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| **Radiocommunication Advisory Group** | C:\Users\murphy\AppData\Local\Temp\Temp1_ITU logo Entire package.zip\jpg\ITU official logo_blue_RGB.jpg | |
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|  | | **Document RAG/INFO/7-E** |
| **30 March 2021** |
| **English only** |
| Deputy Secretary-General | | |
| further improvements to the service quality of itu's online meeting platforms to ensure the efficiency of virtual meetings | | |

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| Summary ITU has the dual goal of effectively eliminating difficulties for members, especially those from developing countries, to participate in ITU activities while at the same time reducing the operating costs. ITU will continue to improve the functions of the platforms concerned by enhancing and upgrading the platforms’ functions in a timely manner based on the experience and feedback in the use of the online virtual meeting systems gathered from the ITU membership.  Ref:  Proposed further improvements on remote participation in ITU's meetings, 1 June 2020: <https://www.itu.int/dms_pub/itu-s/md/20/clvc/c/S20-CLVC-C-0010!!MSW-E.docx>  Improving the organization of virtual meetings: <https://www.itu.int/md/S20-CLVC2-C-0006/en>  VCC2 Document C20/INF/22-E, 13 November 2020, Report by the Secretary-General, Status of Virtual Meeting Platforms and Support: <https://www.itu.int/dms_pub/itu-s/md/20/cl/inf/S20-CL-INF-0022!!MSW-E.docx>   |  | | --- | | CWGFHR12 (Jan 2021), Impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the functioning and activities of ITU: <https://www.itu.int/dms_pub/itu-s/md/21/cwgfhr12/c/S21-CWGFHR12-C-0012!!MSW-E.docx> | |

# 1 Introduction

1.1 This document provides information on the progress on the use of conferencing technology platforms to support the business continuity of the Union and planned actions to improve the efficiency of organizing and running virtual meetings.

# 2 Technology platform evolution during 2020

2.1 While there are many web-conference platforms available in the market, ITU currently standardized on the following five platforms, each covering the specific requirements of the individual meetings: Interprefy, Zoom, Teams, GoToMeeting and MyMeetings. Brief description of the five platforms can be found in [C20/INF/22-E](https://www.itu.int/dms_pub/itu-s/md/20/cl/inf/S20-CL-INF-0022!!MSW-E.docx).

2.2 Twelve months have passed since ITU meetings changed from physical to virtual. Zoom has become the most used platform for supporting ITU meetings, with over 4700 meetings and over 800 webinars held in Zoom since 1st April 2020.

2.3 Since Jan 2021, prior concerns about global access to the Zoom platform have been resolved. ITU has successful tested and all ITU Member States now have unrestricted use of the Zoom platform for participating in ITU meetings and events. In March 2021, similar concerns were resolved so that ITU is also able to use Microsoft Teams for its meetings and events accessible from all Member States.

2.4 With Zoom accessible from all Member States and it requires lower bandwidth to connect, including telephone dial up, it is possible to further reduce the number of web-conference platforms as proposed in the Second Virtual Consultation of Councillors document [VC-2/6-E](https://www.itu.int/md/S20-CLVC2-C-0006/en).

2.6 Currently Interprefy, Zoom and MyMeetings support authentication using ITU User Account and they also support multilingual meetings and human based captioning.

2.7 Currently only Interprefy and MyMeetings are fully integrated with ITU’s CRM accreditation and registration system, allowing the displaying in the virtual room, the entity that a participant is representing and cross-checking with CRM if the participant has the right to attend the virtual session. However, both systems currently support less than 300 active participants.

# 3 Current development

3.1 IS Department is working on integrating Zoom with CRM, hence allowing the displaying in the virtual room, the entity that a participant is representing and cross-checking with CRM if the participant has the right to attend the virtual session.

3.2 Zoom has significantly strengthened the security of its platform since the beginning of the pandemic. ITU is working with the UN Information Security Special Interest Group to re-evaluate the suitability of Zoom as a UN system video-conferencing solution (prior evaluation was done in April 2020).

3.3 Zoom, as well as other commercial platforms such as Cisco WebEx, Microsoft Teams, support over 10,000 active participants and up to 40,000 webinar passive participants. ITU currently has 100 Zoom licenses, each allowing the hosting of meetings with up to 500 active or webinar users. In addition, ITU has a corporate license for up to 1000 users for Zoom meeting and another corporate license for up to 1000 webinar users, which can be shared, one at a time, by the 100 license holders. The total license cost is less than 30,000 USD/year. To increase to 10,000 active and 40,000 webinar users can be achieved by upgrading the licenses, without the need to invest on infrastructure or support personnel.

3.4 While the current development is focused on Zoom, IS Department is also working with Microsoft, Cisco and other web-conference platform vendors on alternate web-conference solutions to meet ITU requirements, as this market is progressing very rapidly. It is also important to have more than one viable solution (e.g. three) on a business continuity perspective.

3.6 IS Department is working on improving the [Events Overview Page](https://www.itu.int/en/events/Pages/default.aspx) to provide easy access to information on ITU events, meetings and sessions, arriving at the registration page of the events, and joining the desired virtual meeting sessions.

3.7 Since the meetings became virtual in March 2020 and access to the ITU premises has been restricted to essential personnel only, no paper documents were provided to the interpreters. They must rely on electronic documents published on the ITU website. However, access to the documents may not be that trivial for them. IS Department, together with Conference and Publishing Department, are working with the document control teams of General Secretariat, ITU-T, ITU-R and ITU-D to harmonize and to provide quick access to all meeting documents. This should benefit not only the interpreters, but also the meeting participants.

3.8 ITU secretariat has the goal of effectively eliminating difficulties for ITU membership to participate in ITU activities, especially those members from developing countries, while at the same time reducing operating costs.

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