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| **Radiocommunication Advisory Group Geneva, 25-27 June 2012** |  |
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|  | **Document RAG12-1/3-E** |
| **25 May 2012** |
| **Original: English** |

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| United States of America |
| PRINCIPLES TO GUIDE THE WORK OF THE CORRESPONDENCE GROUP ON RESOLUTION ITU-R 1-6 |

**Background**

The 2012 Radiocommunication Assembly (RA-12) approved Terms of Reference for a Correspondence Group on Resolution ITU-R 1-6. The Terms of Reference for the Correspondence Group (CG), as attached to [Document RA12/PLEN/116](http://www.itu.int/md/R12-RA12-C-0116/en), are:

*• To examine the formats used by several Study Groups for developing ITU-R Recommendations;*

*• To identify deficiencies and shortcomings of these formats when used for complex cases;*

*• To liaise with the Correspondence Group that RAG may create to review the restructuring of Resolution ITU R 1-6 as indicated in Document PLEN/110.*

The United States anticipates that the Correspondence Group on Resolution ITU-R 1-6 will be established at the nineteenth meeting of the Radiocommunication Advisory Group (RAG). In this contribution the United States offers for the consideration of the RAG some guiding principles that may help focus the work of the CG.

**Discussion**

Currently the chief guidance on the development of ITU-R Recommendations is contained in Annex 2 of the “Guidelines for Radiocommunication Assembly and Study Group Meetings and Documentation” ([Administrative Circular CA/13](http://www.itu.int/md/R00-CA-CIR-0013/en.)). That guidance allows for some flexibility in the development of Recommendations with optional sections and allowance for alternative handling of “more complex Recommendations”.

In general, the ITU-R has functioned well under this guidance from 1995. The United States knows of no major issues arising from misunderstandings of ITU-R Recommendations due to any lack of clarity or precision.

However, there is always room for improvement. It is timely to consider whether improvements can be made in the format and in the development of Recommendations that would improve the output documents of the Working Parties and Study Groups. The United States notes that the issue of format has caused delay in approval of documents when there were no issues or objections to their content. This is certainly detrimental to the efficient working of the ITU-R.

**Proposal**

The United States has considered the issue of format as both a user of and contributor to ITU-R Recommendations and would offer the following principles for the consideration of the meeting to guide the work of the CG on this topic.

* **The existing guidance can serve as a foundation on which to build.**
* Much of the guidance in Annex 2 of the “Guidelines for Radiocommunication Assembly and Study Group Meetings and Documentation” is still valid.
* The CG might usefully undertake a careful review of Annex 2 to determine where there are weaknesses and room for improvement.
* **There is no need to reinvent the wheel.**
* It appears that much of the Annex 2 guidance parallels that contained in the [ITU-T Author's Guide](http://www.itu.int/dms_pub/itu-t/oth/0A/0F/T0A0F0000040003MSWE.docx) . This is to be encouraged; as each Sector can learn from the experience of the others. While there may be sections of the ITU-T Author’s Guide that are not appropriate for ITU-R guidance (e.g., Annex C “URI naming scheme for the identification of XML namespaces defined in ITU-T Recommendations”), there may be much that could be incorporated.
* The CG might usefully undertake a careful review of the latest ITU-T Author’s Guide to determine which elements might usefully be incorporated.
* **There is benefit to common guidance in the development of ITU-R Recommendations**
* There has been inconsistent presentation of sections within ITU-R Recommendations, such the placement of elements within “noting”, “considering”, and “recognizing”.
* Common definitions, common order, etc. would aid the understanding of the documents and would ease the work of the editors and the Secretariat.
* **Establishing a common format is only part of the solution**
* Promulgating a format without providing explanation of the use of the format will simply create the same problems we have today.
* There must be an effort to educate the leadership and membership on the proper use of the format.
* The CG might consider creation of stand-alone document, like the ITU-T Author’s Guide, that could be provided to all chairs of Study Groups, Working Parties, etc. to guide their work.
* **Any change in format should not be retroactive**
* Some Recommendations are so well-known and used in their current format that reorganizing them might create more confusion and undermine the reason for adopting a common format – to ease understanding.
* It is possible that re-formatting of some Recommendations could impose too great a burden on the membership and the Secretariat due to their size or complexity.
* It should be left to the discretion of the Working Parties and Study Groups to determine if Recommendations should be re-formatted during the normal course of review and update of recommendations.
* **Flexibility should be retained by the membership**
* It is possible that certain topics or issues may not fit exactly into the ITU-R format.
* The ITU-R must trust its constituent groups to come to an informed assessment as to whether or not the Recommendation can fit into the ITU-R format.
* If an exception is deemed necessary, the constituent group should provide a rationale for the discrepancy when it forwards the Recommendation for approval; and this procedure would need to be reflected in the guidance on the format of ITU-R Recommendations.

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