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|  | **31 May 2023** |
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| Director, Telecommunication Development Bureau |
| Update on the Review of the Regional Presence |
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| **Summary:**In Decision 616, adopted at Council 2019, the Council instructed the Secretary-General to recruit and hire an independent external management consultancy to perform a comprehensive programmatic, strategic and financial assessment and review of ITU’s Regional Presence. PwC was selected to perform this independent study, contractual arrangements were made, and PwC began its work in November 2019. PwC’s review included qualitative and quantitative data collection, stakeholder consultation (over 100 internal and external stakeholder interviews) and a combination of analytical methods. PwC’s Report was submitted in July 2020, including detailed recommendations for improvement of ITU’s Regional Presence, and an Action Plan for implementation of the recommendations. In its report on ITU’s Regional Presence, PwC recommended an action plan for the strengthening of ITU’s Regional Presence with four implementation streams, broken down into fifteen recommendations and 50 supporting actions.The Secretariat has created a workplan for full implementation of the sections of the PWC report which are within the Secretariat’s ability to implement, which was accepted by the Council Working Group on Finance and Human Resources (CWG-FHR) and Council in 2021. The workplan envisaged implementation of the recommendations by the end of 2023. Full reporting on the implementation of the Regional Presence Review will be submitted to Council. The purpose of this report is to update TDAG on the progress made and work done in implementation of the outcomes of the PWC review.**Action required:**This update is provided for the information of TDAG.**References:**Report of PWC on ITU’s Regional Presence, Council Decision 616  |

**1. Introduction**

1.1 Resolution 25 (Rev. Dubai, 2018) of the Plenipotentiary Conference instructed the Secretary-General to conduct an overall review on ITU regional presence. The elements that were to be covered by the review, among others, were contained in Annex to Resolution 25. During its 2019 session, the Council approved Decision 616, which mandated the Secretary-General to conduct a review of the regional presence in a bid to improve its efficiency and effectiveness. PwC was selected and their report was submitted in July 2020 outlining recommendations for improvement of ITU’s Regional Presence and an Action Plan. The PwC report was presented to Council in 2020 ([C20/74](https://www.itu.int/dms_ties/itu-s/md/20/cl/c/S20-CL-C-0074%21%21PDF-E.pdf)) and was referred to the Council Working Group on Financial and Human Resources (CWG-FHR) to provide guidance on the way forward for the implementation of the recommendations. CWG-FHR set up an ad-hoc group to assess and report back to CWG-FHR before the next session of Council.

1.2 The Ad-hoc Group deliberated on the PWC report during early 2021 and presented its findings to CWG-FHR. On 3 June 2021, CWG-FHR endorsed the findings of the Ad-hoc Group, and the secretariat was directed to implement the report in accordance with those findings. The decisions of CWG-FHR were endorsed by Council at its session in June 2021.

2. **PWC Recommendations and ITU Workplan**

2.1 In its report on ITU’s Regional Presence, PwC recommended an action plan for the strengthening of ITU’s Regional Presence with four implementation streams, broken down into fifteen recommendations and 50 supporting actions.

2.2 The Secretariat created a workplan for full implementation of the sections of the PWC report which were within the Secretariat’s ability to implement by the end of 2023 (based on the decisions made by the Ad-hoc Group). The proposed workplan is divided into three charts, separating 60 actions derived from the PWC report into the following categories:

1. Actions in progress;
2. Completed recommendations; and
3. Recommendations requiring council decisions.

2.3 The Secretariat produced and published on ITU’s website a Dashboard on which membership can access the status of the workplan. The dashboard is available through the regional presence page of the Council section of the ITU website: <https://www.itu.int/en/council/ties/Pages/regional-presence-dashboard.aspx>.

2.4. The implementation of recommendations of the PWC report continues and is anticipated to be completed on schedule by the end of 2023. The current activities being focused upon are the finalization of the Delegations of Authority for regional staff, and completion and endorsement of Regional Strategies.

3. **Delegations of Authority**

3.1 PWC recommended the implementation of a formal register listing all delegations of authority and defining personal accountabilities, within the context of the Regional Presence. PWC recommended a phased approach in this regard, considering the recent fraud case and the fact that the devolution of authority is currently low. PWC noted that a cultural shift will be required to balance empowerment of the local presence with the strict application of the segregation of duties and the fulfilment of the required conditions, e.g. training of relevant staff. Role 'maps' should make clear that the individuals will be held personally accountable for any mismanagement of funds within the ceilings under their responsibility.

3.2 Work has been completed on the development of an appropriate matrix for the first phase of implementation of this recommendation, and this matrix has been co-created and agreed by the regional management. The proposed matrix must now be agreed by ITU central management for the key areas of delegation, appropriate training needs to be designed and implemented, and formal delegation needs to be approved. This work is expected to be completed in the second half of 2023.

**4. Regional Strategies**

4.1 PWC noted that the ITU Strategic and Operational Plan needed to be better cascaded to the regional and area offices. Specifically, PWC noted that the Operational Plan should integrate the programmatic objectives defined at regional and global levels in a common results framework, detail the expected contribution of the regional presence and the support role required of HQ, and specify the common mechanisms required for consistent implementation and coordination. To date, regional strategies have been completed in draft form, and these are currently being reviewed and aligned for coherence with the ITU Strategic Plan and the Kigali Action Plan, and across regions.

4.2 Once the Strategies for each region have been completed, high level summaries will be made available as Information Documents for consideration by membership. It is proposed that during the next Strategic Planning cycle, the Regional Strategies will be incorporated into that process so that the Strategic Plan and Operational Plan will fully integrate the regional perspectives.

**5. Conclusion**

The contents of this report are shared with TDAG for information. Full reporting on the progress made with implementation of the regional presence review recommendations, will be submitted to Council in accordance with Council’s decision.

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