|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Logo, company name  Description automatically generated** | A close up of a sign  Description automatically generated**World Telecommunication Development Conference (WTDC-22)**  **Kigali, Rwanda, 6-16 June 2022** | |
|  | |  |
| PLENARY MEETING | | **Addendum 7 to Document WTDC-22/24-E** |
|  | | **2 May 2022** |
|  | | **Original: English** |
| Member States of the Inter-American Telecommunication Commission (CITEL) | | |
| Proposal to modify Resolution 58 on telecommunication/information and communication technology accessibility for persons with disabilities and persons with specific needs | | |
|  | | |
|  | | |
| **Priority area:** - Resolutions and Recommendations  **Summary:**  The CITEL Member States propose modifications to WTDC Resolution 58, in response to the guidelines on simplifying the resolutions of the Plenipotentiary Conference of 2018. A proposal is also being made to include an item on mechanisms for disseminating and promoting the rights of persons with disabilities and persons with special needs.  **Expected results:**  WTDC-22 is invited to examine and approve the proposal in this document.  **References:**  WTDC Resolution 58 | | |

**MOD** IAP/24A7/1

RESOLUTION 58 (Rev. Kigali, 2022)

Telecommunication/information and communication technology   
accessibility for persons with disabilities and persons   
with specific needs

The World Telecommunication Development Conference (Kigali, 2022),

recognizing

*a)* Resolution 175 (Rev. Dubai, 2018) of the Plenipotentiary Conference, on telecommunication/information and communication technology (ICT) accessibility for persons with disabilities and persons with specific needs;

*b)* Resolution 70 (Rev. Hammamet, 2016) of the World Telecommunication Standardization Assembly, on telecommunication/ICT accessibility for persons with disabilities and persons with specific needs;

*c)* Article 12 of the International Telecommunication Regulations, adopted by the World Conference on International Telecommunications (Dubai, 2012), which states that Member States should promote access for persons with disabilities to international telecommunication services, taking into account the relevant Recommendations of the ITU Telecommunication Standardization Sector (ITU-T);

*d)* The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities which entered into force on 3 May 2008;

*e)* the ITU Telecommunication Development Sector (ITU‑D) digital inclusion programme, which promotes telecommunication/ICT accessibility and use for the economic and social development of persons with disabilities and persons with specific needs;

*f)* the formation of the Global Initiative for Inclusive Information Communication Technologies (G3ict)[[1]](#footnote-1)1, and related activities/actions;

*g)* that the Telecommunication Development Bureau (BDT), in partnership with G3ict, has elaborated the Model ICT Accessibility Policy Report for policymakers, regulators and service providers, which is freely available and accessible online, in order to: i) facilitate development of best policies and strategies for implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD); and ii) set forth action steps for an effective policy framework;

*h)* the related issues being examined in ITU‑T and ITU‑R;

*i)* the formation by the Internet Governance Forum (IGF) of the Dynamic Coalition on Accessibility and Disability (DCAD), in which ITU‑D participates, sponsored by the Director of the Telecommunication Standardization Bureau (TSB), and the partnership between ITU‑T and DCAD for the purposes of maximizing the benefits of electronic communications and online information over the Internet for all sectors of the global community;

*j)* the related resolutions from the Global Standards Collaboration (GSC) meetings;

*k)* activities relating to the development of new standards (e.g. ISO TC 159, JTC 1 SC35, IEC TC100, ETSI TC HF and W3C WAI), and the implementation and maintenance of existing standards (e.g. ISO 9241‑171);

*l)* Resolution 70/1 of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA), on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,

considering

*a)* that the World Health Organization estimates that over one billion of the world's inhabitants live with some form of disability, and that there are different types of disabilities (e.g. physical, motor, cognitive, neurological and sensorial disabilities), each requiring special considerations when designing ICT public policy;

*b)* that maximizing access to ICT services, products, content and terminals for persons with disabilities will support autonomy of persons with disabilities, access to digital literacy, with particular educational focus on aspects that cannot be offered through everyday education, incorporation in worthy ICT employment and, more generally, access to all the benefits that lead to social inclusion, including healthcare;

*c)* that UNGA Resolution 61/106 adopting the UNCPRD requests the Secretary-General (in § 5) "… to implement progressively standards and guidelines for the accessibility of facilities and services of the United Nations system, taking into account relevant provisions of the Convention, in particular when undertaking renovations";

*d)* that persons with disabilities, both acting as individuals and through relevant organizations, should be involved in and participate in the process of elaborating legal/regulatory provisions, public policy and standards, pursuant to the rationale of "nothing about us without us";

*e)* that Article 14 of UNGA Resolution 65/186 and the High-Level Meeting of the General Assembly on Disability and Development (HLMDD) sent a message concerning the important role telecommunications and ICTs can play to enable a post-2015 disability-inclusive development framework, and HLMDD proposes to work together within the framework of the UN system towards the achievement of the United Nations common goal: "Inclusive development and a society in which persons with disabilities are both agents and beneficiaries";

*f)* that UNGA Resolution 66/288 endorses the outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20), entitled "The Future we want", which states as follows: "... 9. We reaffirm the importance of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, as well as other international instruments relating to human rights and international law. We emphasize the responsibilities of all States, in conformity with the Charter, to respect, protect and promote human rights and fundamental freedoms for all, without distinction of any kind as to race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth, disability age or other status",

recalling

*a)* that the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) acknowledged that special attention should be given to the needs of older persons and persons with disabilities: i) when elaborating national cyberstrategies, including educational, administrative and legislative measures; ii) for using ICT in education and human resources development; iii) in order that equipment and services offer easy and affordable access, under the principles of universal design and assistive technology; iv) to promote telework and to increase employment opportunities for persons with disabilities; v) for creation of content that is pertinent to persons with disabilities; and vii) to create the required abilities for the use of ICT by persons with disabilities;[[2]](#footnote-2)2

*b)* the Cairo Declaration (November, 2007) and the Lusaka Declaration (July, 2008) on supporting access to ICT services for persons with disabilities, as well as the Phuket Declaration on tsunami preparedness for persons with disabilities (March, 2007) and the IGF's Hyderabad Declaration on accessibility for persons with disabilities (December 2008),

*c)* the general observation of the UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (April 2014) related to Article 9 on accessibility, to promote access for persons with disabilities to new information and communications technologies and systems, including the Internet;

*d)* that the implementation of the relevant WSIS action lines will contribute to the achievement of Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) target 9.c (Significantly increase access to ICT and strive to provide universal and affordable access to the Internet in least developed countries by 2020),

taking into account

*a)* the principles that should govern ICT services, equipment and software in order to be accessible, namely: universal design, equal access, functional equivalence, affordability and accessibility, which means designing ICTs with parameters and capabilities adapted to the needs, preferences and special abilities of each user;

*b)* that telecommunication/ICT accessibility for persons with disabilities should be achieved through the formulation of policy options and cooperation between governments, specialized bodies, the private sector, non‑governmental organizations and civil society;

*c)* that mainstreaming persons with disabilities, accessibility and inclusive planning in the strategic framework for reinforcing the disability perspective in the global development agenda[[3]](#footnote-3)3 highlights the importance of coordination and exchange of information by and between United Nations bodies concerned;

*d)* the prevailing difference in ICT accessibility for persons with disabilities in the regions, in countries, and within each country, emphasizing that 80 per cent of persons with disabilities live in developing countries[[4]](#footnote-4)4, according to the United Nations Development Programme;

*e)* that women and girls with disabilities suffer multiple disadvantages, being excluded on account of their gender and their disability,

resolves to invite Member States

1 to ratify the UNCPRD, and to take the relevant measures to ensure that ICT services, equipment and software contribute to the development of telecommunication/ICT accessibility and are effectively accessible to persons with disabilities, with the aim of promoting the inclusion of all members of society, in favour of those who are at risk of marginalization and socially vulnerable, taking into account the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;

2 to develop national legal frameworks, including laws, regulations, policies, guidelines or other national and local mechanisms for telecommunication/ICT accessibility for persons with disabilities in accordance with the principles of equal access, functional equivalence, affordability and universal design, taking full advantage of available tools, guidelines and standards;

3 to consider establishing a government procurement policy foraccessible telecommunications/ICTs,establishing accessibility criteria;

4 to continue strengthening the collection and analysis of disaggregated data and statistics on disability related to telecommunication/ICT accessibility for persons with disabilities, aimed at creating e-accessibility statistics and similarly relevant indicators that will contribute to the public policy design, planning and implementation process;

5 to consider introducing telecommunication/ICT relay services[[5]](#footnote-5)5 for persons with disabilities, and encourage the development of applications for telecommunication terminals and products to increase the accessibility and usability of telecommunications/ICTs for persons with visual, auditory, verbal and other physical and cognitive disabilities, such as telecommunication/relay services for any combinations of hearing, visual, verbal and motor disabilities, accessible websites, public phones with accessibility features (e.g. volume control, information in Braille), public schools, institutions and community centres with a range of accessible equipment, including screen readers, Braille printers, hearing aids, among others, and to facilitate access to digital TV content, etc., in order to guarantee the rights of persons with disabilities to information and knowledge;

6 to encourage and enable active participation by persons with disabilities, both as individuals and as organizations, in the policy-making process for ICTs and related areas where ICTs have an impact, by ensuring that the consultation process, meetings and/or surveys are accessible to participation by persons with disabilities;

7 to promote and undertake research and development on ICT-accessible equipment, services and software, with emphasis on free and open-source software and affordable equipment and services;

8 to envisage establishing a programme that considers ICT-accessibility priorities, to be periodically reviewed in order to ensure its relevance to the specific local conditions of a country/region, with a view to progressive implementation;

9 to mainstream telecommunication/ICT accessibility for persons with disabilities, which involves taking into consideration accessibility principles in a cross-cutting manner;

10 to consider exemption from taxes and customs duties on ICT devices and assistive equipment for persons with disabilities, in accordance with the national regulations on this matter;

11 to establish ongoing and permanent collaboration between developed and developing countries in order to exchange information, technology and best practices related to telecommunication/ICT accessibility for persons with disabilities and specific needs;

12 to participate actively in accessibility-related studies in ITU‑D, ITU‑T and ITU‑R, and to encourage and promote self-representation by persons with disabilities in the development and standardization process, so as to ensure that their experiences, views and opinions are taken into account in all the work of the study groups;

13 to promote the development of learning and capacity-building opportunities to train persons with disabilities to use ICTs for their social and economic development, including through train-the-trainer courses and distance learning, for a more inclusive society;

14 to create dissemination and awareness-raising mechanisms that enable persons with disabilities to learn about the rights that can help them and how to require their enforceability, as well as policies for their benefit, current assistance technologies, and accessible equipment available on the market;

15 to advocate for the rights of persons with disabilities and persons with specific needs, and contribute to their integrated development and full inclusion,

invites Sector Members

1 to adopt a self-regulation approach for rendering accessibility-related ICT equipment, software and services accessible for persons with disabilities, it being expressly understood that self-regulation does not override legal and regulatory provisions;

2 to adopt a universal design principle from an early stage when designing, producing and creating ICT equipment, services and software, so as to avoid costly retrofitting measures;

3 to promote, if applicable, research and development on ICT-accessible equipment, services and software, having due regard to affordability for persons with disabilities and specific needs;

4 to take due account of the situations and needs of persons with disabilities, encouraging their active participation so as to receive first-hand information on their requirements for telecommunication/ICT accessibility;

5 to collaborate with Member States in order to make telecommunication/ICT accessibility a reality for persons with disabilities, in particular to promote affordable accessible telecommunications/ICTs for persons with disabilities and specific needs;

6 to promote communication tools for persons with disabilities, so that they can access services and information independently and confidently;

7 to collaborate with Member States on dissemination and awareness-raising to enable persons with disabilities to learn about current assistance technologies and accessible equipment available on the market,

instructs the Director of the Telecommunication Development Bureau

1 to ensure that each ITU‑D programme, project or activity takes into account telecommunication/ICT accessibility issues and is adapted to the situations and/or needs of all persons with disabilities and with specific needs;

2 to develop and/or update tools and guidelines for use/reference by Member States in mainstreaming telecommunication/ICT accessibility issues in their national/regional policies and regulations, and provide the necessary capacity building, taking into account the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;

3 to identify document and disseminate examples of best practice for accessibility in the field of telecommunications/ICTs for dissemination, publication and sharing of experiences, best practices and information among ITU Member States and Sector Members, taking into account the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;

4 to consider holding seminars, symposia or forums for policy-makers, telecommunication regulators and Sector Members at which telecommunication/ICT accessibility policies are presented and discussed, and also to promote the elaboration of books, reports or literature that address telecommunication/ICT accessibility for persons with disabilities and persons with specific needs;

5 to collaborate with the Radiocommunication Bureau (BR) and the Telecommunication Standardization Bureau (TSB) on accessibility-related activities, particularly in creating awareness and mainstreaming telecommunication/ICT accessibility policies, as well as creating programmes that enable countries to introduce services which allow persons with disabilities and specific needs to utilize ICT services effectively, reporting the findings to the ITU Council, as appropriate, in both cases;

6 to collaborate and cooperate with relevant United Nations entities and organizations for persons with disabilities in all regions in order to generate awareness of the need for the design and implementation of policies or self‑regulatory approaches that will make ICTs accessible for persons with disabilities and persons with specific needs;

7 to ensure that the needs of the communities of persons with disabilities are taken into account in the provision of telecommunication/ICT accessibility equipment, services and software;

8 to consider the development of an internship programme for persons with disabilities who have expertise in the field of telecommunications/ICTs, so as to build capacity among persons with disabilities in the public policy-making process;

9 to strengthen the Digital Inclusion programme to promote telecommunication/ICT accessibility for persons with disabilities;

10 to promote the exchange of experiences and best practices in terms of access to telecommunication and ICT services for persons with disabilities and persons with specific needs,

further instructs the Director of the Telecommunication Development Bureau

1 to review, in consultation with the Secretary‑General, the accessibility of ITU services and facilities, including meetings and events, to consider taking actions, where appropriate, pursuant to UNGA Resolution 61/106, and to inform Member States and Sector Members about the implementation of such actions, as appropriate;

2 to contribute, within the scope of BDT, to uniting efforts for the implementation of the provisions of Resolution 70 (Rev. Hammamet, 2016) and Resolution 175 (Rev. Busan, 2014);

3 to provide advice to, evaluate and supervise initiatives, projects and programmes, so as to determine their impact in terms of telecommunication/ICT accessibility for persons with disabilities, under Resolution 17 (Rev. Buenos Aires, 2017) of this conference on regional initiatives, where appropriate;

4 to provide assistance to Member States, as appropriate, in the establishment of their national funding strategies aimed at addressing the needs of persons with disabilities;

5 to identify, within the study groups, taking into account the financial implications, new accessible software, services and solutions to enable all persons with disabilities and persons with specific needs to effectively use telecommunication/ICT services, on the basis of contributions from the Member States and Sector Members, as well as the ITU‑T and ITU‑R study groups, as appropriate,

invites the Plenipotentiary Conference

1 to build on and consolidate past accomplishments, by providing the necessary financial and human resources for the effective and sustained integration of telecommunication/ICT accessibility for persons with disabilities in the development activities of ITU;

2 to instruct the Secretary-General to bring this resolution to the attention of the Secretary-General of the United Nations in an effort to promote increased coordination and cooperation for development policies, programmes and projects for achieving ICT accessibility for persons with disabilities, in line with the principles of equitable access, functional equivalence, affordability and universal design, and fully harnessing the available tools, guidelines and standards, to eliminate obstacles and discrimination.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

1. 1 An ITU-D Sector Member and flagship advocacy initiative of the United Nations Global Alliance for ICT and Development (UN-GAID), in collaboration with the secretariat of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. 2 Geneva Declaration of Principles, §§ 13 and 30; Geneva Plan of Action, §§ 9 e) and f), 19 and 23; Tunis Commitment, §§ 18 and 20; Tunis Agenda for the Information Society, § 90 c) and e). [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. 3 Report 66/128, on strengthening efforts to ensure that persons with disabilities are included in and have access to all aspects of development, in accordance with UNGA Resolution 65/186. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. 4 These include the least developed countries, small island developing states, landlocked developing countries and countries with economies in transition. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. 5 Telecommunication relay services enable users of different modes of communication (e.g. text, sign, speech) to interact by providing convergence between the modes of communication, usually through human operators. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)