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| Director, Telecommunication Development Bureau |
| Youth Celebration in shaping the future of Digital Development: Hearing Voices of Tomorrow in the lead to the World Development Conference 2025 (WTDC-25) |
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| **Summary:**Given the prospective outcomes of the Global Youth Summit, which is planned for the end of 2024 as well as the BDT’s mandate to lead meaningful youth engagement in digital development, a one- or two-day event is proposed to be held prior to the World Telecommunication Development Conference (WTDC-25) to celebrate youth, the global driving force in shaping the digital future and to highlight the importance of youth empowerment in digital development. **Action required:**TDAG is invited to note this document and provide guidance as deemed appropriate.**References:**Resolution 76 (Rev. Kigali, 2022) of the World Telecommunication Development Conference (complemented by WTDC Resolutions 11, 37, 45, 46, 55, 58, 67) Resolution 198 (Rev. Bucharest, 2022) of the Plenipotentiary Conference (complemented by PP Resolutions 70, 175, 179, 184) |

1. **Justification**

In line with the decision made by TDAG-23 and endorsed by the ITU Council, the BDT will organize the ITU Global Youth Summit (GYS-24) under the theme “*Amplifying youth voices in ICT for a Connected Future*” in 2024. The GYS-24 will, among others, aim to facilitate focused discussion and actions to ensure equal and equitable access to and use of ICTs by all young people, thereby supporting their active participation in the digital society, economy, and environment. The GYS-24 will further aim to cultivate a global intersectional and intergenerational conversation that engages young people in the digital development and provides ITU Members, including governments, the private sector, academia, other UN agencies, and decision-makers, with a comprehensive and current vision of the ICT-related needs essential for empowering the youth from all regions of the world.

Given the prospective outcomes of the Global Youth Summit at the end of 2024 as well as the BDT’s mandate to lead meaningful youth engagement in digital development, the BDT Director proposes a one- or two-day event to celebrate youth in shaping the future and to highlight the importance of youth empowerment in digital development prior to the World Telecommunication Development Conference (WTDC-25).

1. **Date, Duration and Location**

The event is scheduled for 1 or 2 days immediately preceding WTDC-25, in the same location, providing a seamless and dynamic transition into the main conference.

1. **Proposed Activities**

*Results Showcase from the Global Youth Summit:* This session will feature presentations of the key outcomes from the Global Youth Summit, showcasing how these ideas and initiatives can impact – and/or have started – to transform the digital landscape. This serves as a direct reflection of ITU’s proactive steps in integrating youth perspectives into its framework for a more sustainable digital transformation and an equitable digital society.

*Commitment Panels:* Engage in discussions with young leaders who have actively participated in digital development through volunteer efforts. These panels will highlight the projects they have worked on and the challenges they have overcome, emphasizing their commitment to the digital inclusion goals of the BDT.

*Solution-Oriented Workshops:* These interactive workshops will provide a platform for participants to showcase their current projects and initiatives, inviting discussion, guidance, and potential partnerships. The goal is to provide a collaborative environment to enable development of comprehensive action plans for youth projects and initiatives with tangible impacts in implementation. These workshops will aim to provide practical application of youth projects and initiatives within their communities and beyond. It will foster the BDT's leadership in creating new avenues for implementation while also encouraging youth participants to refine their ideas into actionable strategies that drive meaningful change.

*Intergenerational Dialogues to Foster a Dynamic Development Agenda:* Facilitate sessions that bring together young participants and established ICT leaders and professionals. These dialogues will underscore the importance of merging experience and expertise with innovative ideas. and will highlight the pivotal role of youth in the BDT’s efforts to foster a dynamic environment of mutual learning and collaboration to advance the digital development agenda.

Additionally, these intergenerational dialogues will align with the United Nation system’s comprehensive approach to youth empowerment and development, highlighting the ITU’s role in expanding the focus on youth within the context of ICT. This strategy underscores the ITU’s commitment to integrating youth perspectives into global development initiatives since 2003, reinforcing the work on youth of other UN agencies. The work of United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in promoting inclusive education, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in involving youth participation in sustainable development, United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) in engaging youth in environmental activities, International Labour Organization (ILO) in promoting decent employment for youth, World Health Organization (WHO) in addressing the health issues of youth, are key examples. Through such collaborative efforts, the UN harnesses the potential of young people to advance sustainable development goals, ensuring that the dynamism and creativity of youth are pivotal in shaping a resilient and inclusive future.

*Networking Opportunities:* Organize activities and/or events that are designed to enhance networking opportunities, cultural exchanges, and foster a sense of global solidarity among the youth and the participants to WTDC-25. These activities/events will feature collaborative activities, creating an engaging and inclusive atmosphere conducive to building lasting connections between the global youth and the key policy and decision makers participants to the WTDC-25.

1. **Expected Outcomes**

*Build on the Outcomes of the ITU Global Youth Summit:* Leveraging the results and initiatives from the Global Youth Summit to inform and energize discussions at WTDC-25.

*Reiterate Youth Commitment:* Highlight the ongoing commitment of youth to contribute to the ITU’s development agenda through their voluntary activities and innovative projects in their respective countries, regions and globally.

*Actionable Strategies:* Identify practical strategies to follow up the outcome document of the GYS-24 aimed at implementing youth-led digital projects in particular to ensure that all youth, including those youth in vulnerable situations, are equally and equitably empowered by ICTs to support their active participation in the digital society, economy and environment.

*Facilitate Intergenerational Dialogue:* Establish a platform that enables meaningful exchanges between young experts, leaders and innovators with global key policy and decision makers and recognised thought leaders in the ICT sector. This will foster collaboration across generations, allowing for the sharing of insights and the development of mentorship relationships.

*Enhanced Global Network:* Strengthen connections among young leaders and between youth and global decision-makers in digital development. This will facilitate knowledge sharing and collaborative opportunities, building a robust network that supports ongoing and future digital development global agenda.

1. **Added Value of the Event**

Through this youth event celebration, the BDT aims to ensure that youth voices continue to influence the ITU’s work leading up to and beyond WTDC-25. This event will not only spotlight the potential of young leaders in shaping the digital future but also solidify the ITU’s and BDT’s commitment to the young generation as pivotal partners in the global telecommunications and digital development agenda.

This approach aims not only to inform but also inspire the ITU member to integrate youth voices, perspectives, and energy into the heart of the WTDC-25 discussions, contributing to a motivated and visionary tone for the conference.

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