RESOLUTION 87 (Kigali, 2022)

Connecting every school to the Internet and every young person to information and communication technology services

The World Telecommunication Development Conference (Kigali, 2022),

recalling

a) the commitment by all Member States of the United Nations to achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and related targets, as reflected in Resolution 70/1 of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA);

b) the commitment by all Member States of the United Nations to improving digital cooperation, as reflected in UNGA Resolution 75/1, on the Declaration on the commemoration of the 75th anniversary of the United Nations;

c) the Connect 2030 Agenda for global telecommunication/information and communication technology (ICT) development, adopted in Resolution 200 (Rev. Dubai 2018) of the Plenipotentiary Conference;

d) Resolution 139 (Rev. Dubai, 2018) of the Plenipotentiary Conference, on the use of telecommunications/ICTs to bridge the digital divide and to build an inclusive information society;

e) the Buenos Aires Declaration and Buenos Aires Action Plan, as well as relevant resolutions, including Resolution 37 (Rev. Buenos Aires, 2017), on bridging the digital divide, adopted by the World Telecommunication Development Conference (WTDC-17);

f) Recommendation ITU-D 19 (Dubai, 2014) of WTDC, on telecommunications for rural and remote areas, which notes that schools, as well as other public ICT facilities, can serve to connect the communities they serve, especially in rural and remote areas of developing countries[1],

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[1] These include the least developed countries, small island developing states, landlocked developing countries and countries with economies in transition.

recalling further

a) Resolution 71 (Rev. Dubai, 2018) of the Plenipotentiary Conference, on the strategic plan for the Union, containing a set of strategic targets whose purpose is to provide the direction where ITU should focus its attention and to materialize the ITU vision for an interconnected world for 2020-2023;

b) the new set of global targets for "universal and meaningful digital connectivity" to be achieved by 2030, announced by the Office of the United Nations Secretary-General's Envoy on Technology, developed as part of the implementation of the United Nations Secretary-General's Roadmap for Digital Cooperation (Document A/74/821);

c) the 2025 Global Broadband Targets of the ITU/United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Broadband Commission for Sustainable Development to support ''connecting the other half'',

considering

a) the United Nations system-wide implementation of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda and efforts towards achieving the SDGs;

b) the role of ITU as a United Nations specialized agency to support Member States and to contribute to the worldwide efforts to achieve the SDGs;

c) the relevant work already accomplished and to be carried out by ITU as part of the implementation of the WSIS outcomes, considering the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;

d) the United Nations Secretary-General's Roadmap for Digital Cooperation, which calls for every person to have safe and affordable access to the Internet by 2030, including the meaningful use of digitally enabled services, in line with the SDGs;

e) the United Nations Secretary-General's report on Our Common Agenda (Document A/75/982), which presents the United Nations Secretary-General's vision on the future of global cooperation through inclusive, networked and effective multilateralism, as requested by Member States in the Declaration on the commemoration of the 75th anniversary of the United Nations,

recognizing

a)   that telecommunications/ICTs can help to accelerate progress towards the SDGs;

b)   that education systems need to be transformed to become more agile, more resilient, shock absorbent, crisis respondent, more innovative and more connected using appropriate telecommunication/ICT solutions that can support such transformation;

c)   the importance of school connectivity to support meaningful learning experiences and to enable teachers to stay abreast of new content, technologies and teaching methods in order to reach more children and young people everywhere irrespective of their circumstances;

d)   that sustainable digital and hybrid learning systems should be inclusive, generate value through contextualized and open educational resources, and celebrate local languages, while benefiting from global ecosystems, initiatives, value chains, resources and knowledge;

e)   that continuous energy supply is required for connected schools,

having noted

a)   that key ITU Telecommunication Development Sector projects that focus on connecting the unconnected in diverse settings can share their findings to inform national school connectivity projects and initiatives;

b)   that Giga, the ITU and United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) initiative to connect every school to the Internet and every young person to information technology services, opportunity and choice:

i)   connects schools and therefore connects students and teachers;

ii)   is working actively with governments to create investment opportunities for blended public- and private-sector funding, to build the infrastructure needed to provide universal access to every school and to equip learners with high-quality, vetted and safe content;

iii)   supports (through its pillars of Map, Finance, Connect and Empower) governments and national leaders in mapping schools and their connectivity levels and with analysis of the infrastructure requirements and technologies to connect all schools, and in developing sustainable financial models for universal digital access;

c)   ongoing flagship partnerships of ITU with other United Nations agencies such as the World Bank, UNESCO, UNICEF and UN Women in the area of skills and ICTs, such as the Broadband Commission for Sustainable Development, Giga and EQUALS,

resolves

to commit to working towards connecting every school to the Internet, as a contribution to bridging the digital divide and to ensuring that young people everywhere have the means and skills to enable their fruitful participation in the global digital economy,

instructs the Director of the Telecommunication Development Bureau

1   to continue to carry out work on connecting every school and every young person to ICT services;

2   to set standards for school connectivity and to provide short-mid-long term global targets for connecting every school in line with the global targets of universal and meaningful connectivity, towards 2030;

3   to evaluate models for affordable and sustainable approaches and financing with a view to connecting every young person, especially those in rural or remote areas, to ICT services, based on study of these models;

4   to continue to assist Member States and Sector Members in developing policy, regulatory and financial frameworks for connecting every school to the Internet;

5   to report annually to the ITU Council on the progress made in the implementation of this resolution;

6   to bring this resolution to the attention of all interested parties, including, in particular, the United Nations Secretary-General, UNESCO, UNICEF and other relevant United Nations agencies and programmes, for cooperation in implementing this resolution,

calls upon Member States, Sector Members and Academia of the ITU Telecommunication Development Sector

1   to promote whole-of-government and public-private partnership approaches for connectivity and infrastructure to bridge the digital divide and support the local development of digital education and training systems;

2   to encourage the adoption of a national strategy for school connectivity and digital skills development for life, work and lifelong learning, encompassing students, teachers and educators;

3   to make all efforts to bring down the costs of connectivity infrastructure and of the installation and operation of ICT equipment;

4   to identify, examine and implement sustainable energy solutions and supply for connectivity to and in schools, taking into consideration the geographical and topographical context;

5   to promote innovation in infrastructure and connectivity operating models to ensure inclusive and sustainable digital learning;

6   to share knowledge, expertise, skills and experiences in connecting schools and the communities around them.