board in November 2020.

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| TDAG noted the report with interest and appreciation and expressed support for the ongoing work and its impact on the ground, including steps taken to strengthen ITU project management practices. Responding to membership questions and comments, BDT emphasized that the identification of new projects is done jointly by the ITU team in the field (ITU regional and area offices), and headquarters (Thematic Priority Leads), and driven by membership through different mechanisms such as day-to-day interaction, information sharing at Regional Development Forums, TDAG, and other meetings. In addition, ITU conducts surveys through satisfaction questionnaires to members and shares the suggestions, proposals and ideas received. In conclusion, BDT proposed to organize an information session in the context of TDAG to showcase the new information systems and dashboards it has introduced to reinforce operational planning and project management. (See the summary of the information session under “Any other business.”) |

1. **Preparations for WTDC**

A great deal of preparation has been undertaken since the Government of Ethiopia extended its kind invitation to host the World Telecommunication Development Conference in Addis Ababa from 8 to 19 November 2021. This invitation was followed by the approval of those dates and location by the 2019 session of the ITU Council and the required majority of ITU Member States through a consultation that ended in September 2019.

[Document 16](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-TDAG28-C-0016/en) highlights the ***Preparations for the World Telecommunication Development Conference***to date. Important milestones include a site visit undertaken by ITU to the venue of the conference; discussions on the conference preparatory process, along with a brainstorming session during [TDAG-19](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Conferences/TDAG/Pages/TDAG24/default.aspx); and a [membership-wide survey](https://itu-d.limequery.com/365362?newtest=Y&lang=en) that further informed these discussions, followed by two [TDAG web dialogues](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Conferences/TDAG/Pages/TDAG25/default.aspx) in March and April 2020. Consultations continued up to the TDAG meeting in June 2020, which among other things created three working groups: TDAG Working Group on WTDC Preparations (TDAG-WG-Prep); TDAG Working Group on Strategic and Operational Plans (TDAG-WG-SOP); and TDAG Working Group on WTDC Resolutions, Declaration and Thematic Priorities (TDAG-WG-RDTP).

The host country agreement between Ethiopia and ITU was signed on 9 November 2020 in a virtual signing ceremony, marking the beginning of a series of multi-stakeholder dialogue events called “**The Road to Addis.”**

[Proposals](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-TDAG27-C-0005/en) presented by TDAG-WG-Prep to the extraordinary meeting of TDAG on 23 November 2020 resulted in the endorsement of the WTDC theme: **Connecting the unconnected to achieve sustainable development** and the decision to replace the former high-level segment and incorporate side events into a development track, now dubbed the **Partner2Connect for Digital Development Segment.**

Since January 2021, **six regional preparatory meetings** were held which allowed membership to review regional progress and challenges in ICTs and begin to identify regional priorities and initiatives to be adopted by WTDC for the next four-year period. Each region launched its **Generation Connect regional group** and its **Network of Women in ITU-D** to ensure that the voices of youth and women are brought to the table. One interregional meeting was held in March 2021, with two more planed before WTDC.

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| TDAG noted with appreciation the document providing an outline of the WTDC preparations and agreed that the document would be updated to reflect the latest developments in the WTDC preparatory process. In particular, reference to the second interregional meeting that had been planned for May 2021, but did not take place, would be deleted. TDAG also agreed that information on the reports of the regional preparatory meetings held in April 2021 should be updated so that members would be able to refer to the correct versions in their preparations for WTDC. |

**Update on the preparations for the Youth Summit**

The Youth Strategy includes a plan to organize a WTDC Generation Connect Global Youth Summit back to back with the upcoming WTDC. [Document 18](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-TDAG28-C-0018/en) lays out this plan and explains how the summit will focus on building a strong engagement of youth in preparation for the conference, and bring the voices of young people into WTDC discussions, sessions, and activities. Preparations of the Youth Summit are well under way and coordinated by an ITU Youth Task Force.

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| TDAG noted this document with appreciation and agreed that the Youth Summit would also have to be postponed to a suitable date prior to 6 June 2022, in collaboration with the host country. |

**Preparations for the WTDC-21 Partner2Connect for Digital Development Segment**

The **Partner2Connect for Digital Development Segment** will bring togetherleaders from government, business, international organizations, civil society, and academia, including participants and organizations who do not traditionally attend WTDC but are critical to advancing digital connectivity and development in the context of the SDGs.

[Document 19](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-TDAG28-C-0019/en) presents an overview of preparations to date for the ***Partner2Connect for Digital Development Segment*** .An overarching goal of this segment is to secure meaningful commitments from participants to advance access and use of digital connectivity to transform lives, particularly in least developed countries (LDCs), small island developing States (SIDS), and landlocked developing countries (LLDCs).

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| TDAG noted the document and confirmed that following its decision taken in November 2020, the Partner2Connect for Digital Development Segment will take place as an integral part of the main WTDC program from Day 2 to Day 4 of the conference.  |

* 1. **WTDC preparations and contingency plans for the work of ITU-D in the case of postponement of WTDC-21**

Proposals addressing ways ITU-D could continue its work given the likely postponement (confirmed at this writing) of WTDC were submitted and presented by the Russian Federation, the Republic of Zimbabwe, and the United States. The BDT secretariat also proposed broad continuity plans for consideration.

The Russian Federation presented its contribution in [Document 30](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-TDAG28-C-0030/en) containing ***proposals for the continuation of the ITU-D study group work in case of possible postponement of the WTDC-21.***

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| TDAG noted with appreciation the proposed action plan put forward in this document, acknowledging its relationship to the broad continuity plans also proposed by BDT in Document 10(Rev.1). |

The United States presented its contribution in [Document 33](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-TDAG28-C-0033/en) offering ***views on ITU-D study group activities given the likely postponement of WTDC-21.*** TDAG was called upon, among other things, to consider and recommend possible ways in which ITU-D could leverage and promote the final reports completed and approved by the study groups in advance of WTDC-2022, without the need to re-open discussions on these reports or subject them to further meetings or revisions.

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| TDAG noted with appreciation the proposals put forward in this document, observing its relationship to the broad continuity plans proposed by BDT in Document 10(Rev.1) section 2, on ITU-D study group work. In particular, TDAG agreed that ITU-D should leverage and promote the study group’s output reports between now and WTDC, and would not re-open discussion or subject the reports to further revisions. |

Zimbabwe presented its contribution in [Document 37](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-TDAG28-C-0037/) presenting a ***proposal for the continuation of the work of study groups in view of the proposed postponement of WTDC*.** The proposal underlines the challenges wrought by the COVID-19 pandemic and the need to find solutions to ICT access that can ensure that the progress made towards achieving the SDGs is not undone, as has already happened with access to education in developing countries. In this regard, the proposal called on TDAG to capitalize on the outcomes of work undertaken during the 2018-2021 study period.

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| TDAG noted with appreciation the proposal put forward in this document, observing its relationship to the broad continuity plans proposed by BDT in Document 10(Rev.1) section 2. Of particular note in Zimbabwe’s contribution is the suggestion to promote the outcomes of the work undertaken during the 2018-2021 study period through workshops, webinars and publications to help address problems arising from the COVID-19 pandemic. |

The BDT Secretariat presented [Document 10](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-TDAG28-C-0010/en)(Rev.1) ***continuity plans for the work of ITU-D in case of postponement of WTDC-21 to June 2022,*** as proposed by the government of Ethiopia. The continuity plans include proposals for the work of study groups, interregional meetings, and TDAG and its working groups. Some key takeaways are highlighted below.

* The ITU regional initiatives adopted at WTDC-17 for the period 2018-2021 would continue to be implemented until the next WTDC.
* The postponement of WTDC-21 would not have an impact on the implementation of the current 10 thematic priorities of ITU-D.
* To allow the preparatory process to continue in the months leading up to WTDC, the secretariat proposed to hold an additional TDAG meeting during the original WTDC-21 dates. There was also a proposal for ITU-D study groups to hold one additional meeting each in October 2021 to continue their work.
* The postponement of WTDC-21 would provide additional time to [TDAG-WG-RDTP](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Conferences/TDAG/Pages/TDAG_WG_WTDC.aspx) and [TDAG-WG-SOP](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Conferences/TDAG/Pages/TDAG_WG_SOP.aspx) to advance their work and report to the additional TDAG meeting in November 2021. The outputs from these groups and the views of TDAG can be taken into consideration by membership in preparation for WTDC, now planned for June 2022.
* The postponement of WTDC will allow for additional preparatory work to be completed to ensure that the Partner2Connect for Digital Development Segment has optimal reach to all targeted stakeholders and can achieve tangible results going forward.
* The development by membership of the ITU-D contribution to the ITU strategic planning process is a matter of key importance to members. The change in date of WTDC, as related to the dates established for the Plenipotentiary Conference in 2022 has an impact on how members will engage at the ITU-D level on the strategic plan.
* In addition to the first Interregional Meeting, held in March 2021, it was proposed to hold the two remaining meetings each over two days.
* The Youth Summit would also have to be postponed to a suitable date prior to 6 June 2022, in collaboration with the host country.
* The Road to Addis series would take place throughout 2021 and would continue in 2022 to capitalize on opportunities to create global awareness around WTDC.

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| TDAG noted with appreciation the comprehensive document prepared by BDT proposing a course of action to ensure business continuity in ITU-D, given the impending postponement of WTDC-21.Taking into account all contributions on the issue of continuity plans, TDAG agreed that study groups should continue their work, that the TDAG-WG-SOP and TDAG-WG-RDTP should continue their work and report to an extraordinary meeting of TDAG in November 2021, and that the schedule for interregional meetings should be adjusted. TDAG also agreed that all documents that had been submitted to the meeting for consideration under agenda item 10.1 (Report of the work of the TDAG-WG-RDTP) would be presented, discussed, and fully considered by the TDAG-WG-RDTP at its next meetings.TDAG examined and approved proposed dates for the meetings of these groups, as contained in Document TDAG-21/DT/6(Rev.2) and reproduced here for ease of reference: * 30 June-1 July 2021: TDAG-WG-RDTP
* 15-16 September 2021: TDAG-WG-RDTP
* 4 October 2021: TDAG-WG-SOP
* 11-15 October 2021: ITU-D Study Group 1
* 18-22 October 2021: ITU-D Study Group 2
* 8-12 November 2021: TDAG-21/2
* 13-14 December 2021: Second Interregional Meeting (IRM-2)
* 14-15 March 2022: Third Interregional Meeting (IRM-3)
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TDAG also considered the revised Questions proposed in Documents 8 and 9 (reports on the activities of SG1 and SG2), and in Documents 31 and 32 from the Russian Federation. TDAG participants commented that some of the revised Questions were not presented in the proper template provided in Annex 3 of Resolution 1 (Rev. Buenos Aires, 2017) of WTDC. This was rectified immediately during the meeting and TDAG noted an update to Document 10(Rev.1) which included a table containing links to the revised texts for all the study group Questions.

The Russian Federation presented its contribution in [Document 31](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-TDAG28-C-0031/en) containing ***proposals on the revision of terms of reference of Question 4/1: "Economic policies and methods of determining the costs of services related to national telecommunication/ICT networks, including next-generation networks"****.*

In [Document 32](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-TDAG28-C-0032/en) the Russian Federation presented ***proposals on the revision of terms of reference of Question 7/1 "Access to telecommunications/ICT services by persons with disabilities and other persons with specific needs"****.*

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| TDAG noted the proposals and commended the Chairmen of SG1 and SG2, members of the Questions 4/1 and 7/1 management teams, and all contributors for their efforts and hard work in producing updated terms of reference.TDAG agreed that new and revised terms of reference for study Questions would continue to be discussed at the study group meetings to be held in October 2021 with the aim of reaching consensus. The results of these meetings would then be submitted to the November 2021 TDAG meeting for decision in accordance with the relevant provisions of Resolution 1 (Rev. Buenos Aires, 2017) of WTDC.  |

* 1. **Structure of WTDC**

The ***draft structure of the World Telecommunication Development Conference***,presented in[Document 17](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-TDAG28-C-0017/en) , follows that of WTDC-17, albeit with a new feature: the non-statutory Partner2Connect for Digital Development Segment as an integral part of the overall conference programme.

Typically, the WTDC structure comprises the following: meetings of the heads of delegation; the Steering Committee (Committee 1); Budget Control (Committee 2); Objectives (Committee 3); ITU-D Working Methods (Committee 4);Editorial Committee (Committee 5); and the Working Group of the Plenary which includes the ITU-D contribution to the ITU strategic plan and WTDC Declaration. The decision to create this latter group for the WTDC to be held in 2022 would need to be made by the first plenary of the upcoming WTDC, and will depend on how the ITU-D contribution to the ITU strategic plan for 2024-2027 will be treated at WTDC, and the status of the text of the Declaration following consultations in the IRMs and in the work of TDAG-WG-RDTP.

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| TDAG noted the document with appreciation, and in particular the addition of the Partner2Connect for Digital Development Segment as a new integral part of the WTDC programme. |

1. **Report on preparatory process for WTDC-21**

TDAG, its Chairman, and the Director of BDT thanked His Excellency **Dr Ahmedin** **Mohammed**, State Minister of Innovation and Technology for his inspiring remarks, passion and conviction; and for all the extensive preparations undertaken so far by Ethiopia as the WTDC host country. Both TDAG and Ethiopia look forward to advancing an inclusive preparatory process and an inclusive conference. And all are excited to stage a conference that delivers outcomes that are meaningful, achievable and impactful.

* 1. **Report on the work of the TDAG-WG-RDTP**

The Chairman of the TDAG-WG-RDTP, Dr Ahmad Sharafat, presented the group’s report contained in [Document 21](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-TDAG28-C-0021/en), including proposals based on its terms of reference. Throughout its meetings, TDAG-WG-RDTP was reminded that 3.7 billion people are not connected, and was encouraged by the Director of BDT to be bold in making proposals that would dramatically change the connectivity landscape in the parts of the world that need it most. Their mission was made ever more urgent with the COVID-19 pandemic having thrown into sharp relief the digital divides.

Over the course of its five meetings held thus far, TDAG-WG-RDTP has developed concrete proposals on streamlining resolutions; prepared a draft WTDC Declaration; proposed revisions to study Questions; and proposed to streamline the Sector’s thematic priorities from 10 to the following four: ***Connectivity; Digital Transformation; Enabling Environment; Resource Mobilization and International Cooperation***. Based on discussions to date, there is broad support for these four thematic priorities. Some administrations have also proposed to include cybersecurity as a fifth thematic priority, however others have objected to this proposal and further discussion is anticipated.

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| TDAG noted with appreciation the report of the Chairman of the TDAG-WG-RDTP and commended him for the tremendous work done by the group to facilitate the work of the conference. TDAG agreed to extend the timeline for TDAG-WG-RDTP to continue and complete its work under the existing terms of reference and leadership according to the schedule approved by this meeting in Document TDAG-21/DT/6(Rev.2). TDAG noted the proposal by TDAG-WG-RDTP to reduce the number of thematic priorities to those listed above and the proposal to have a fifth thematic priority on cybersecurity. TDAG further agreed that the following documents (summarized below) would be discussed and fully considered at the next meetings held by the TDAG-WG-RDTP as they are within the purview of its mandate: Documents 24, 26, 27, 29, 35 36 and DT/3. |

[Document 24](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-TDAG28-C-0024/en),a contribution from theArab groupon ***the draft Addis Ababa Declaration***, proposed modifications to the draft declaration produced by TDAG-WG-RDTP ([document TDAG-WG-RDTP/36](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-TDAG27.RDTP-C-0036/)(Rev.1). In particular, the Arab group proposed to add text concerning security and personal data protection, capacity building, conformance and interoperability of telecommunication/ICT equipment and systems, transparent and collaborative collection and dissemination of quality indicators and statistics that measure the information society, the role of ITU-D which should target its efforts in achieving the ITU-D contribution to the ITU strategic plan and the ITU-D Action Plan.

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| This proposal will be discussed and considered by TDAG-WG-RDTP. |

[Document 26](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-TDAG28-C-0026/en), an ***African common proposal on Addis Ababa Declaration***,points to the need to include a mention of rural and remote areas in the declaration. These areas, particularly in developing countries, lag behind in access to high-quality broadband services. The underlying problem is mainly lack of electricity, and backbone and backhaul broadband infrastructure.The proposal further underlinesthat effective radio-frequency spectrum and satellite orbit management are important for connecting the unconnected.

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| This proposal will be discussed and considered by TDAG-WG-RDTP. |

[Document 27](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-TDAG28-C-0027/en), an ***African common proposal on ITU-D Thematic priorities***,supports the four thematic priorities agreed by TDAG-WG-RDTP in April 2021 and proposes a fifth one on building confidence and security in the use of ICTs that would assist Member States in building national computer emergency response teams (CERTs), national cybersecurity strategies, legal aspects including cybercrime, securing telecommunication/ICT networks and applications, including countering current and emerging cyberthreats, and consumer protection and privacy.

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| This proposal will be discussed and considered by TDAG-WG-RDTP. |

[Document 29](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-TDAG28-C-0029/en), an ***African common proposal on modifications to Resolution 1****,* argues against the principle of working parties and encourages the creation of regional groups to discuss issues at this level. The proposal also calls for annual deliverables from study groups to be included in WTDC Resolution 1 as a product of their work.

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| The proposal will be discussed and considered by TDAG-WG-RDTP. |

[Document 35](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-TDAG28-C-0035/en), a ***multi-country contribution to TDAG on ITU-D/WTDC Thematic Priorities***, provides a multi-country position (France, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Romania, Spain, the United Kingdom, Czech Republic, Bulgaria), which supports the approach of having four thematic priorities, but expresses concern that any attempt to limit the work of a thematic priority to a list of topics will inevitably capture a partial picture of the potential topics and exclude other important work areas. The contribution does not support the addition of cybersecurity as a fifth thematic priority, stressing that there are opportunities for work on cybersecurity topics under the proposed four thematic priorities.

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| This proposal will be discussed and considered by TDAG-WG-RDTP. |

[Document 36](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-TDAG28-C-0036/en), a ***proposal on WTDC-21 Draft Declaration*** from theEuropean Conference of Postal and Telecommunications Administrations(CEPT)suggeststo add the following points to the section that leads with “We commit”:

* co-creating a secure and standard-based whole-of-society approach to designing and implementing generic digital public goods, which will simplify the costs, time, and resources needed for building human-centred digital government solutions. By simplifying the technology needed to build a digital society, countries can create digital solutions that empower individuals and businesses while improving social well-being.
* tackling environmental and climate change issues, notably the impact of telecommunication/ICT on the environment, as the ICT sector itself has a role to play in contributing to the attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals, in collaboration with users and regulators.

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| This proposal will be discussed and considered by TDAG-WG-RDTP. |

[Document DT/3](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-TDAG28-210524-TD-0003/en), an ***Inter-American Contribution on Thematic Priorities****,* contains a proposal that aims to establish guiding principles to help allocate topics for each thematic priority that will be approved at WTDC. The ultimate goal is to rationalize and guide the work of ITU-D by making it more focused, allowing better coordination of efforts and synergies.

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| This proposal will be discussed and considered by TDAG-WG-RDTP. |

* 1. **Matters Related to the ITU-D component of the ITU Strategic Plan and Report on the work of the TDAG-WG-SOP**

The African Telecommunications Union (ATU), presented its contributions in [Document 28](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-TDAG28-C-0028/en): ***African common proposal on African common position on the proposed deletion of provision 1.8.2 of WTDC Resolution 1*** and [Document 34](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-TDAG28-C-0034/en), calling for a ***discussion on the future of TDAG Working Group on Strategic and Operational Plans***.

The ATU contribution expressed the African common position that the role of reviewing the ITU-D contribution to the overall ITU strategic plan is entrusted with WTDC in section 1.8.2 of Resolution 1 (Rev. Buenos Aires, 2017). Both contributions from ATU called on TDAG to revisit the recommendation it endorsed in November 2020 from TDAG-WG-SOP to transfer the role of reviewing the ITU-D contribution to the overall ITU strategic plan from WTDC to TDAG. During the meeting the spokesperson for the position added that a majority of ITU membership in the African region participate in and attend the WTDC more than in the TDAG, where travel requirements and connectivity challenges thwart full involvement.

Some Member States, mainly from the Arab region (Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Kuwait) agreed with the ATU position calling for no change to provision 1.8.2. Other Member States (Mexico, Canada, Spain, United States, Brazil, Romania) expressed support for the proposed transfer and for the modifications required to the relevant provisions of Resolution 1 (provision 1.8.2) and Resolution 24 of WTDC to make this transfer possible.

The Russian Federation cautioned that modifications to Resolution 1 are not under the authority of TDAG as defined in WTDC Resolution 24 and should be deferred to WTDC.

The General Secretariat recalled that the Council is required to endorse a draft new strategic plan for 2024-2027 and transmit it to the Plenipotentiary Conference for consideration and adoption by ITU members at least four months before the conference opens. The next Plenipotentiary is planned to be held in Bucharest from 26 September to 14 October 2022, at the kind invitation of the Government of Romania. As WTDC (is now planned for) June 2022, and will occur after Council-22 (scheduled for 22 March – 1 April 2022), it would not be possible for WTDC to approve the draft endorsed by the Council.

Members then sought advice from the ITU Legal Affairs Unit which noted that WTDC Resolution 1 provides for WTDC input to the ITU-D component of the strategic plan, and stated that there is no legal requirement for WTDC to give input to the ITU-D component of the strategic plan, and that WTDC would not be in breach of its legal obligations pursuant to the Constitution if it did not do so. Kuwait then cited Article 16, provision 211 of the Constitution, which mandates WTDC to “...fix the objectives and strategies for the balanced worldwide and regional development of telecommunications...” as the legal basis for WTDC to give input to the ITU-D component of the strategic plan. The Legal Affairs representative offered advice that this provision does not mandate WTDC to review and submit input to the ITU-D component of the strategic plan.

ATU then proposed the following three options:

* postpone the 2022 Plenipotentiary Conference to allow time for WTDC inputs from June 2022 to be incorporated into the draft ITU strategic plan;
* request the Council to shift the timeline for the Council Working Group on the strategic and financial plans so that it concludes the drafting of the strategic plan after WTDC; or
* pursue consensus to modify Article 62-A.

Several Member States from the Arab region supported these options, but other countries mainly from Europe and the Americas voiced opposition. As the proposals would have to be implemented by the Council, the TDAG Chairman requested that ATU reconsider the points and provide options that could be pursued under TDAG's authority. She also stressed the importance of having the input of membership from all regions in decisions on the ITU-D contribution to the ITU strategic plan as TDAG and ITU-D continued to grapple with ways to accommodate the unusual situation presented. She also noted the broad timeline over the next year in which the Council would table for the Plenipotentiary a draft of the ITU strategic plan in May 2022, WTDC would likely occur in June 2022, and membership would have until August 2022 to make contributions to the Plenipotentiary on all matters, including the ITU strategic plan.

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| TDAG respectfully noted the position of ATU and the Africa region presented in Documents 28 and 34 on the ITU-D contribution to the ITU strategic plan and agreed to their request, made during this meeting, to place on record the following statement: “African Member States share the view that WTDC is the right venue to deliberate on, and approve, the draft ITU-D contribution to the strategic plan of the Union, for the various reasons expressed during this TDAG-21 meeting. In view of the current exceptional circumstances, African Member States recommend that the current process of TDAG-WG-SOP will continue to proceed forward. At the same time, provision 1.8.2 of Resolution 1 and Resolution 24 of WTDC will be kept unchanged. The processes as set in these resolutions will be honoured to ensure that in normal circumstances, WTDC still has the opportunity to receive proposals and entertain discussions on the strategic plan. The ITU-D advisory group (i.e. TDAG) will be able to discuss and send its final input to the Council Working Group on the strategic and financial plans which will be created at the next Council session for further development. Moreover, African Member States want to make sure that all their members’ views and positions are recorded in the minutes of this meeting. Any other options related to the discussed issue, can be envisioned and further elaborated in other appropriate ITU venues, such as the ITU Council. This statement is only confined to this current circumstance that we are witnessing and should not be taken in any way as a precedent.”TDAG agreed that TDAG-WG-SOP would continue to meet, including by correspondence, would collect and reflect the aspirations and views of the D Sector membership on the strategic plan, and report to TDAG in November 2021.  |

[Document 22](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-TDAG28-C-0022/en) contains a report on the activities of the TDAG-WG-SOP since its creation in June 2020, and provides recommendations to TDAG on future work.

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| The Chairman of TDAG-WG-SOP, Ms Blanca Gonzalez (Spain), presented recommendations from the report of her group. In particular, she highlighted the recommendation that TDAG endorse the thematic priorities proposed by the TDAG-WG-RDTP so that they could be used as ITU-D objectives for the next ITU strategic plan (Connectivity, Digital Transformation, Enabling Environment, and Resource Mobilization and International Cooperation). TDAG agreed that the TDAG-WG-SOP would review the draft of the ITU strategic plan at its meeting in October 2021 which would follow the Council Working Group's first public consultation in September 2021. TDAG commended the Chairman for the work accomplished so far by her group. TDAG also agreed to entrust TDAG-WG-SOP with preparing the Addis Ababa Action Plan and requested the BDTsecretariat to provide a skeleton draft for consideration by the group, and subsequent expansion at WTDC. The TDAG-WG-SOP Chairman committed to delivering on this expanded mandate with her two vice-chairmen Christopher Kemei (Kenya) and Wim Rullens (Netherlands).  |

* 1. **Report of the Regional Preparatory Meetings Coordination Meeting (RPM-CM)**

In line with Resolution 31 (Rev. Hyderabad, 2010), the RPM Coordination Meeting took place in preparation for WTDC. [Document 5](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-TDAG28-C-0005/en) presents the report by the Chairman of the RPM-CM, His Excellency Mr Petr Ocko, Deputy Minister for Industry and Trade of the Czech Republic. The report is a consolidation of the outputs of all RPMs and describes all the issues on which the RPMs reached a conclusion. Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, all RPMs were held virtually. Information on the six RPMs is listed below.

| **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) |

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| TDAG noted the report and the presentation by His Excellency Ocko with interest and appreciation. |

* 1. **Report of IRM-1**

[Document 3](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-TDAG28-C-0003/en) provides a ***report of the first Interregional Meeting (IRM) to prepare for WTDC***, which took place virtually on 11 March 2021, chaired by His Excellency Dr Ahmedin Mohammed, State Minister, Ministry of Innovation and Technology, Ethiopia and Chairman Designate of the forthcoming WTDC.

During this meeting Ethiopia presented detailed plans it had developed for four possible scenarios for holding WTDC which included the advantages and disadvantages for each: Scenario 1, hold the conference as initially planned; Scenario 2, hold a hybrid event; Scenario 3, hold a fully virtual event. Scenario 4, postpone the conference to a later date. Nearly all Member States who commented expressed their preference for a physical, face-to-face meeting. A number expressed support for scenario 1 (if possible) or scenario 4. The BDT secretariat agreed to continue working with the Ethiopian administration and with other key stakeholders (such as the United Nations offices in Africa) to reach a decision on a way forward to be taken by the Council in June 2021.

All six regional telecommunication organizations (RTOs) presented an update on preparations within their respective regions, including common regional proposals and streamlining resolutions.

The two Regional Preparatory Meetings (RPMs) that had already taken place: the RPM for Europe and the RPM for Asia and the Pacific presented their outcomes. TDAG-WG-RDTP and TDAG-WG-SOP presented their progress reports.

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| TDAG noted the report with interest and appreciation. |

1. **Report on Study Group activities**
	1. **ITU-D Study Group 1 activities for the seventh study period**

The Chairman of Study Group 1 presented her report in [Document 8](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-TDAG28-C-0008/en) summarizing the activities carried out by the group in the seventh study period (2018-2021). Her vision for the study group, known as the 3I’s - *Interaction, Innovation and Implementation* – which guided her leadership is highlighted in the report.

The introduction in Section 1 provides participation statistics and contributions received (nearly 500) during the study period.

Section 2 provides a summary of the meetings held during the study period, including those that were fully virtual, and the joint SG1 and SG2 meeting. Information on workshops and webinars held by each Question was also provided.

Section 3 offers a summary of the key results achieved by each rapporteur group, including approval of their output reports, and the publication of annual deliverable(s)where applicable.

Section 4 highlights collaboration with other groups and information on BDT project synergies, the inter-Sectoral mapping activity, Resolution 9-related work, the ITU Coordination Committee for Terminology, and EGH/EGTI.

Section 5 provides results of the survey on the work of ITU-D study groups: key points for consideration by membership in preparing for WTDC, notably points to consider on the future of the Questions and working methods.

Section 6 outlines her vision for the study group: Interaction, Innovation and Implementation, and the status of actions taken based on this vision.

Section 7 presents the conclusion, noting that Study Group 1 has successfully carried out its mandate.

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| TDAG noted with appreciation the report of the Chairman of Study Group 1 and congratulated her for the excellent work and for the achievements of the study group during the study period.Proposed revisions to Questions will be discussed further at the meeting of Study Group 1 in October 2021. |

* 1. **ITU-D Study Group 2 activities for the seventh study period**

The Chairman of Study Group 2 presented his report in [Document 9](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-TDAG28-C-0009/en) summarizing the activities carried out by his group in the seventh study period (2018-2021).

The introduction in Section 1 recalls the seven Questions and management teams, participation statistics and contributions received (543) during the study period.

Section 2 provides a summary of the meetings held during the study period, which concluded with the approval of all final deliverables.

Section 3 summarizes the main achievements by each rapporteur group, including approval of their output reports, publication of annual deliverable(s), where applicable and the associated workshops and webinars organized.

Section 4 highlights the collaboration with other groups, providing a summary of the main topics undertaken in that regard both inside and outside of ITU.

Section 5 contains the results of the survey on the work of ITU-D study groups and provides some of the key points on these issues for membership to consider in preparing for the upcoming WTDC.

Section 6 provides the conclusion, and states that Study Group 2 has successfully carried out its mandate.

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| TDAG noted with appreciation the report of the Chairman of Study Group 2 and congratulated him for the excellent work and for the achievements of the study group during the study period.Proposed revisions to Questions will be discussed further at the meeting of Study Group 2 in October 2021. |

1. **Collaboration with the other Sectors**

[Document 13](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-TDAG28-C-0013/en), a ***progress report of the Inter-Sector Coordination Group (ISCG) on issues of mutual interest***, highlights the conclusions from the group’s last meeting, held virtually, on 12 March 2021.

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| TDAG noted with appreciation the report of the Chairman of the Inter-Sector Coordination Group (ISCG) on issues of mutual interest and congratulated him for his excellent work as chairman of the group.TDAG noted a suggestion for the group to next work on conformance and interoperability, given that this is a cross-cutting topic with implications for many fields. |

1. **Membership, Partnership, Private Sector-related matters**
	1. **ITU-D Partnership and Resource Mobilization**

[Document 7](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-TDAG28-C-0007/en) reports on the results achieved in 2020 and the first quarter of 2021, providing an analysis of the composition of BDT funding partners, beneficiary regions and beneficiary thematic areas. It summarizes key actions carried out by BDT and their outcomes: strengthening resource mobilization and partnership building with the development of a robust, forward-looking resource mobilization strategy and plan; enhancing staff expertise in resource mobilization with the delivery of a dedicated training; enhancing research tools; and raising visibility with the creation of a new common webpage for partnerships and ITU-D members.

The document concludes with the commitment that BDT will continue its efforts to consolidate existing partnerships and attract new and diverse partners that bring more resources to finance large scale and impactful projects to ensure all WTDC programmes and regional initiatives can be successfully implemented.

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| TDAG noted the document with appreciation and underlined the importance of partnership and resource mobilization to implement WTDC outcomes. TDAG reiterated its support for the Director’s reform process aimed at achieving a “Fit4Purpose” BDT that is able to identify and leverage new opportunities, build new partnerships, and more effectively engage with its traditional and long-standing partners. |

* 1. **ITU-D Sector Members, Associates and Academia**

[Document 12](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-TDAG28-C-0012/en) provides an overview of the evolution of ITU-D membership and its related objectives, strategies, and actions to strengthen the ITU-D membership in accordance with the outcomes of WTDC-17 and the 2018 Plenipotentiary Conference.

In 2020, ITU-D attracted ***10 new Sector Members***: African Network Information Centre Ltd (Mauritius), American Registry for Internet Numbers (United States), Bitsight Technologies (United States), International Mobile Satellite Organization (United Kingdom), KAMALEON (Mozambique), Polyverse Corporation (United States), SBA Communications (United States), Welchman Keen (Singapore), Wireless World Research Forum (Switzerland), Registro de Direcciones de Internet para América Latina y Caribe (Uruguay). ITU-D also attracted ***4 new Associates***: Almaahad Almutagadem Specialized Computer Training Center (Sudan), Just-ICT Dubai (United Arab Emirates), OISTE Foundation (Switzerland), Promotion de la Technologie (Democratic Republic of the Congo).

In the first quarter of 2021, ITU-D attracted ***4 new Sector Members***: Axon Partners Group (Spain), Deloitte Risk Advisory (Italy), New Jersey Fiber Exchange (United States), and Security Alliance Limited (United Kingdom). In addition, ***5 new Sector Members*** are finalizing the affiliation process to become full members in the second quarter of 2021.

Academia participate in the work of all three ITU Sectors with one single fee. For 2020, through efforts coordinated with the General Secretariat, ***26 new Academia*** joined the three Sectors of ITU.

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| TDAG noted the report and commended the secretariat for the fine efforts made and the initiatives being implemented to build more value for its membership. The Chairman of the Industry Advisory Group for Development Issues and the Private Sector Chief Regulatory Officers (IAGDI-CRO) established under Resolution 71 (Rev. Buenos Aires, 2017) of WTDC, emphasized the importance of industry and private-sector engagement in the work of ITU-D and highlighted the many existing platforms and initiatives in which these stakeholders should participate to ensure that their needs and priorities are heard and reflected in the ITU-D development agenda and in the overall ITU multi-stakeholder work. This view was echoed by the two IAGDI-CRO vice-chairmen in encouraging all industry representatives to engage actively in these vital conversations in the run-up to and at WTDC itself, and thus make a collective and meaningful impact. TDAG, recognizing the great work being done in this area, also highlighted the importance of linking study group work to membership participation. |

1. **Report by the Chairman of the Group on Capacity Building Initiatives (GCBI)**

The Group on Capacity Building Initiatives (GCBI) advises the Director of BDT on matters related to human capacity building. The Chairman of GCBI presented [Document 14](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-TDAG28-C-0014/en) highlighting the conclusions reached at the group’s meeting in June 2020, where most of the discussions focused on COVID-19 implications on capacity development.

The COVID-19 pandemic has exposed the digital gap between countries in both the availability of digital infrastructure, and the skills required to use that infrastructure for learning purposes. Strategies need to be developed to address these gaps, and training and capacity development will be a crucial part of those strategies.

GCBI members expressed appreciation for the launch of the Digital Transformation Centres initiative and acknowledged the role this could play in strengthening digital skills, supporting digital inclusion, and bringing marginalized and underserved populations into the digital economy.

They also noted the huge increase in the demand for and use of online platforms for remote learning over the COVID-19 period, and the need to develop skills to conduct remote teaching and learning. The group encouraged the Centres of Excellence to use the ITU Academy and/or other online learning platforms more routinely, especially to avoid disruptions to training such as those regrettably caused by COVID-19. In this regard, they also urged ITU to convert existing ITU Academy content into online training materials. The report also indicated that the shift to online or distance learning and skills development should not be seen as an emergency response only. Rather, training providers such as CoEs should seize the opportunity to develop greater resilience, and to encourage cross-regional collaboration among training providers.

Finally, noting the impending study on the assessment of ITU capacity development activities and feasibility to establish an ITU training institute, GCBI suggested that it would be prudent to base any plans for its future work on the outcome of that study. The group welcomed the invitation by the BDT Director to provide input to the study, noting that it was looking forward to this opportunity.

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| TDAG noted the report, expressed appreciation to GCBI and highlighted the importance of digital capacity and skills development in the work of BDT. TDAG recognized the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on training and learning, including the growing shift towards online learning, and the need to address the digital skills requirements of youth and marginalized groups, through programmes such as the Digital Transformation Centre Initiative. |

1. **Contribution to the work of the Expert Group on the International Telecommunication Regulations (EG-ITR)**

[Document 6](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-TDAG28-C-0006/en) presents the main outputs from the third and fourth meetings of EG-ITR, organized on 17-18 September 2020 and on 3-4 February 2021. Of particular note is the message from the EG-ITR Chairman addressed to the Directors of the Bureaux calling on them to seek advice from their respective Sector advisory groups to contribute to the work of EG-ITR, whose next meeting will be held in September 2021.

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| TDAG noted the progress report from the Expert Group on the International Telecommunication Regulations (EG-ITR) and requested that its appreciation be conveyed to the group, with the Chairman of TDAG informing participants that any inputs to the work of EG-ITR could be channelled through the BDT secretariat. |

1. **Update on ITU Regional Presence Review**

BDT continues to advance its vision of a stronger and more relevant regional presence to better serve members on the ground. These efforts are going on in parallel with the formal regional presence review under the ITU Council in accordance with its Decision 616. [Document 20](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-TDAG28-C-0020/en) provides a status report on the work being carried out under this review.

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| TDAG welcomed the report with appreciation. |

1. **Updates to measures and principles for interpretation and translation in ITU**

Measures and principles for interpretation and translation in ITU are updated by the Sectors through their Sector advisory groups and by the General Secretariat. They are then reviewed by the Council Working Group on Languages and, subsequently, approved by the Council. The measures and principles currently in force were adopted by the Council in May 2014 and need to be revised to reflect new developments. [[Document INF/4](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-TDAG28-210524-TD-0005/en)](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-TDAG28-INF-0004/) containing some updates was submitted to TDAG for information, pending additional details currently under study. TDAG will be invited to consider the updated measures at its meeting in November 2021.

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| TDAG noted the information document on measures and principles for interpretation and translation in ITU, underscored the importance of this topic, and stressed the need to harmonize these measures across the Union. TDAG, appreciative of the explanation from the secretariat regarding requests for interpretation for non-statutory meetings, decided to consider including this issue in Resolution 1, which can only be done at WTDC.  |

1. **Harmonization of ITU websites**

The General Secretariat presented [Document 25](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-TDAG28-C-0025/en) on the new One ITU website project and the next steps concerning the ITU-D website. The ITU secretariat is seeking an investment of CHF 2 million to deploy a secure, mobile-first website with a consistent structure and a “One ITU” look and feel. The work on a new website began in December 2018. Extensive research and trials have thus far culminated in website prototype iterations 1 and 2. The prototype includes the harmonized homepages of [ITU-R](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-R/Pages/default.aspx), [ITU-T](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-T/Pages/default.aspx) and [ITU-D](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Pages/default.aspx) (links lead to the current landing pages).

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| TDAG welcomed the presentation on the One ITU website project and the next steps concerning the ITU-D website. The project aims to support content in the six languages of the Union on an equal footing. TDAG called for all issues being faced by delegates on the current website to be taken on board by the project team and to be resolved. |

1. **Calendar of ITU-D events**

[Document 15](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-TDAG28-C-0015/en) and [Document DT/6(Rev.2)](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-TDAG28-210524-TD-0006/en), presented calendars for ITU-D events in 2021 and 2022, with the latter including dates for the remaining WTDC-21 preparatory process. These documents were presented together for review and approval.

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| TDAG noted the calendar for 2021 and 2022 with appreciation and approved the proposed calendar for the remainder of the preparatory process. |

1. **Any other business**

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| The BDT secretariat presented a live demonstration of its two new information dashboards developed to support results-based management in BDT: (1) The BDT Reporting Dashboard, which monitors how operational planning resources are being used, facilitates collaboration between teams, and helps identify opportunities to repurpose resources throughout the year; and (2) the BDT Project Assessment Dashboard, which identifies the implementation status of projects using criteria such as the percentage of activities completed, key performance indicators (KPIs) and disbursement of funds. The tool allows for projects with a risk of delay to be a quickly identified and remedied. The presentation was followed by interventions from several Member States, who expressed appreciation for the new tools and encouraged the secretariat to make them available to the rest of ITU, as well as to ITU delegates, for better transparency on the use of ITU resources. |

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