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| Logo  Description automatically generated | **Telecommunication Development Advisory Group (TDAG)**  **28th Meeting, Virtual, 24-28 May 2021** | | A close up of a sign  Description automatically generated |
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|  | | **Document** **TDAG-2****1/DT/7-E** | |
|  | | **28 May 2021** | |
|  | | **Original: English** | |
| Chairman, Telecommunication Development Advisory Group (TDAG) | | | |
| Draft summary of conclusions | | | |
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Summary of Conclusions – TDAG-21 Meeting (Virtual, 24-28 May 2021)

| **AGENDA ITEM** | **DOC. #** | **Document title** | **MAIN CONCLUSION**: |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **1. Address by the Secretary-General** | -- |  |  |
| **2. Address by the Director of BDT** | -- |  |  |
| **3.Address by other Elected Officials** | -- |  |  |
| **4. Opening remarks by the Chairman of TDAG** | *DT/4* |  |  |
| **5. Adoption of the agenda and Time Management Plan** | *1* | Draft agenda | The agenda and time management plan were adopted without change. |
|  | *DT/1* | Draft Time Management Plan |
| **6. ITU-D four-year rolling Operational Plan 2022-2025** | *4* | ITU-D four-year rolling Operational Plan 2022-2025 | TDAG thanked the General Secretariat for an excellent document. Kuwait and the Russian Federation sought to know why the document had not been translated into Arabic and Russian, 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 the six languages of the Union. Canada sought clarification on the relationship between this document, the draft four-year rolling operational plan for 2022-2025 and the work that will be undertaken by the Council Working Group on the draft strategic and financial plans.  The General Secretariat responded that the operational plan is based on the current structure of the strategic plan for 2020-2023 and the future work of the group will be will be based on a new structure when developing the ITU plans for the 2024-2027 strategi plan.  TDAG then endorsed the ITU-D four-year rolling Operational Plan for 2022-2025. |
| **7. 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)** | *2* | Report on the implementation of the BaAP (including RIs), and contribution to the implementation of the WSIS Plan of Action and the SDGs | TDAG underlined the importance of the report in Document 2, which is structured around the current 10 thematic priorities, and noted the ongoing discussions to reduce that number for the next four-year period.  TDAG noted the document, welcomed the youth initiatives as refreshing, and highlighted the importance of investing in youth and including them in the work of ITU. |
|  | *23* | Reporting on the Youth Strategy implementation |  |
| **8.ITU-D projects** | *11* | ITU-D Projects | TDAG noted the document with appreciation and expressed support for the ongoing work aimed at strengthening ITU project management practices. The following four Member States made comments and raised questions: Japan requested additional information on the process followed to identify new projects and suggested that more project case studies should be undertaken and shared with ITU study groups. Japan also asked how the targets for resource mobilization are reached. Kuwait congratulated ITU for the training of staff in project management leading to certification and sought to know how this would directly benefit countries. The Islamic Republic of Iran and India expressed their support for the work conducted by BDT and for the measures undertaken to strengthen project management practices.  Responding to these 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) driven by the 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. |
| ***9. Preparations for WTDC-21*** | *16* | Preparations for the World Telecommunication Development Conference 2021 | TDAG noted with appreciation the document providing an outline of the WTDC preparations. However, there were some inconsistencies and it was agreed that the document would be updated to reflect the latest developments in the WTDC preparatory process. In particular, the mention of the second interregional meeting that had been planned for May 2021, but did not take place, should be deleted. Information regarding the reports of the regional preparatory meetings, held in April 2021, should be updated so that members refer to the correct versions in their preparations for WTDC. |
|  | *18* | Update on the preparations for the Youth Summit | TDAG noted Document 18 and there were no questions or comments. |
|  | *19* | Preparations for the WTDC-21 Partner2Connect for Digital Development Segment | 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 programme from day two to day four. |
| **9.1 WTDC preparations and contingency plans for the work of ITU-D in the case of postponement of WTDC-21** | *10* | Continuity plans for the work of ITU-D in case of postponement of WTDC-21 to June 2022 | TDAG noted with appreciation this comprehensive document highlighting the decisions that need to be taken to ensure business continuity in ITU-D in the event that WTDC-21 is postponed.  TDAG agreed that study groups continue their work, that additional interregional meetings be held, and that TDAG-WG-RDTP continue its work and report to a future meeting of TDAG towards the end of the year. The proposed dates were presented in Document TDAG-21/DT/6(Rev.1) and treated under agenda item 19.  TDAG approved the revised study group Questions to be studied until WTDC, at which time WTDC can revise Resolution 2 in a manner it deems appropriate.  TDAG considered and endorsed a revised Document 10 (Rev.1), which now has a table indicating the links where the revised texts for study group Questions may be found, including the four Questions that have been reformatted to fit into the template, as indicated in Article 20 of Resolution 1.  These Questions are only an interim measure until WTDC, allowing the work of the study groups to continue.  New or revised Questions for the next study period will be approved at WTDC.  For the remaining Question that has not been revised, the work will continue using the current terms of reference (approved by WTDC-2017). |
|  | *28* | African common proposal on African common position on the proposed revision of provision 1.8.2 of WTDC Resolution 1 | Documents 28 and Document 34 were considered together.  TDAG considered the African Common proposal in Document 28 calling for no change to provision 1.8.2 of WTDC Resolution 1 and the proposal in Document 34 from the African Telecommunications Union (ATU) on the future of the TDAG Working Group on Strategic and Operational Plans (TDAG-WG-SOP), presented by Côte d’Ivoire. Both proposals requested that TDAG revisit the recommendations it endorsed in November 2020 from TDAG-WG-SOP that WTDC should not review the ITU-D component of the strategic plan but should instead delegate this function to TDAG (requiring modifications to Resolutions 1 and 24 of WTDC). ATU is recommending against these changes, requesting to use time at WTDC to generate ITU-D input to the strategic plan. Several Member States from the Arab region (Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Kuwait) also agreed with this ATU request. Primary concerns were: 1) WTDC has higher representation of members than TDAG or Council Working Groups; and 2) questions on legality of WTDC not discussing and providing input to objectives and strategies of the Sector.  Other Member States (Mexico, Canada, Spain, United States, Brazil, Romania) expressed support for modifications to Resolutions 1 and 24 of WTDC.  The Russian Federation indicated that these modifications are not under the authority of TDAG and should be deferred to WTDC.  The General Secretariat explained that the Council is required to submit the strategic plan four months prior to the Plenipotentiary Conference (which would be May 2022), therefore timewise WTDC in June 2022 would not be able to submit contributions to CWG-FSP. Furthermore, the other two Sectors do not follow this process, and it was only introduced to ITU-D in the last two cycles.  Legal advice from the ITU Legal Affairs Unit indicated there is no legal requirement for WTDC to give input to the ITU-D component of the strategic plan. Therefore, WTDC would not be in breach of its legal obligations as per the Constitution (only WTDC Resolution 1 obliges input to the ITU-D component of the strategic plan). Article 16 of the Constitution (cited by Kuwait as the legal requirement for WTDC to give input to the ITU-D component of the strategic plan) in provision 211 mandates WTDC to “...fix the objectives and strategies for the balanced worldwide and regional development of telecommunications...”. However, this 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:   1. postpone the 2022 Plenipotentiary Conference to allow time for WTDC inputs from June 2022 to be incorporated into the draft ITU strategic plan; 2. the Council could shift the timeline for the Council Working Group so that it concludes the drafting of the strategic plan after WTDC; or 3. pursue consensus to modify Article 62-A.   The proposal was supported by several members from the Arab States region, but opposed by many countries from Europe and the Americas. As these proposals cannot be implemented under TDAG's authority, ATU was requested to rethink their position and provide proposals that can be pursued under TDAG's authority.  [The conclusion on this matter is awaited on Friday]  xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx  TDAG decided:   1. to extend the work of TDAG-WG-SOP through October 2021 to review the draft Strategy; and 2. to adopt the recommendation put forward by TDAG-WG-SOP to use the four thematic priorities proposed by TDAG-WG-RDTP as ITU-D objectives for the next four-year period, namely. |
|  | *34* | Discussion on the future of TDAG Working Group on Strategic and Operational Plans |
| **=** | *30* | Proposals for the continuation of the ITU-D Study Groups work in case of possible postponement of the WTDC-21" | TDAG noted with appreciation the proposal put forward in this document and considered it within the scope of **Document 10 (now Rev. 1 section 2,** which lays out the plan for continuity of ITU-D study group work.  TDAG considered the revised Questions proposed in Documents 8, 9, 31 and 32. There were comments 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 by immediately during the meeting. The conclusion on this matter is summarized under Document 10 (now Rev.1) above |
|  | *31* | 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" | TDAG commended members of the management team of Question 4/1 and contributors for their efforts and hard work in producing an updated terms of reference (ToR). The conclusion on this matter is summarized under Document 10 (now Rev.1) above |
|  | *32* | 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" | TDAG also commended members of the management team of Question 7/1 and contributors for their efforts and hard work in producing an updated terms of reference (ToR). The conclusion on this matter is summarized under Document 10 (now Rev.1) above  y. |
|  | *33* | Views on ITU-D Study Group activities given likely WTDC-21 postponement | TDAG noted with appreciation the proposal put forward in this document and considered within the scope **of Document 10 (now Rev. 1) section 2,** which lays out the plan for continuity of ITU-D study group work.  The conclusion on this matter is summarized under Document 10 (now Rev 1) above |
|  | *37* | Proposal for continuation of the work of study Groups in view of the proposed postponement of WTDC before WTDC | TDAG noted with appreciation the proposal put forward in this document and considered it within the scope of **Document 10 section 2,** which lays out the plan for continuity of ITU-D study group work.  The conclusion on this matter is summarized under Document 10 (now Rev 1) above |
| **9.2. Structure of WTDC-21** | *17* | Draft structure of the World Telecommunication Development Conference 2021 | 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. |
| **10. Report on preparatory process for WTDC-21** |  |  | TDAG and the Director of BDT thanked Dr Mohammed Ahmedin 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 itself. And all are excited to stage a conference that delivers outcomes that are meaningful, achievable and impactful. |
| **10.1. Report on the work of the TDAG-WG-RDTP** | *21* | Chairman's report on the work of the TDAG Working Group on WTDC Resolutions, Declaration and Thematic Priorities | TDAG noted with appreciation the report of the Chairman of the TDAG Working Group on WTDC Resolutions, Declaration and Thematic Priorities (TDAG-WG-RDTP) and commended him for the tremendous work done by the group to facilitate the work of the conference. TDAG decided to extend the timeline for TDAG-WG-RDTP to complete its work.  TDAG further decided that the following documents would be considered by TDAG-WG-RDTP: Documents 24, 26, 27, 29, 35 36 and DT/3*.* |
|  | *24* | Draft Addis Ababa Declaration | To be considered by TDAG-WG-RDTP. |
|  | *26* | African common proposal on ITU-D Thematic priorities | To be considered by TDAG-WG-RDTP. |
|  | *27* | African common proposal on ITU-D Thematic priorities | To be considered by TDAG-WG-RDTP. |
|  | *29* | African common proposal on modifications to Resolution 1 | To be considered by TDAG-WG-RDTP. |
|  | *35* | Multi country contribution to TDAG on ITU-D/WTDC Thematic Priorities | To be considered by TDAG-WG-RDTP. |
|  | *36* | Proposal on WTDC-21 Draft Declaration | To be considered by TDAG-WG-RDTP. |
|  | *DT/3* | Inter-American Contribution (IAC) on Thematic Priorities | To be considered by TDAG-WG-RDTP. |
| **10.22 Report on the work of the TDAG-WG-SOP** | *22* | Report on the work of the TDAG-WG-SOP | The Chairman of TDAG-WG-SOP presented recommendations from the report of her group and proposed a meeting in the first half of October 2021 to review the draft of the ITU Strategy after the Council Working Group's first public consultation in September 2021. TDAG commended the Chairman for the work accomplished so far by her group.  The Russian Federation proposed that TDAG-WG-SOP should be entrusted with the preparation of the Addis Ababa Action Plan. TDAG agreed with this proposal and tasked the secretariat to provide a skeleton draft of the Addis Ababa Action Plan for consideration by TDAG-WG-SOP, and subsequent expansion at WTDC. The TDAG-WG-SOP terms of reference will be updated accordingly.  [A final decision on any modification to the TDAG-WG-SOP mandate is expected Friday. -] |
| **10.3. Report of the Regional Preparatory Meetings Coordination Meeting (RPM-CM)** | *5* | Report of the Chairman of the RPM Coordination Meeting to TDAG | TDAG noted the document with appreciation. |
| **10.4. Report of IRM-1** | *3* | Report of the first and second Inter-Regional Meetings (IRMs) to prepare for WTDC-21 | TDAG noted the document with appreciation. |
| **11. Report on Study Group activities** | *8* | ITU-D Study Group 1 activities for the seventh study period | 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.  TDAG considered the request to adopt proposed revised Questions in accordance with Resolution 1 (Rev. Buenos Aires, 2017) of WTDC under Agenda Item 9.1. TDAG adopted the revised Questions, based on which Study Group 1 will continue to work until WTDC, as explained in **Document 10 (now Rev. 1)** . |
|  | *9* | ITU-D Study Group 2 activities for the seventh study period | 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.  TDAG considered a request to adopt proposed revised Questions in accordance with  Resolution 1 (Rev. Buenos Aires, 2017) of WTDC under Agenda Item 9.1. TDAG adopted the revised Questions, based on which Study Group 2 will continue to work until WTDC, as explained in **Document 10 (now Rev. 1)** |
| **12. Collaboration with the other Sectors** | *13* | Progress report of the Inter-Sector Coordination Group (ISCG) on issues of mutual interest | 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 proposed that the group next work on conformance and interoperability, given that this is a cross-cutting topic with implications for many fields. |
| **13. Membership, Partnership, Private Sector-related matters** | *7* | ITU-D Partnership and Resource Mobilization | TDAG noted the document with appreciation and underlined the importance of partnership and resource mobilization in the implementation of WTDC programmes. TDAG reiterated its support for the Director’s reform process aimed at achieving a “Fit4Purpose” BDT that is able to quickly identify and leverage new opportunities, build new partnerships, and more effectively engage with BDT traditional long-standing partners. |
|  | *12* | ITU-D Sector Members, Associates and Academia | TDAG noted the report and commended the secretariat for the 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 ITU multistakeholder work going forward. 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 meaningful impact. The meeting, recognizing the great work being done in this area, also highlighted the importance of linking study group work to membership participation. |
| **14. Report by the Chairman of the Group on Capacity Building Initiatives (GCBI)** | *14* | Report on the work of the Group on Capacity Building Initiatives (GCBI) to TDAG | 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. |
| **15. Contribution to the work of the Expert Group on the International Telecommunication Regulations (EG-ITR)** | *6* | Expert Group on the International Telecommunication Regulations (EG-ITRS): progress report to TDAG | TDAG noted the progress report on the work of the Expert Group on the International Telecommunication Regulations (EG-ITR), with the Chairman of TDAG informing participants that any inputs to the work of EG-ITR could be channelled through the BDT secretariat. |
| **16. Update on ITU Regional Presence Review** | *20* | Report on Review of ITU Regional Presence | TDAG welcomed the report with appreciation. |
| **17. Measures and Principles for interpretation and translation in ITU** |  | -- | TDAG noted the information document on measures and principles for interpretation and translation in ITU and stressed the importance to harmonize these measures across the Union. TDAG agreed that the rule on the requests for interpretation for non-statutory meetings should be included and clarified in Resolution 1 of WTDC rather than in a footnote in a Council document. -- |
| **18. Harmonization of ITU websites** | *25* | New OneITU website | 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. |
| **19. Calendar of ITU-D events** | *15* | Calendar of ITU-D events | This agenda item covered document 15, containing the calendar of events for 2021-2022, as well as Document DT/6(Rev.1), which presented a proposed calendar for the remainder of the preparatory process for WTDC-21.  TDAG noted the calendar for 2021 and 2022 with appreciation. TDAG then examined the proposed calendar for the remainder of the preparatory process and approved it. |
| **20. Any other business** |  | **Demo on ITU-D projects dashboard** | BDT Secretariat presented the new information dashboards developed to support Results Based Management in BDT. The presentation included a live demo of two the new dashboards developed by BDT: (1) The BDT Reporting Dashboard, developed to monitor the use of operational planning resources and facilitate collaboration between teams, as well as the identification of opportunities for repurposing resources throughout the year; and (2) the BDT Project Assessment Dashboard, a tool to identify the implementation status of projects using criteria like % of achievement of activities, KPIs and disbursement of funds. The tool allows for a quick identification of projects with a risk of delay and facilitate decision making to undertake corrective actions when necessary.  The presentation was followed by interventions from ATDI, Russian Federation and Canada, 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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