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| **Council 2017 Geneva, 15-25 May 2017** |  |
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|  | **Document C17/121-E** |
| **23 May 2017** |
| **Original: French** |
| SUMMARY RECORD  OF THE  FOURTH plenary meeting | |
| Thursday, 18 May 2017, from 0935 to 1240 hours | |
| **Chairman**: Dr E. SPINA (Italy) | |

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|  | Subjects discussed | Documents |
| 1 | Report of the first meeting of the Expert Group on the International Telecommunication Regulations (EG-ITRs) | [C17/26](https://www.itu.int/md/S17-CL-C-0026/en),  [C17/81(Rev.1)](https://www.itu.int/md/S17-CL-C-0081/en), [C17/95](https://www.itu.int/md/S17-CL-C-0095/en) |
| 2 | ITU's activities related to Resolution 70 (Rev. Busan, 2014) and review of ITU's GEM policy | [C17/6](https://www.itu.int/md/S17-CL-C-0006/en), [C17/71](https://www.itu.int/md/S17-CL-C-0071/en) |
| 3 | Preparations for the 2018 Plenipotentiary Conference | [C17/5](https://www.itu.int/md/S17-CL-C-0005/en) |

# 1 Report of the first meeting of the Expert Group on the International Telecommunication Regulations (EG-ITRs) (Documents [C17/26](https://www.itu.int/md/S17-CL-C-0026/en), [C17/81](https://www.itu.int/md/S17-CL-C-0081/en)(Rev.1) and [C17/95](https://www.itu.int/md/S17-CL-C-0095/en))

1.1 The Chairman of the Expert Group, speaking over a video link, introduced Document C17/26, which summarized the results of the first meeting of the Expert Group on the International Telecommunication Regulations (EG-ITRs) held on 9 and 10 February 2017. The Group had discussed issues relating to its working methods, considered a number of contributions, and decided to adopt a step-by-step approach; the next step would be to determine any challenges that might arise from the implementation of the 2012 ITRs, in accordance with the ToR of the Group. The Council was invited to give some indications as to the dates of its final meeting in 2018.

1.2 All the councillors considered that the group's final meeting had to be held before the April 2018 session of the Council, in order to allow the Council and the Member States sufficient time to study the final report before the plenipotentiary conference, and also in view of No. 45 of the General Rules according to which the Secretary-General was required to assemble reports received and communicate them to the Member States at least four months before the opening of the conference. They endorsed the idea of asking Member States and Sector Members to submit more contributions, to enable the group to work on the basis of factual data.

1.3 A number of councillors emphasized the importance of the ITRs in the light of the rapid evolution in the field of telecommunications, and considered that the 2012 version of the ITRs was necessary and applicable to Member States.

1.4 The councillor from the Russian Federation introduced Document C17/81(Rev.1) submitted by his country, Armenia and Belarus, which sought increased efficiency in the work of EG-ITRs. It was proposed, among other things, that the final report should comprise two sections: future consideration of the 2012 ITRs, and the applicability of the 2012 ITRs. A number of councillors supported the contribution, as time was limited and it was important to enhance the efficiency of the group's work.

1.5 The councillor from Brazil introduced Document C17/95, on the review of the International Telecommunication Regulations, highlighting the four major issues raised and setting out the relevant arguments and the position of Brazil. Those issues were: the applicability of the ITRs; the need for a periodic review; the cost-benefits aspects of holding a new WCIT; and the impacts on international cooperation and ITU's reputation.

1.6 Several councillors said that it was important for the group to work efficiently in order to achieve progress and find points of agreement. Discussions needed to find ways of reconciling currently divergent points of view in order to find a solution.

1.7 The councillor from Canada, speaking as Chairman of TSAG, recalled that on the role of the Study Groups in providing information with regard to the implementation of the ITRs, TSAG agreed that the Chairman should solicit the views of the relevant ITU-T Study Groups with respect to the implementation of the existing 2012 ITRs and the information that is made available would be included in the report of the TSB Director to the next meeting of the expert group.

1.8 One councillor wished to have a legal opinion on what was meant by the term "review" in the expression "periodic review", since it could be understood to mean either "review" or "revision". In the former case, amendments would be made to existing provisions, and the new ITRs would complement the existing ITRs. If the intention was revision, the new ITRs would replace the existing ones.

1.9 The Chairman of the Expert Group recalled that the issues raised had already been discussed. It had been agreed that what was required was to review, rather than revise, the 2012 ITRs. In that respect, the Russian Federation's document was clear and appropriate. The intention was to consider the applicability of the 2012 ITRs in the light of contributions from Member States and Sector Members.

1.10 For a number of councillors, there was no doubt that the terms of reference of the Expert Group, as defined by Council Resolution 1379 and PP-14 Resolution 146 (Rev. Busan, 2014), were to review the 2012 ITRs, rather than revise them. Concerns were raised with regards to various aspects of the structure proposed by the Russian Federation..

1.11 Some councilors suggested that the Expert Group develop the structure of the final report at the next meeting of the group.

1.12 Following an exchange of views, the Chairman suggested that the Expert Group hold three more meetings (September 2017, January 2018 and the final one on 12 and 13 April 2018, before the April session of the Council). She proposed further that the participants in the Expert Group submit as many contributions to the group as possible regarding the structure of the final report; those contributions would be studied by the group in the same way as those of the Russian Federation and Brazil.

1.13 It was so **agreed**.

# 2 ITU's activities related to Resolution 70 (Rev. Busan, 2014) and review of ITU's GEM policy (Documents [C17/6](https://www.itu.int/md/S17-CL-C-0006/en) and [C17/71](https://www.itu.int/md/S17-CL-C-0071/en))

2.1 The Chief of the Strategic Planning & Membership Department (SPM) introduced Document C17/6, describing ITU's activities in promoting the use of ICTs to advance gender equality and women's empowerment, and Document C17/71, on the results of the review of the Union's GEM policy. That review involved an analysis of ITU's compliance with the United Nations System-Wide Action Plan (UN-SWAP) on gender equality and women's empowerment, an internal audit on the GEM policy, and a broad staff consultation. The document also contained a plan for implementing the policy with the aim of filling gaps in the latter in relation to the UN-SWAP.

2.2 All the councillors taking the floor welcomed the priority accorded by the Secretary‑General to the issue of gender equality and women's empowerment, and commended the work done in that area by the Chief of the SPM Department. One councillor cited SDG 5 as the reference in the area of women's empowerment. A number of councillors noted the progress achieved in their countries with regard to improving the condition of women and girls in general, and with regard to participation of women and girls in initiatives such as "Girls in ICT Day" and "EQUALS" in particular. The work and publication on Raising Women’s Voices in Intergovernmental Forums was also appreciated, and the NOW4WRC and WISE initiatives were acknowledged. Several councillors stressed the dynamic character of the GEM implementation plan and the necessity of annual reporting in that area. One councillor asked whether the internal audit of the policy could be consulted.

2.3 The Secretary-General acknowledged unanimous support of the councilors and reaffirmed his commitment, and that of the entire Union, to the principle of gender equality and women's empowerment. With regard to budgetary issues, the activities in question required posts more than anything, while the concern to submit a balanced budget presupposed the elimination of posts. Payment of earmarked voluntary contributions might offer a solution. He noted in conclusion that the internal audit on the GEM policy could be made available to councillors.

2.4 The Chairman proposed that Documents C17/6 and C17/71 be noted, the GEM Implementation Plan (Document C17/71) be approved, and the secretariat be requested to prepare, for the 2018 session of the Council, a report on the implementation of that plan in 2017 and its update for 2018.

2.5 It was so **agreed**.

# 3 Preparations for the 2018 Plenipotentiary Conference (Document [C17/5](https://www.itu.int/md/S17-CL-C-0005/en))

3.1 The representative of the secretariat, introducing Document C17/5, recalled that on 13 February 2017 the Secretary-General had announced that the venue and dates of PP-18, namely, Dubai (United Arab Emirates), from Monday, 29 October, to Friday, 16 November, had been approved by the requisite majority of the Union's Member States. The secretariat had sent a team to Dubai to visit the conference centre and other infrastructure facilities including hotels, and to determine the arrangements that would be needed in terms of security, communications, protocol and other logistical aspects. Talks were under way with the Government of the United Arab Emirates with a view to concluding an agreement with the host country, which would be signed by both parties.

3.2 The councillor from the United Arab Emirates thanked ITU and its Member States for their confidence. He noted that his country had requested a slight change to the dates of PP-18 to enable it to start on Sunday, 28 October and end on Thursday, 15 November, as Friday and Saturday were the weekly rest days in the UAE.

3.3 The councillors taking the floor thanked the United Arab Emirates for their hospitality. As some councillors had asked about the legal difficulties that might arise from changing the dates already adopted, the Legal Adviser explained that, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Convention, the Council had taken a decision regarding the dates of PP-18 and that decision had been agreed by the requisite majority of the Union's Member States. There was nevertheless nothing to stop the Council from changing those dates, but in order to do so it had to adopt a new decision and once again seek the concurrence of a majority of the Member States, in accordance with No. 6 of the Convention.

3.4 As one councillor had asked about possible financial implications of the requested change of dates, the Chairman proposed that discussion on the issue be resumed at a later sitting, to enable the secretariat to provide clarification on that point for the Council.

3.5 It was so **agreed**.

3.6 The observer from Uruguay announced that during PP-18, his country would be putting forward a candidate for the directorship of BR, a post that had not been held by a representative of the Americas for a long time.

The Secretary-General: The Chairman:  
H. ZHAO E. SPINA

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