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Note by the Secretary-General

CONTRIBUTION FROM THE REPUBLIC OF BULGARIA, THE REPUBLIC OF LITHUANIA, THE REPUBLIC OF POLAND, PORTUGAL, SPAIN, THE CONFEDERATION OF SWITZERLAND, THE CZECH REPUBLIC AND ROMANIA

PROPOSAL ON THE INTRODUCTION OF HEARING FOR THE ITU ELECTED OFFICIALS

I have the honour to transmit to the Member States of the Council a contribution submitted by **the Republic of Bulgaria, the Republic of Lithuania, the Republic of Poland, Portugal, Spain, the Confederation of Switzerland, the Czech Republic** and **Romania**.

 Houlin ZHAO
 Secretary-General

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PROPOSAL ON THE INTRODUCTION OF HEARING FOR THE ITU ELECTED OFFICIALS

# 1 Introduction, background and analysis

ITU Council 2016 was invited to initiate a study on how to improve electoral process. In this relation ITU Members were discussing a possibility to create a dedicated online space for campaign material (PDF, video, etc.) of the candidates, so that stakeholders could access information about the candidates electronically.

During the previous discussions ITU Member States have supported the idea on holding of candidates’ fora (hearings). A reference and good example in this regard is the practice of other international organizations that ITU could follow (see information below).

Furthermore, PP-14 recognised the desire to improve the electoral process of the elected officials in the Union (Document 175, Recommendation 8). It instructed Council to initiate studies on the issue and to recommend to Member States options for implementing new procedures to improve the electoral process of Secretary-General, Deputy Secretary-General and Directors of the Bureaux. PP-14 invited Council to give due consideration to several options such as presentations, interactive sessions, live sessions, interviews, submission of questions, through webcasting and remote participation, as well as further enhancing the election portal in the ITU website.

The envisaged value of the hearing of candidates for the ITU elected positions:

* Improved transparency and openness of the ITU;
* Value for ITU membership (including Ministries of Foreign Affairs, etc.) in making informed decisions about candidates;
* Possibility to review candidates work and achievements when (s)he runs for a 2nd term;
* Possibility for inclusiveness by webcasting hearings.

Practice of the International Organizations that practice hearings in their election systems:

* *United Nations (UN)*: during the last election, candidates for Secretary-General participate on a three-day hearings/Q&A at the General Assembly, even though the appointment is done by the Security Council.
* *World Health Organizations (WHO)*: holds an open forum (webcasted) with all candidates one year before the election, then the WHO elected Executive Board (their Council) short-lists five candidates. Then the executive board interviews these candidates and forwards three to the deciding Assembly.
* *World Trade Organization (WTO)*: candidates make a presentation to the General Council, answer questions, and speak to the press four months before the formal consultations on Member States and the final appointment.
* *International Labor Organization (ILO)*: candidates make a hearings presentation at the beginning of the Governing Body’s Session that will hold the ballots for election
* *World Bank (WB)*:  recently had its truly contested election where candidates participated in an unofficial open debate held outside the WB.
* *International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO)*: no information on hearings, but useful as a benchmark for electronic voting.

# 2 Proposal

The Council instructs the Secretary-General to submit to the 2018 ordinary session of the Council a concept of conducting hearings of the candidates running for elected positions at PP-18 taking into account the consideration in Annex 1 of this contribution.

The Council instructs the Secretary-General to submit the draft of the concept to CWG-FHR at its meeting in the beginning of 2018 and invites the CWG-FHR working group to bring its comments, if any, to the attention of the Council 2018.

ANNEX 1

Guidelines to the ITU Secretary-General to finalize and submit proposal on hearing of candidates (elected officials of the ITU) to the ordinary session of the ITU Council 2018:

- To outline a concept/definition of a hearing (for example, a hearing is a self-standing event that would be led by the Chairman of the Council or a high-level staff member. Event specifically organized for candidates that participate in the election process for the major ITU posts – Secretary-General, Deputy Secretary-General and Directors of the 3 Bureaus – to appear in the hearing in order to outline their vision of the Union);

- To propose a maximum time of a hearing per candidate, including presentation on candidates vision and question and answer session;

- To outline the basic principles for candidates to answer random questions during the hearing (e. g., 2-3 random questions from the audience or those following it on the webcast);

- To ensure that ITU members have a possibility to attend the hearing or follow it by electronic means (e. g., to webcast it via ITU TIES-protected account for membership only);

- To propose appropriate date and meeting for such a hearing prior to PP-18;

- To propose possibility to reimburse translation, room rental or other costs incurred by the ITU related to the hearing (e. g., for countries that present candidates to share the costs of the hearings and reimburse those cost in equal parts to ITU);

- To create a dedicated online space for campaign material (PDF, video, etc.), so that stakeholders could access information about the candidates electronically.