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| Note by the Secretary-General | |
| contribution from the federative republic of brazil | |
| ENHANCING THE PARTICIPATION OF NON-STATE MEMBERS IN THE WORK OF ITU | |

I have the honour to transmit to the Member States of the Council a contribution submitted by **the Federative Republic of Brazil**.

Houlin ZHAO  
 Secretary-General

Brazil (Federative Republic of)

ENHANCING THE PARTICIPATION OF NON-STATE MEMBERS IN THE WORK OF ITU

Article 1, item *a) bis* of the ITU Constitution defines as one of the core purposes of the Union the promotion and enhancement of the participation of non-state members (i.e., Sector Members, Associates, Academia) in the activities of ITU. Non-state members’ technical, intellectual, and financial contributions to the development of global telecommunication/ICTs and to the ITU are invaluable, thus the ITU should continuously seek to foster and increase their participation.

This presents a difficult challenge. As a UN agency, the ITU is a Member States-driven organization. States also have the sovereign right to determine public policy. The development of telecommunication/ICTs, however, is driven by research, investment and technical innovation provided by the private sector and academia. These roles are well defined in para. 35 of the Tunis Agenda for the Information Society, and should be reflected in the work of ITU.

This contribution proposes principles to enhance the participation of non-state members in the work of ITU, and consequently retain current members and attract new members.

**Principle #1 – Providing more value for ITU membership**

Non-state members should participate in all activities of the ITU, with varying degrees of participation depending on the level of technical discussions taking place. The more technical are the discussions (i.e., Study Groups and their variants); the less restrictions for non-state members’ participation.

Taking into account Resolution 54 (Hammamet, 2016), Sector Members shall be entitled to participate fully in all activities of the sector of which they are members (CS, Art. 4, 3), including their respective regional ITU-T study groups. Associates shall be permitted to participate in the work of their study group, without taking part in any decision-making or liaison activity of that study group (CV, Art. 20, 7*ter*), and shall be permitted to participate in the regional group. Academia shall be allowed to participate in the works of the three sectors, without any role in decision-making (Res. 169, Busan, 2014), and shall be allowed to participate in regional study groups.

Member States should have the right to determine the modality of participation of non-state members outside of study groups, but should strongly avoid limiting the participation of non-state members in the activities of their sectors.

The Council should continue studying measures to provide more value to non-state members, such as the creation of new categories of membership for non-profit entities and small and medium enterprises (SMEs), and providing financial benefits for members of more than one sector, taking into account potential losses of revenue from these measures. The Council should also discuss the fees, rights and modalities of participation of regional branches of global corporations as Sector Members in study groups and regional groups (i.e., should regional branches pay another full fee, a discounted fee, or no fee to participate in regional groups?).

**Principle #2 – Fostering participation by avoiding duplication of work**

Sector conferences/assemblies and sector advisory groups, when deciding on the structure of the sector and study groups, should take a comprehensive look at the other ITU Sectors and other international organizations and avoid duplication of work.

As an example, regional ITU-T study groups (RSGs) present a high potential for duplication of work. While we should be mindful of the objectives of Resolution 54 (Hammamet, 2016) and Resolution 123 (Busan, 2014) to increase the participation of developing countries in the work of ITU, we also need to consider that the creation of RSGs may in fact have a reverse effect. More RSG meetings to attend demand more budget, which may discourage all members, but particularly developing countries and non-state members, from participating in the regional organizations’ meetings and in the main study groups’ meetings. Furthermore, decisions in a RSG still need to be discussed and approved at the main study group.

Document [C17/72](https://www.itu.int/md/S17-CL-C-0072/en) provides an overview of regional groups and informs that there are currently 23 regional groups in ITU-T. Brazil does not oppose the creation of regional groups; however, Brazil is concerned with the effects of some regional groups in the efficiency of the technical work at main SGs and regional organizations, and the budgetary effects on ITU members and on the ITU itself. Avoiding unnecessary duplication and overlap of work is essential to increase the efficiency and inclusiveness of the work of ITU and to minimize the costs of participation in, and organization of, meetings.

**Principle #3 – Respecting non-state members’ competencies, expertise and inputs**

Some Sector Members have expressed a perception that their expertise, information and data provided, particularly in ITU-T study groups, are often discounted without discussion, leading to decision-making based on geopolitical reasons rather than on empirical evidence and technical expertise. Such a situation discourages industry participation and membership, and weakens the robustness and legitimacy of ITU Recommendations. Considering that most ITU Recommendations are technical standards to be adopted by the industry; technical robustness and legitimacy are crucial elements in their elaboration and approval.

Study group and working party chairs should treat Sector Member and Member State inputs equitably, recognizing the value that both the private sector and the public sector bring to the discussions. Multi-stakeholder collaboration is key for the development of ICTs and policy, and Member States should always be mindful of the role of the private sector and academia in the economic and technical development of ICTs. Their contributions should always be encouraged and valued.

Furthermore, there should be complete adherence to documented ITU processes and procedures, particularly in relation to document introduction, consensus determination, pre-determined outcomes and accurate meeting reporting, and especially in Study Groups. This would foster a more collegial and collaborative environment and strengthen relationships and trust between the ITU secretariat, as a neutral party, Member States and Sector Members.

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