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|  | **Telecommunication Development** **Advisory Group (TDAG)**  **29th Meeting, Virtual, 8-12 November 2021** | | A close up of a sign  Description automatically generated |
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|  | | **Document TDAG-21/2/34-E** | |
|  | | **7 February 2022** | |
|  | | **Original:** **English** | |
| Chairman, Telecommunication Development Advisory Group (TDAG) | | | |
| Report of the 29th TDAG Meeting | | | |
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**Introduction and highlights**

The 29th meeting of the Telecommunication Development Advisory Group (TDAG-21/2) was conducted virtually from 8 to 12 November 2021, under the chairmanship of Ms Roxanne McElvane Webber (**United States**). The meeting attracted **313** participants, including **144 female** participants and **169** **male** participants. Of those, **248** were delegates representing **77** Member States, **42** participants from **30** ITU-D Sector Members, **2** participants from Academia, **4** participants from Regional Telecommunication Organizations (RTOs) and **14** guests. TDAG Vice-Chairmen Mr Nicolás Karavaski (**Argentina**), Mr Neil Checo Valera (**Dominican Republic**), Mr Al-ansari Almashakbeh (**Jordan**), Mr Christopher Kemei (**Kenya**), Mr Abdulkarim Oloyede (**Nigeria**), Mr Arseny Plossky (**Russian Federation**), 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 Reza Sharafat (**Islamic Republic of Iran**), Chairman of Study Group 2. TDAG-21/2 participants considered **44** written contributions (including temporary documents), of which **10** were submitted by membership.

1. **Address by the Secretary-General**

**Mr Houlin Zhao, ITU Secretary-General**, opened the 29th meeting of TDAG and stressed that connecting the billions of people who remain unconnected is one the most pressing challenges of our times, and the work of TDAG – and, importantly, the World Telecommunication Development Conference (WTDC) – in shaping the global digital development agenda is critical.

Mr Zhao reiterated ITU’s commitment in the preparations for a successful WTDC. He informed the meeting that, in light of the introduction of a six-month State of Emergency by the Government of Ethiopia, the United Nations had issued a decision severely restricting travel for UN staff to Ethiopia and on holding UN activities in the country until further notice. He reported that ITU security services were closely monitoring the United Nations Department of Safety and Security deliberations on this issue. Mr Zhao recognized the excellent collaboration with the host country to arrange for the conference and the efforts to mitigate the current situation. He indicated that the Secretariat was ready to begin developing possible alternate arrangements while continuing to engage with Ethiopia, in order to ensure viable options for WTDC. He further stated that the Secretariat would aim to communicate a clear and confirmed position to membership no later than 6 December 2021.

Mr Zhao indicated that 2022 would be a significant year for ITU, with three major conferences – the World Telecommunication Standardization Assembly (WTSA), WTDC and the Plenipotentiary Conference (PP). He conveyed that this is a golden opportunity to make use of the spotlight that has been shone on connectivity, connect the dots between the important work of each of the conferences, and truly revitalize the global connectivity agenda.

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

**Ms Doreen Bogdan-Martin, Director of the ITU Telecommunication Development Bureau (BDT),** highlighted the importance of breaking through the challenges of the digital divide – one of the grand canyons highlighted by the UN Secretary-General in his Common Agenda. Digital solutions, she said, offer one of the greatest opportunities of our generation to address great social divide and build a UN 2.0. Today, there is strong global consensus on the role of digital in global development.

Reminding members that this is the last TDAG of the current cycle, Ms Bogdan-Martin highlighted major milestones and achievements of the work of the Bureau, and especially the efforts towards building a fit-for-purpose BDT that have been mobilized despite the COVID-19 pandemic. She reiterated that the upcoming WTDC might be the most important development conference ever held, and will require effective coordination, broad collaboration and strong commitment from both the ITU-D membership and the BDT Secretariat.

1. **Address by other Elected Officials**

**Mr Mario Maniewicz, Director of the ITU Radiocommunication Bureau (BR)**, reminded participants that COVID has shown that connectivity is key for all people to have access to the digital world and ITU Bureaux shall continue to leverage synergies across the board towards connecting the unconnected. The Radiocommunication Bureau and the Development Bureau have been working together to support ITU Member States in the area of spectrum management through concrete projects and initiatives such as PRIDA, REG4COVID and the Economic Experts Roundtables. As the ITU Secretariat Lead on supporting the Council Working Group on Strategic and Financial Plans (CWG-SFP) and the development of the draft ITU Strategic Plan for 2024‑2027, Mr Maniewicz expressed his anticipation for receiving the ITU‑D contribution to the new strategic plan as well as Member States’ recommendations for the draft operational plan in developing an overarching plan for the Union towards shaping a more united and fit‑for‑purpose organization.

**Mr Chaesub Lee, Director of the ITU Telecommunication Standardization Bureau (TSB)**, highlighted that the Telecommunication Standardization Sector (ITU-T) and ITU-D align towards a shared mission to make sure everyone everywhere can benefit from ICTs and digital technologies. He noted that COVID has highlighted the importance of a trusted environment for economic and social development as well as the value and benefits of collaboration within ITU. Mr Lee emphasized that the upcoming high-level decision-making conferences are key opportunities to demonstrate leadership in international cooperation, especially in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic.

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. Ms McElvane Webber expressed the support of TDAG for the innovation occurring and the work of BDT more broadly, despite the pandemic and the challenges it posed. She stressed the importance of the upcoming WTDC and urged members to work together to make the conference a success. She also expressed her hope that consensus could be reached on several outputs of TDAG-21/2 which could advance WTDC preparations by serving as base documents in the Conference preparatory process, specifically, the draft WTDC Declaration, the new BDT Thematic Priorities, revisions to the Study Group Questions, and the draft WTDC Action Plan, among others. Membership, she noted could of course continue to refine such outputs and bring new proposals to the table in the lead up to and at WTDC.

**H.E. Mr Zenebe Kebede Korcho, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Ethiopia to the United Nations Office and other international organizations in Geneva,** was invited to address the meeting to provide an update on the situation in Addis Ababa and the state of host-country preparations for WTDC. He confirmed that the capital was still the center of UN operations and stressed Ethiopia’s confidence in its ability to host the conference. He noted that the host country team in Addis would continue to work together with the ITU Secretariat on WTDC preparations and ITU membership will be provided an update on the situation in due course.

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

The meeting agenda and time management plan are contained respectively in [Document 1(Rev.2)](https://www.itu.int/md/meetingdoc.asp?lang=en&parent=D18-TDAG29-C-0001) and [Document DT/1(Rev.9)](https://www.itu.int/md/meetingdoc.asp?lang=en&parent=D18-TDAG29-211108-TD-0001).

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| TDAG adopted the Draft Agenda and the Draft Time Management Plan. |

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/meetingdoc.asp?lang=en&parent=D18-TDAG29-C-0002)

This report, an update to the one presented at TDAG-21, described actions taken to implement the Buenos Aires Action Plan (BaAP) and how these efforts in turn contributed to both the WSIS Plan of Action and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The document recounts the progress and achievements made in the Thematic Priorities, the ITU-D study groups, new strategic initiatives, and the Regional Initiatives between 2018 and September 2021. The document also highlights key links between BDT/ITU’s work and international development plans. Annex 1 displays links between thematic priorities, study groups, ITU Resolutions, BDT projects, BDT regional initiatives, SDGs and WSIS Action Lines, and the ITU Connect 2030 Agenda.

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| TDAG noted the document and thanked BDT for all the efforts to implement the BaAP. Further updates on the ongoing work and outcomes will be made available in the lead up to WTDC. |

**Document** [**19**](https://www.itu.int/md/meetingdoc.asp?lang=en&parent=D18-TDAG29-C-0019)

The ITU Youth Strategy was presented and adopted by ITU Members at TDAG-20 (2-5 June 2020). Its aim is to improve and have real impact on the lives of young people around the world and to ensure meaningful participation of youth in ITU as key stakeholders in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The three pillars of the Strategy are: Empower, Engage and Participate. It seeks to support a fit-for-purpose ITU and to reduce the youth digital divide.

This document, which was initially submitted to TDAG-21 in May 2021, has been updated with activities and events carried out towards the implementation of the Strategy since then, including at GSR-21, Road to Addis, Emerging Technologies Week, ECOSOC Youth Forum, WSIS Forum, Kofi Annan Change Makers Week, Youth Lead Innovation Festival, UNIDO LKDF Forum 2021, among others.

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| TDAG noted the document with interest and appreciation. BDT indicated that it would continue to implement the ITU Youth Strategy and will provide further updates in due course. |

1. **Preparations for WTDC**
   1. **Update on the preparations for WTDC, including COVID-19 mitigation and contingency measures**

**Document** [12](https://www.itu.int/md/meetingdoc.asp?lang=en&parent=D18-TDAG29-C-0012)

Prepared by the Secretariat, the report described the preparations for the upcoming WTDC through the end of October 2021. **Document** [**DT/8**](https://www.itu.int/md/meetingdoc.asp?lang=en&parent=D18-TDAG29-211108-TD-0008)

Submitted by Ethiopia, the report covered the host-country preparations for the upcoming WTDC through the end of October 2021.

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| Due to the evolving situation in the host country, Document 12 and DT/8 were tabled. As the Secretary General noted in his opening remarks, the ITU Secretariat would provide further information by 6 December 2021. |

* 1. **Draft agenda for WTDC**

**Document** [**13(Rev.1)**](https://www.itu.int/md/meetingdoc.asp?lang=en&parent=D18-TDAG29-C-0013)

The draft agenda for the upcoming WTDC is currently composed of three main segments: a Report on the implementation of the BaAP, the ITU-D work plan for 2022-2025, and the Partner to Connect Digital Coalition (P2C) (non-statutory). Despite the fact that current conference dates are shorter than in previous editions (an inadvertent occurrence that is expected to be corrected), P2C events will not impose any parallel sessions of plenaries or committees during the Conference.

On the request of the delegate from Kuwait, the Deputy Director of BDT clarified that the policy statements by high-level participants at WTDC will occur as part of the P2C event within the format of interactive round tables (see also 7.4 below).

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| TDAG endorsed the proposed agenda. It will be submitted to the ITU Council for approval by correspondence, and then to all ITU Member States, also by correspondence. |

* 1. **Youth Summit**

**Document** [**14**](https://www.itu.int/md/meetingdoc.asp?lang=en&parent=D18-TDAG29-C-0014)

The BDT provided an update on the organization of the “Generation Connect Global Youth Summit” which will immediately precede the WTDC. The Summit will offer opportunities for young people to participate in the conference, make their voices heard, engage with ITU members, and contribute to ITU’s work. It will focus on building a strong engagement of youth to prepare for the Conference, bringing the voices of young people into the WTDC discussions, sessions, and activities. Preparations for the Youth Summit are underway and coordinated by the ITU Youth Task Force and the Generation Connect Youth Summit co-design team, including efforts such as the Emerging Technologies Week and the newly launched Generation Connect podcast.

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| TDAG noted the report and commended BDT on the initiative and for promoting participation by youth and women in ITU events, and in WTDC, in particular. Updates on the organization of the Summit will be provided in due course. |

* 1. **Partner2Connect**

**Document:** [**15**](https://www.itu.int/md/meetingdoc.asp?lang=en&parent=D18-TDAG29-C-0015)

The ITU Partner2Connect Digital Development Roundtable scheduled to take place at the upcoming WTDC will offer ITU-D Members and other stakeholders an opportunity to engage in high-level discussions on the challenges and opportunities related to digital development. A dedicated side event on the P2C Digital Coalition was also held on the margins of TDAG-21/2 to provide more information on the rationale and objectives of the new initiative.

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| TDAG noted the document with appreciation. More information on the Partner2Connect initiative will be provided as the initiative gains momentum. |

1. **Preparatory process for WTDC**
   1. **Report on the work of the TDAG-WG-RDTP**

**Document** [**17(Rev.1)**](https://www.itu.int/md/meetingdoc.asp?lang=en&parent=D18-TDAG29-C-0017)

The final report of the TDAG Working Group on WTDC Resolutions, Declaration and Thematic Priorities (TDAG-WG-RDTP), presented by its Chairman, Dr Ahmad Sharafat, comprehensively described the work undertaken, the outcomes produced and the seven meetings held to advance the work. The report highlights the main outputs of the group: the draft WTDC Declaration, the draft alternative sets of ITU-D Thematic Priorities which also guided discussions on the BDT action and strategic plans, and significant discussions on Resolutions 1 and 2. While there was insufficient time for the group to complete its review of the extensive changes proposed to Resolution 1, the exchanges, reflections, and review will support and benefit membership proposals in this regard. The discussions held on Resolution 2 contributed to the ToR’s and other outcomes presented to TDAG by ITU-D Study Groups 1 and 2 on these issues (respectively, Documents [DT/4(Rev.1)](https://www.itu.int/md/meetingdoc.asp?lang=en&parent=D18-TDAG29-211108-TD-0004) and [DT/5](https://www.itu.int/md/meetingdoc.asp?lang=en&parent=D18-TDAG29-211108-TD-0005)).

Various delegations took the floor to express their appreciation for the substantial and important work completed under the leadership of Dr Sharafat, the broad consultative process undertaken and the substantive outcomes, which will serve as a basis for further discussion and refinement of Member States’ and regional proposals in the lead up to WTDC.

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| TDAG noted the report with appreciation and commended Dr Sharafat, Chairman of TDAG-WG-RDTP, for his exceptional commitment and for the significant amount of work achieved for ITU-D and its membership. |

**WTDC Declaration**

**Document** [**32**](https://www.itu.int/md/meetingdoc.asp?lang=en&parent=D18-TDAG29-C-0032)

The Chairman of TDAG-WG-RDTP prepared and presented the working draft of the WTDC Declaration which incorporated membership views expressed since the 5th meeting of TDAG-WG-RDTP held on 9 April 2021. It was originally contained in document TDAG-WG-RDTP/52. The proposed draft shows the broad agreement on the format, structure and issues addressed that had been reached by TDAG-WG-RDTP. This document can serve as a basis for contributions by membership to revise and refine further in the lead up to WTDC.

The proposal from Intel to replace references to “broadband” with “high-speed broadband” throughout the draft proposal generated a fair amount of debate. While the importance of high-quality broadband access was underscored by all delegates who took the floor, the majority was of the opinion that such a modification to the language was not required at the current stage.

The proposal of the Russian Federation to reflect in the draft Declaration the mandate of the three ITU Sectors (and in particular spectrum management) was also extensively discussed; however, no consensus was reached on the issue and no further modifications were made to the proposed text.

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| TDAG noted the output and thanked the Chairman of TDAG-WG-RDTP and all participants in the group for their substantial and fruitful efforts which had continued over 18 months and had produced a very good draft Declaration for ITU membership. |

**Document** [**22**](https://www.itu.int/md/meetingdoc.asp?lang=en&parent=D18-TDAG29-C-0022)

This contribution contains the common proposal by 13 APT countries to lend full support to the draft WTDC Declaration as submitted by the Chairman of TDAG-WG-RDTP (contained in Document 32).

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| TDAG noted Document 22 and thanked APT for sharing their views in the contribution, which supported the draft Declaration expressed in Document 32 with no changes. |

**Document** [**28**](https://www.itu.int/md/meetingdoc.asp?lang=en&parent=D18-TDAG29-C-0028)

This contribution contains a common proposal from 11 European countries (Bulgaria, Czech Republic, France, Germany, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, United Kingdom)on the WTDC Declaration developed by the TDAG-WG-RDTP.

The proposal supports the general approach taken by the TDAG-WG-RDTP Chairman in the working draft of the WTDC Declaration while suggesting further topics for inclusion, such as the need to develop simple and human-centred solutions, sustainable development, and leaving no one behind as a policy imperative.

Three concrete proposals for further revision were presented during the discussion:

* Algeria suggested replacing the reference to “green digital solutions” with “environment-friendly digital solutions” (in paragraph 2);
* Saudi Arabia suggested replacing “whole-of-society approach” to “well-coordinated approach” (in paragraph b);
* The United States suggested that with regard to ICTs and the environment, the text should focus on solutions to climate change as opposed to simply the impact of ICTs on climate change (in paragraph b).

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| TDAG discussed revisions to the draft Declaration proposed by several CEPT countries in Document 28 along with additional text proposed by Algeria, Saudi Arabia and the United States from the floor, as above. TDAG agreed to include the revisions proffered by CEPT countries (except those in item d), the United States and Algeria. The revised proposal for the draft TDAG output on the WTDC Declaration is contained in Document DT/11.  TDAG agreed that **Document** [**DT/11**](https://www.itu.int/md/meetingdoc.asp?lang=en&parent=D18-TDAG29-211108-TD-0011) may serve as the basis for further proposals and refinement by ITU membership in preparation for the WTDC, where it will be finalized. |

**WTDC Resolution 1**

**Document** [**25**](https://www.itu.int/md/meetingdoc.asp?lang=en&parent=D18-TDAG29-C-0025)

This contribution from the Russian Federation contains the draft proposals for revision of Resolution 1. TDAG-WG-RDTP reviewed Sections 1 through 3 of the initial proposal for revision of Resolution 1 from the Russian Federation at its meeting in June 2021; however, the review was not completed due to the lack of time and the extensive nature of the proposed changes. Some of the issues that the proposal aims to tackle are the active engagement and contribution of ITU-D Study Group Rapporteurs and Vice-Rapporteurs, and the provisions for remote collaboration, reflecting the experience of the past cycle of ITU-D Study Groups as well as the experience of the other ITU Sectors.

The draft proposal would also suppress relevant provisions of WTDC Resolutions 61, 81 and 86 in order to streamline and merge those Resolutions with those of PP (e.g., use of the six official languages on an equal footing, terminology). The contribution reflects discussions and input received from CEPT and RCC.

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| TDAG thanked the Russian Federation for their efforts and noted the document, which may be considered by Member States in preparing their proposals to revise Resolution 1 in the lead up to WTDC. |

**Streamlining Resolutions**

**Document** [**27**](https://www.itu.int/md/meetingdoc.asp?lang=en&parent=D18-TDAG29-C-0027)

This document is a contribution from the Russian Federation proposing to determine at the upcoming WTDC the list of WTDC Resolutions that could be streamlined or supressed at WTDC-22, if the necessary provisions are introduced into the corresponding PP Resolutions at PP-22.

There was a general support to continue the work on streamlining resolutions within and across all ITU Sectors.

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| TDAG noted the document and observed that it provides useful food for thought as Member States proceed further with their individual country proposals and within regional preparations for the upcoming WTDC and beyond. TDAG thanked the Russian Federation for sharing its views in the contribution. |

**Thematic Priorities**

**Document** [**31**](https://www.itu.int/md/meetingdoc.asp?lang=en&parent=D18-TDAG29-C-0031)

The Chairman of TDAG-WG-RDTP, Dr Ahmad Sharafat, presented a revised version of the proposed ITU-D Thematic Priorities (WTDC) consistent with discussions held at the 6th meeting of TDAG-WG-RDTP on 30 June 2021, as contained in document TDAG-WG-RDTP/53(Rev.1). As reported, the proposed Thematic Priorities are: 1) Connectivity (which includes elements of cybersecurity), 2) Digital transformation, 3) Enabling environment, and 4) Resource mobilization and international cooperation. The Thematic Priorities were shared with the TDAG-WG-SOP to help guide how the Objectives in the ITU‑D Action Plan could be framed, with the proposed supporting components becoming “Outcomes” in the new draft Action Plan. The Thematic Priorities were also relevant to and were included in the ITU-D contribution to the ITU Strategic Plan.

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| TDAG noted Document 21 and thanked the Chairman of TDAG-WG-RDTP and all participants in the group for their substantial efforts and contributions to the outcomes of the group. |

**Document** [**21**](https://www.itu.int/md/meetingdoc.asp?lang=en&parent=D18-TDAG29-C-0021)

The APT Preparatory Group for WTDC-21 led by Dr Sharafat proposed to retain the set of four Thematic Priorities for ITU-D. This proposal lends the full support of APT to the draft proposal by the TDAG-WG-RDTP Chairman with no changes.

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| TDAG noted the views presented and thanked APT for sharing their views in the contribution. |

**Document** [**26**](https://www.itu.int/md/meetingdoc.asp?lang=en&parent=D18-TDAG29-C-0026)

To the draft proposal by the TDAG-WG-RDTP Chairman for a set of four Thematic Priorities, this contribution from the Russian Federation proposes an additional Thematic Priority titled “Building confidence, trust and security in the use of ICTs” for a set of five priorites that would be included in the draft WTDC Action Plan. The proposal was supported by countries in the CIS region, the African region and by the Arab Group.

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| TDAG noted the views presented and thanked the Russian Federation for sharing their views in the contribution. |

**Document** [**29**](https://www.itu.int/md/meetingdoc.asp?lang=en&parent=D18-TDAG29-C-0029)

This multi-country contribution on the Thematic Priorities developed by TDAG-WG-RDTP was submitted by 11 European countries members of CEPT (Bulgaria, Czech Republic, France, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Spain, Sweden, United Kingdom), and was agreed during the Europe region WTDC preparations.

The contribution supports the set of four Thematic Priorities: 1) Connectivity; 2) Digital transformation; 3) Enabling environment, and 4) Resource mobilization and international cooperation, and acknowledges the importance of cybersecurity in ITU-D’s work, as part of the proposed Thematic Priority 1 (Connectivity). It further notes that key cybersecurity issues could be addressed in the outcomes and outputs of the WTDC Action Plan, and could form a strong foundation from which to work towards consensus in the lead up to and at WTDC.

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| TDAG noted the views presented and thanked the 11 CEPT countries for sharing their views in the contribution. |

**Document** [**DT/3**](https://www.itu.int/md/meetingdoc.asp?lang=en&parent=D18-TDAG29-211108-TD-0003)

This contribution presents CITEL views on the working draft of the Thematic Priorities following the last meeting of TDAG-WG-RDTP. This Inter-American contribution addresses the bracketed sections, adding emphasis to future BDT work in support of broadband adoption and affordability, and refines the language for the supporting components to better capture the work of BDT and to focus on the needs of developing and least-developed countries. The contribution confirms support for the four Thematic Priorities as identified in the the working draft by the TDAG-WG-RDTP Chairman ([Document 31](https://www.itu.int/md/meetingdoc.asp?lang=en&parent=D18-TDAG29-C-0031)): 1) Connectivity (which includes cybersecurity elements), 2) Digital transformation, 3) Enabling environment and 4) Resource mobilization and international cooperation.

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| TDAG noted the views presented and thanked CITEL for sharing their views in the contribution. |

**Document** [**DT/12(Rev.1)**](https://www.itu.int/md/meetingdoc.asp?lang=en&parent=D18-TDAG29-211108-TD-0012)

Submitted by the TDAG Chairman and based on the extensive discussions that took place during Agenda item 8.1 (Preparations for WTDC), this document contains a compilation of the proposals and views to revise the ITU-D Thematic Priorities. Specifically, the contribution was based on the Proposal for ITU-D Thematic Priorities submitted by the TDAG-WG-RDTP Chairman (Document 31) and incorporates suggested revisions by APT, CEPT, RCC and CITEL (Documents 21, 26, 29 and DT/3) as well as relevant text from the report of TDAG-WG-SOP, which, among other things, reflected the views of ATU (Document [TDAG-WG-SOP/14](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-TDAG27.SOP-C-0014/en)).

In sum, three regions supported a set of four Thematic Priorities: (1) Connectivity, 2) Digital Transformation, 3) Enabling Environment and Resource Mobilization and 4) International Cooperation), and three regions expressed support for a set of five Thematic Priorities: (1) Connectivity, 2) Digital Transformation, 3) Enabling Environment, 4) Resource Mobilization and International Cooperation and 5) Building Confidence, Trust and Security in the Use of ICTs). CEPT, APT and CITEL supported the former and RCC, ATU and the Arab States supported the latter. Those members that supported the set of four Thematic Priorities would include cybersecurity issues within Thematic Priority 1 on connectivity.

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| TDAG agreed that the document as modified during the TDAG-21/2 Closing Plenary could serve as the basis for further proposals by membership and the work of regional telecommunication organizations in preparation for WTDC. |

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

**Document** [**18**](https://www.itu.int/md/meetingdoc.asp?lang=en&parent=D18-TDAG29-C-0018)

This contribution from the Chairman of TDAG-WG-SOP, TDAG Vice Chair Ms. Blanca Gonzales summarized the work of the TDAG Working Group on the Strategic and Operational Plans (TDAG-WG-SOP) from July 2020 through October 2021. During this period, the group developed a draft WTDC Action Plan as well as other recommendations relevant to the ITU-D contribution to the ITU strategic plan. The draft WTDC Action Plan presented by the group is based on the outcomes of the discussions in TDAG-WG-RDTP which defined new ITU-D Thematic Priorities, taking a modular approach to accommodate two alternative sets of TPs (the sets of four and of five TPs). The proposal also outlines Objectives, Outcomes and Outputs many of which had been agreed by participants in the TDAG-WG-SOP by consensus.

In the context of continued disagreement over whether TDAG should recommend four or five Thematic Priorities, the Chairman of TDAG-WG-SOP demonstrated how the seven ATU-proposed Objectives and their Outcomes integrate well with both sets (four or five) of Thematic Priorities.

Following extensive discussions on the proposal for a draft WTDC Action Plan, an offline drafting group led by the Chairman of the TDAG-WG-SOP collected, compiled, and analyzed input for the draft WTDC Action Plan and for the ITU-D contribution to the ITU Strategic Plan. This output of TDAG will be available for the Council Working Group on Strategic and Financial Plans (CWG-SFP), which had been coordinating closely with TDAG-WG-SOP and TDAG. The revised proposal for the draft TDAG output on the WTDC Action Plan is contained in Document DT/13.

With regards to Outcomes and Outputs, further work will be required to reach agreement on language remaining in square brackets. Some of the main issues to be further clarified are the references to “digital economy” as opposed to “telecommunications/ICTs” as well as aligning the terminology referring to developing countries (including LDCs, LLDCs and economies in transition).

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| Acknowledging that TDAG-WG-SOP was tasked with coordinating the TDAG input to the ITU Strategic Plan and with preparing a draft of the WTDC Action Plan, TDAG noted the report, expressing appreciation for the work conducted and outcomes achieved by the TDAG-WG-SOP Chairman, the Vice Chairmen, and all participants in the group.  TDAG agreed that the Outcomes and Outputs listed in the document, as revised during the TDAG-21/2 and contained in **Document** [**DT/13**](https://www.itu.int/md/meetingdoc.asp?lang=en&parent=D18-TDAG29-211108-TD-0013), may serve as the basis for further proposals for revision and refinement by ITU Member States and their delegations in preparation for WTDC. The areas highlighted in red signify areas that lack consensus and will remain in square brackets to identify them as such for all negotiations and discussions in the lead up to WTDC.  The revised Outcomes and Outputs will be available to the Council Working Group on Strategic and Financial Plans (CWG-SFP) which has committed to reflect the substance appropriately in the new ITU Strategic Plan. Following the first draft of the new ITU Strategic Plan which will be available in December 2021 for the January 2022 meetings of CWG-SFP, BDT indicated that it could provide an updated draft WTDC Action Plan with necessary adjustments to align with the framework of the Strategic Plan. |

**Document** [**DT/6**](https://www.itu.int/md/meetingdoc.asp?lang=en&parent=D18-TDAG29-211108-TD-0006)

This document contains the first draft of the WTDC Action Plan, aiming to outline how the document could look if it follows the framework crafted in TDAG-WG-SOP. The proposal follows a simplified and more focused format, with increased use of infographics. This draft is superseded by the revised version developed during TDAG-21/2 and contained in **Document** [**DT/13**](https://www.itu.int/md/meetingdoc.asp?lang=en&parent=D18-TDAG29-211108-TD-0013).

The Chairman of CWG-SFP, Mr Frederic Sauvage, emphasized how the work undertaken by TDAG on Thematic Priorities had served as an inspiration to review the Strategic Goals of the Union. He also explained how the contributions of ITU-D to the Strategy process would be reflected in the new framework.

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| TDAG noted the document and supported the proposed simplified structure for the draft WTDC Action Plan, and the increased use of infographics. |

**Document** [**23**](https://www.itu.int/md/meetingdoc.asp?lang=en&parent=D18-TDAG29-C-0023)

This document from APT outlines the Asia-Pacific Vison for the ITU Development Sector, which proposes the following building blocks:

1. Focuses on reducing the telecommunications/ICT divide between developing and developed countries;
2. Supports a successful WTDC with clear outputs and goals;
3. Is results-focused; and
4. Continues to strengthen the efficient, transparent and accountable operation of the BDT.

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| TDAG noted the views presented with appreciation and thanked APT for their contribution. |

* 1. **Report to WTDC on TDAG activities (as per Resolution 24 (Rev. Dubai (2014)))**

**Document** [**16**](https://www.itu.int/md/meetingdoc.asp?lang=en&parent=D18-TDAG29-C-0016)

This report contains a detailed summary of the work carried out by the Telecommunication Development Advisory Group (TDAG) during the period 2018-2021, including meetings, matters assigned to TDAG by WTDC Resolution 24 (Rev. Dubai, 2014), and inter-Sector coordination and collaboration, with the exception of the report on TDAG-21/2, the outcomes of which will be added in due course, and following comment from membership on the final report of the complete period will be submitted to the WTDC.

Following the discussion on the report and a clarification provided by the Secretariat, TDAG agreed that the chart in the report summarizing the gender of all TDAG meeting participants would identify those who did not select either Mr/Ms during their user account creation under a category titled “not provided.”

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| TDAG noted the report. The TDAG Chairman recognized the outstanding support and commitment of the BDT Director, the TDAG Vice-Chairmen, the BDT Secretariat, and all participants.  TDAG agreed that the draft report will be updated as requested by the meeting participants to reflect the discussions and decisions of TDAG-21/2. Membership will have the opportunity to comment by correspondence within two weeks after its posting. At the end of this period, the report will be considered as endorsed and will be submitted as input to WTDC. |

1. **Study Group activities**

**Document** [**5**](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-TDAG29-C-0005/en)**(Rev.3)**

This report is an update to [TDAG-21/8](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-TDAG28-C-0008/en) on the activities carried out by Study Group 1 for the seventh study period which was extended as a result of the postponement of WTDC to June 2022. The report provides useful detail on the outcomes, annual deliverables, participation and contribution statistics, and collaboration between SG1 and SG2 Questions and with other Sectors.

As per TDAG decision taken at its 28th meeting, an additional set of Study Group 1 meetings were held in October 2021, principally to refine the terms of reference (ToRs) of study Questions. Decisions on the submitted revised ToRs can be found in document [DT/4](https://www.itu.int/md/meetingdoc.asp?lang=en&parent=D18-TDAG29-211108-TD-0004).

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| TDAG noted the report with appreciation and recognized the important and comprehensive work accomplished by ITU-D membership, supported by BDT staff and Focal Points and led by the ITU-D Study Group 1 Chair Ms Regina Fleur Assoumou Bessou with professionalism, fairness and tenacity. |

**Document [6](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-TDAG29-C-0006)(Rev.1)**

This report is an update to the last meeting report to TDAG (Revision 1 to Document [TDAG-21/9](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-TDAG28-C-0009)) on the activities carried out by Study Group 2 for the seventh study period which was extended as a result of the postponement of WTDC to June 2022. The report provides useful detail on the outcomes, annual deliverables, participation and contribution statistics, and collaboration between SG1 and SG2 Questions and with other Sectors.

As per the TDAG decision made at its 28th meeting, an additional set of Study Group 2 meetings were held in October 2021, principally with the aim of reaching consensus on the revised ToRs for study Questions. Decisions on the submitted revised ToRs can be found in the relevant section of the report for Document [DT/5](https://www.itu.int/md/meetingdoc.asp?lang=en&parent=D18-TDAG29-211108-TD-0005).

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| TDAG noted the report with appreciation and recognized the important and comprehensive work accomplished by ITU-D membership, supported by the BDT staff and Focal Points and led by the ITU-D Study Group 2 Chair, Dr Ahmad Reza Sharafat with professionalism, fairness and tenacity. |

**Document** [**DT/4(Rev.1)**](https://www.itu.int/md/meetingdoc.asp?lang=en&parent=D18-TDAG29-211108-TD-0004) **and DT/5**

As per the TDAG decision made at its 28thmeeting, an additional set of Study Group 1 meetings were held from 11 to 15 October 2021 principally to refine the ToRs of revised study Questions which were submitted to inform TDAG of the views of the study groups, and which were included as part of the contingency proposals in Document [TDAG-21/10](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-TDAG28-C-0010/en) (Item 2).

During the October meetings, the Study Group reached consensus on the revised ToRs for the seven Study Group 1 Questions. The agreed ToRs are contained in this document. The revision marks indicate changes between the approved ToRs at WTDC-17 and the revised ToRs agreed at the SG1 meetings held in October 2021.

The draft proposed ToRs for SG1 Study Questions generated extensive debate. Many delegations were of the opinion that the work to revise Resolution 2 and refining the ToRs should continue in the lead up to and at WTDC based on the current draft proposal, which can be used as a starting point for negotiation between Member States.

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| TDAG noted that the revised Terms of Reference (ToR) for the Study Group 1 Questions were agreed by Study Group 1 at their October 2021 Plenary meetings.  Recognizing that all study Questions will be finalized at WTDC, and in accordance with Article 19 of WTDC Resolution 1 (Rev. Buenos Aires, 2017), TDAG recommended that the revisions to the ToRs could be used as base text for further membership proposals on study Questions in the lead up to and at WTDC.  TDAG also agreed that if the upcoming WTDC is significantly postponed such that it does not take place before the 2022 Plenipotentiary Conference, the revised ToRs would be considered to be adopted by TDAG and would be circulated by BDT for membership approval in accordance with Article 20 of WTDC Resolution 1 (Rev. Buenos Aires, 2017). |

**Document** [**DT/5**](https://www.itu.int/md/meetingdoc.asp?lang=en&parent=D18-TDAG29-211108-TD-0005)

As per TDAG decision taken at its 28th meeting, an additional set of Study Group 2 meetings were held from 18 to 22 October 2021, principally to refine the terms of reference (ToRs) of Questions which were submitted as part of the contingency proposals in Document [TDAG-21/10](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-TDAG28-C-0010/en) (Item 2).

During the last Study Group meetings, consensus was reached on the revised ToRs for the seven Study Group 2 Questions. The agreed ToRs are contained in this document. The revision marks indicate changes between the approved ToRs at WTDC-17 and the revised ToRs agreed at the SG2 meetings held in October 2021.

The draft proposed ToRs for SG1 study Questions generated extensive debate. Many delegations were of the opinion that the work on revising Resolution 2 and refining the ToRs should continue in the lead up to and at WTDC based on the current draft proposal, which can be used as a starting point for negotiation between Member States.

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| TDAG noted that the revised Terms of Reference (ToR) of Study Group 2 Questions were agreed by Study Group 2 at their October 2021 Plenary meetings.  Recognizing that all study Questions will be finalized at WTDC, and in accordance with Article 19 of WTDC Resolution 1 (Rev. Buenos Aires, 2017), TDAG recommended that the revisions to the ToRs would be used as base text for further membership proposals on study Questions in the lead up to and at WTDC.  TDAG also agreed that if the upcoming WTDC is significantly postponed such that it does not take place before the 2022 Plenipotentiary Conference, the revised ToRs would be considered as adopted by TDAG and would be circulated by BDT for membership approval in accordance with Article 20 of WTDC Resolution 1 (Rev. Buenos Aires, 2017). |

**Document** [**30**](https://www.itu.int/md/meetingdoc.asp?lang=en&parent=D18-TDAG29-C-0030)

Through this contribution, the United States proposed a new study Question titled “Strategies to Increase the Adoption of Broadband Technologies and Services and Improve Digital Skills, Particularly for Vulnerable Populations” to be adopted at the upcoming WTDC for the study period 2022-2025.

In the discussion on the proposed new Study Group Question, a number of delegations acknowledged the importance of the topic. The proposal was supported by Canada, Indonesia and Sector Member Intel and discussion ensued, without conclusion, on whether it would be more optimal to have broadband adoption and digital skills addressed in a stand-alone Question or integrated into one or more existing Questions.

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| TDAG noted the proposal in Document 30 and thanked the United States for sharing its views in the contribution. |

1. **Collaboration with the other Sectors**

**Document** [**9**](https://www.itu.int/md/meetingdoc.asp?lang=en&parent=D18-TDAG29-C-0009)

This document presents a progress report of the Inter-Sector Coordination Group (ISCG) on issues of mutual interest, highlighting the conclusions from its last meeting, held virtually on 1 September 2021. During the last TSAG meeting, ISCG was requested to appoint coordinators from the membership for each of the two themes being addressed by the Group (Climate change and Accessibility). The coordinators will be appointed at the next ISCG meeting in February 2022.

The Secretariat provided additional information in response to questions raised by the membership regarding the existing coordination between the Inter-Sectoral Coordination Task Force (ISC-TF), an internal secretariat task force, and ISCG. Members also discussed the possibility of piloting automatic translation for ITU-D documents in view of advancing accessibility in virtual meetings for persons with specific needs. The membership was also invited to provide input on the revision of PP Resolution 191 to CWG-SFP.

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| TDAG noted the report with appreciation and thanked the ISCG Chair, Dr Fabio Bigi, for his excellent leadership. |

1. **Membership, Partnership, Private Sector-related matters**

**Document** [**4**](https://www.itu.int/md/meetingdoc.asp?lang=en&parent=D18-TDAG29-C-0004)

This report takes stock of partnerships and resource mobilization activities undertaken between 1 April and 30 September 2021 and presents concrete proposals for future activities. The document builds on the report presented at the 28th meeting of TDAG in May 2021 and describes key actions and outcomes carried out by the BDT which include enhancing outreach materials, taking steps to support the Partner2Connect Digital Coalition, and collaborating with UN organizations.

BDT will continue its efforts to consolidate existing partnerships, attract new and diverse partners, and secure more resources to finance large scale and impactful projects to successfully implement ongoing projects initiated at WTDC-17 as well as the upcoming WTDC Programmes and Regional Initiatives at the global, regional and national levels. In addition, synergies between projects, resource mobilization and partnerships will be further enhanced.

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| TDAG noted the report and expressed appreciation for the work BDT is accomplishing in gaining new partners and increased financial resources. |

**Document [8](https://www.itu.int/md/meetingdoc.asp?lang=en&parent=D18-TDAG29-C-0008)(Rev.1)**

This document provides an overview of the evolution of ITU-D Membership and the related objectives, strategies, and actions to strengthen the ITU-D Membership in accordance with the outcomes of WTDC-17 and PP-18, highlighting positive growth in membership over the past year. As of October 2021, ITU-D counted a total of 314 Sector Members compared to 295 at the end of December 2020. The number of Academia has grown from 163 to 178 over the same period. Delegates appreciated the significant work undertaken in view of growing the number of members and partners.

The Chairman of the Industry Advisory Group for Development Issues and the Private Sector Chief Regulatory Officers (IAGD-CRO) established under WTDC Resolution 71 (Rev. Buenos Aires, 2017), Mr Bocar Ba (Samena Telecommunications Council), conveyed his appreciation for the work conducted by the BDT Director and the BDT Secretariat in working closely with the private sector.

The Secretariat called upon Member States to encourage local private sector entities to join ITU-D and leverage its assets as a global platform to further foster development agendas.

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| TDAG noted the report with appreciation for the work of BDT in expanding ITU-D membership and for the recent and important initiatives involving private sector members and academia, as well as for the IAGD-CRO, its contributions, and for its Chairman. |

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

**Document** [**10**](https://www.itu.int/md/meetingdoc.asp?lang=en&parent=D18-TDAG29-C-0010)

This report provides an overview of the work undertaken by the Group on Capacity Building Initiatives (GCBI), in particular the launch of the Digital Skills Assessment Guidebook and the development of a glossary of capacity development terms. The report contains a number of recommendations, including strengthening the capacity of the ITU Centres of Excellence (CoE) to run training courses online using the ITU Academy platform, and to convert existing content into online training materials.

The report also provides an update on the feasibility study on the establishment of an ITU training institute which was submitted to the last Council meeting and to which the ITU Secretariat will be submitting its own recommendations at the next Council meeting. The Group also noted the ongoing CoE strategic review, to which consultations with various bodies, including GCBI, are still taking place.

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| TDAG noted the report with appreciation and looks forward to the outcome of the strategic review of the Centres of Excellence ahead of WTDC. TDAG also awaits the final recommendations on the Feasibility study on establishing an ITU training institute. |

1. **ITU-D projects**

**Document** [**7**](https://www.itu.int/md/meetingdoc.asp?lang=en&parent=D18-TDAG29-C-0007)

This report provides an overview of the work undertaken by BDT in project development and implementation in the six BDT regions. As of 15 September 2021, the ITU project portfolio stood at 77 ongoing projects, valued at CHF 93.9 million, with a balance of CHF 25.9 million yet to be committed. The report also presented the actions undertaken by BDT to strengthen project management practices in ITU during 2021. The document was initially presented at the last TDAG meeting and was updated with new developments since then.

Delegates expressed appreciation for the continuing work of BDT in the area of project development. They also put forward to the Secretariat the following requests for:

* Organizing information sessions on flagship projects such as PRIDA in future meetings of ITU-D Study Groups;
* Organizing information sessions to the African Group on ITU projects, in particular on issues related with the identification, funding and monitoring of ITU projects;
* Supporting regional organizations to monitor the implementation of ITU Regional Initiatives.

The delegations of Australia and Japan announced further support to ITU projects with funding for the Connect2Recover global initiative as well as other projects in the area of resilient digital infrastructure and capacity development in the Asia-Pacific region in the aftermath of the pandemic.

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| TDAG noted the report and expressed appreciation for the work of BDT to implement new and existing projects, including increased financial resources for this purpose and innovations in training and monitoring. |

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

**Document** [**3**](https://www.itu.int/md/meetingdoc.asp?lang=en&parent=D18-TDAG29-C-0003)

This report described the main outputs from the fifth meeting of the Expert Group on the International Telecommunication Regulations (EG-ITR), organized from 30 September to 1 October 2021, specifically the EG-ITR Work Plan, the diverse views expressed by Members during the meeting and proposals for next steps.

The EG-ITR initiated the revision of the draft Final Report to Council 2022 and broadly agreed on the structure of the Report. Based on the work plan, EG-ITR is expected to finalize the Final Report to Council at its 6th meeting, to be held from 19 to 20 January 2022.

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| TDAG noted the document with appreciation. |

1. **Measures and Principles for interpretation and translation in ITU**

**Document** [**20**](https://www.itu.int/md/meetingdoc.asp?lang=en&parent=D18-TDAG29-C-0020)**(Rev.1)**

This document highlights the updates needed to the measures and principles governing interpretation and translation in ITU-D as set out in Section III of [Document C14/INF/4](https://www.itu.int/md/S14-CL-INF-0004/en) of Council-14, contained in Annex 1.

The Group on the study and evaluation of translation procedures agreed, at its 10th meeting in October 2020, that there is a need to review the measures and principles currently in force in the light of developments that have occurred since 2014. This group proposed an action plan with a view to submitting revised measures and principles for interpretation and translation to the 2022 meeting of CWG-LANG.

Following the discussions on the topic, it was agreed to delete the reference to PP Resolution 165 in the sections on Regional Preparatory Meetings (RPMs) and Interregional Meetings (IRMs). With regards to the footnote on p.9 of the document, the proposed modification of the language regarding the deadline for submission of requests for interpretation was accepted while the original language was maintained for the rest of the text as there was no consensus to accept the proposed changes.

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| TDAG adopted the document with the amendment agreed during the TDAG-21/2 Closing Plenary. |

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

**Document [11](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-TDAG29-C-0011/en)**

This document presents a calendar of ITU-D events planned for the years 2022, 2023 and 2024, although only 2022 contains most events with dates. Information for 2023 and 2024 is preliminary at this early stage.

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| TDAG noted the information presented and acknowledged that further changes may be made to the draft ITU-D calendar of events, including possibly moving the Global Symposium for Regulators (GSR) to post PP-22 and the next study group meetings, now scheduled to take place immediately after PP. Delegates also asked the Secretariat to consider scheduling ITU-D events on a rotational basis to better accommodate ITU membership in different regions and time zones.  Due to the dismantling of the Varembé building starting in 2023 and the New Building project, meeting rooms at ITU Headquarters will be unavailable from 2023. TDAG noted that membership interested in hosting ITU-D events during this transition period should approach the Secretariat. |

1. **Any other business**

**Document** [**24**](https://www.itu.int/md/meetingdoc.asp?lang=en&parent=D18-TDAG29-C-0024)

This document contains a Liaison Statement received from ITU-R Working Party 5D for comment on the preliminary draft of the new edition of the Handbook on Global Trends in International Mobile Telecommunications (IMT), which provides information such as service requirements, application trends, system characteristics, spectrum, regulatory issues, guidelines for evolution and migration, and core network evolution.

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| TDAG noted the Liaison Statement, its value and relevance for the ITU-D Sector, and thanked ITU-R for the information. |

**Document** [**DT/7**](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-TDAG29-211108-TD-0007/en)

This document contains a Liaison Statement received from TSAG for information on a new TSAG *ad-hoc* group on governance and management of e-meetings. This *ad-hoc* group aims to identify an initial set of issues that will form the basis for future studies with respect to detailing the governance and management of e-meetings. The terms of reference for the group are provided in the document along with a list of the relevant reference documents.

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| TDAG noted the Liaison Statement and its relevance for the ITU-D Sector, particularly in regard to the upcoming WTDC and thanked ITU-T for the information. |

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