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| **COUNCIL WORKING GROUP ON THE USE OF THE SIX OFFICIAL LANGUAGES OF THE UNION (RES. 1238)** 7th meeting, Geneva, 1 February 2017 |  |
| INTERNATIONAL TELECOMMUNICATION UNION |  |
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|  | **Document CWG-LANG/7/2-E** |
| **14 December 2016** |
| **English only** |

**Report by the Secretary-General**

PURSUANT TO RESOLUTION 154 (REV. BUSAN, 2014)  
AND RESOLUTION 1372

The present report, submitted by the Secretary-General through the good offices of the CWG-LANG, aims at updating the ITU Council on the implementation of Resolution 154 (Rev. Busan, 2014) regarding the use of ITU’s six official languages on an equal footing and adheres, further, to provisions in Council Resolution 1372, as revised in 2016.

The Secretariat is pleased to note that steady progress continues to be made on all fronts leading to full, equitable use of ITU’s six official languages, as evidenced below:

1. ***Evolution of the budget for translation of documents to the six official languages of the Union since 2010***

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Translation volumes continue to reflect full equality of treatment of all 6 ITU official languages. Translation output figures between 1 January 2016 and 30 November 2016 are as follows:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | Arabic | Chinese | English | French | Russian | Spanish | **TOTAL** |
| Number of Translated Pages | 6343 | 6482 | 2101 | 7313 | 6507 | 6556 | **35302** |

* On average, approximately 20% of the work was outsourced (with that percentage exceeding 28% in the case of some languages).

Translation operations continue to show consistent savings, with actual disbursements revealing savings of as much as 14% for 2016.

1. ***Procedures adopted by other international organizations inside and outside of the United Nations system and benchmark studies on their costs of translation***

Through its active participation in the International Annual Meeting on Language Arrangements, Documentation and Publications (IAMLADP) and its working groups and task-forces, plus the Joint Inter-Agency Meeting on Computer-Aided Translation and Terminology (JIAMCATT), ITU keeps abreast of procedures and IT tools adopted by other IOs and adapts its business model and procedures to the best practices resulting from such interaction.

A Statement on multilingualism was adopted at IAMLADP’s last meeting (UNOV, Vienna, 20-22 June 2016), in order to reinstate the **importance of multilingualism** for Member Organizations and their Member States, and to obtain from the respective Governing Bodies the promulgation of a clear multilingualism policy framework.

The system-wide Agreement governing the hiring of short-term interpreters by the UN agencies will expire at the end of June, 2017. Formal negotiations are already underway between the UN organizations and AIIC (the International Association of Conference Interpreters) with a view to redrafting the Agreement that will be enforced for five years as of July 2017. Under the leadership of the UN DGACM, ITU is articulating with its sister agencies a common framework of measures towards more economical and streamlined provisions. Highlights of the new Agreement will be summarized in the next report.

1. ***Initiatives undertaken by the General Secretariat and the three Bureaux to increase efficiencies and cost savings on the implementation of Res.154 (Rev. Busan, 2014) and Res. 1372***

In 2016, the Secretariat introduced another set of initiatives aiming to increase efficiency and reduce costs while promoting the equitable use of ITU official languages. The Secretariat notes, with satisfaction, that all proposed measures have attained the intended results partly or fully, as noted below:

* The consideration of a new **Document Production System** in ITU is continuing and a negotiation for buying an existent software developed by UNODC in Vienna was done during 2016. This software is already in use in UN Vienna, UN New York, UNECA in Addis Ababa and UN Geneva for this purpose. The software needs customization to meet ITU needs in terms of document and publications workflow. This customization is being carried presently with the interested parties and the roll-out is expected in 2017.
* Efforts to **reduce the use of paper documents by ITU interpreters** have been the subject of another two weeks of tests during ITU-D meetings. C&P continues to engage with the interpreters and the Bureaux in search of the ideal balance.
* C&P has initiated consultations with actors involved and other agencies with a view to define qualitative and quantitative **performance indicators** both for translation and interpretation with regard to productivity, timely delivery, and use of ITU’s Conference Proposal Interface (CPI), among others.

1. ***Alternative translation procedures***

The Union is constantly evaluating, testing and implementing viable and innovative translation procedures. In addition to outsourcing of translation work to recognized translation companies and freelance translators through calls for tender, significant progress is noted in the areas below:

* ITU keeps abreast of developments in **computer-aided translation and machine translation**, and of their viability for possible integration in the translation workflow. To that effect, a project to improve the translators’ working environment is ongoing. For the moment, the ITU terminology database (Termite) has been integrated into **LogiTerm**, the main computer-aided translation tool used, thus making all resources available to the translator within only one interface. Moreover, a training was given in November to translators to initiate them to even more functions of the tool that could help them saving time in their daily work.

With regards to the current **machine translation project** in liaison with WIPO, more language pairs are being added (current language pairs are English to Chinese, French and Spanish). The possibility to integrate it with the translation tool is to be investigated.

* Council-15 had instructed the Secretary-General and the Directors of the Bureaux “to study the **use of remote interpretation** in consultation with CWG-LANG.” (Document C15/99-E). While cognizant of the potential legal, technical and financial difficulties involved in bringing such a system to fruition, the Secretariat commissioned a preliminary study by C&P and IS. On occasion of the ITU Telecom 2016, a full remote interpretation pilot test was conducted in English and French. A team of interpreters working out of standard booths in Geneva (ITU room K) managed to service a total of two sessions taking place in Bangkok on November 16, 2016. Tests were conducted in partnership with a Zurich-based private company, which offered to showcase its cloud-based technology free of charge. From a technical point of view, results, although promising, were inconclusive. C&P and IS will therefore conduct further tests in the future on different platforms and technologies.
* From 21 January 2016 to 24 November 2016, a total number of 50 webpages were translated into Arabic, Chinese and Spanish within the scope of the **pilot project for the translation of webpages with the help of some administrations. Arabic** translations were organized by the Administration of Egypt. For translation in **Chinese**, these were organized by the Ministry of Industry and Information Technology from China. **Spanish** translations were performed under the auspices of the Administration of Argentina.

Generally the translation was done in a timely manner based on the relaxed time limit set (5 pages/2 working days). The quality of translation did not meet normal ITU requirements, mainly due to an insufficient knowledge of ITU terminology, its documentation and its processes; the non-observance of the hierarchy of sources (most relevant source of text of the highest level for the specific context), inappropriate use of references, or non-respect of the House-style Manuals, and so all 50 pages had to be forwarded to the respective ITU translation sections for further processing.

Total ITU staff involved in the pilot project were: 13 (1 DPA, 1 reference, 3 Heads of Translation Sections, 3 COMPO, 1 IS, 4 webmaster (1xSector)).

The secretariat appreciates the cooperation of the Member States involved, however, in order to make this methodology cost effective and efficient, further effort will be required to improve the quality of the translations received so as to avoid the necessity of further processing by the ITU translation sections.

1. ***Progress made on the implementation of measures and principles for translation and interpretation adopted by the Council in its 2014 session***

The measures and principles for translation and interpretation, as adopted by Council in 2014 and 2016, are systematically considered by the secretariat as a benchmark in the delivery of translation and interpretation services for ITU conferences, meetings, documents and publications.

* To this end, all preparatory and in-session documents, including the provisional Final Acts, were delivered in the six official languages for the **WTSA-16**. Final versions of the outcome documents for **RA-15 and WRC-15** were also published in all six languages. The delivery of all relevant preparatory documentation in six languages for the **WTDC** in October of 2017 is on schedule.
* TSB continues to translate **Recommendations approved under the Alternative Approval Procedure (AAP)** within the limits of available translation budget. In the reporting period, TSB has requested the translation of seven Recommendations (191 English pages) into the five languages according to the specific needs expressed by the membership and within the limits of the budget available.

1. ***Use of languages on the ITU website***

As indicated in the previous report, all ‘level 0’ pages are now translated and published in the six languages. Between January and November 2016, some 150 pages have been translated and are currently displayed in all languages. It is a work in progress. Council-16, on revising [Resolution 1372](http://www.itu.int/md/S16-CL-C-0126/en), instructed the Secretary-General and the Directors of the Bureaux “to report to CWG-LANG on the measures taken to ensure on the ITU website in the medium term: i) the publication of new or modified pages in the six official languages simultaneously and ii) equality in terms of functionality and navigation”.

In response to this, an **Ad-Hoc Group on Multilingual ITU Web** was created, chaired by the Deputy Secretary General and attended by representatives of the three Sectors, the General Secretariat and other staff involved in web pages production. The group held **four meetings** in order to reflect on measures for structuring and controlling ITU Web publication, based on the “[Minimum standards for multilingualism of United Nations websites](http://www.un.org/en/sections/web-governance/minimum-standards-multilingualism-united-nations-websites/index.html)” published by the UN Department of Public Information, so as to improve the ITU Web governance and to provide a set of specific instructions to all ITU Web Editors/Authors aimed at accelerating the translation process.

The outcomes of those meetings were several documents of a very pragmatic nature, and among them the “Specific Instructions to all ITU Web Editors/Authors” (see Annex), conceived so as to satisfy the mandate stipulated by the Council in Resolution 1372 (Rev. 2016), and that will be implemented as of January 2017.

ANNEX

Instructions to all ITU Web Editors/Authors

**Introduction:**

The following instructions are obligatory requirements for ITU staff involved in creating and maintaining a web page, microsite[[1]](#footnote-1) or other related web property under the ITU brand. A key objective of these instructions is to limit the number of pages/sites on the ITU.int website which have been proliferating at an unmanageable rate resulting in a drop in quality, consistency, branding and style. These instructions work on the presumption that the ITU website must be coherent and consistent right across all aspects of the site i.e. one website for one ITU.

The purpose of these instructions is to achieve full consistency in these three key areas:

1. Web page creation
2. Multilingualism applied to the web
3. Translation process
4. **Creation of a web page**

When creating a web page the web author must have an answer to the most basic questions - is there a need for a web page? Clear criteria for deciding to create a web page must be defined and agreed to avoid proliferation of web pages or duplication of efforts with existing translations.

Who can create a web page? [Definition of roles and responsibilities have been outlined and agreed by the ITU’s Web and Editorial Board in 2014 and can be referenced on the ITU intranet.](https://intranet.itu.int/gs/spmd/web-guidelines/Pages/roles.aspx)

1. **Multilingual content**
   1. Multilingualism must be incorporated from the very beginning of any website project and should not be considered a mere translation exercise.
   2. Content authoring officers must ensure that content on their website is made available in all of the six Union’s official languages and must know in particular where they are obliged to have content in all six languages. For the regional pages, translations should be always be made available in the relevant official UN language of the region.
   3. A language ‘bar’ must be used to ensure users can navigate easily between the six official languages.
   4. Links must always lead to the language that they point to. It is not acceptable to have a link pointing to a page in another language only to find a message indicating it has not been translated to that language. The link should indicate it leads to a document in another language.
   5. Dynamic and streaming content from RSS feeds, Twitter etc. must be linked to a level 2 page, indicating that such content appears in the language it has been generated and is not translated.
   6. Web Pages can never mix languages into a jumble of different translations. All pages must be completely in the language expected by the user.
   7. Ensure that any acronyms being used are being used in the correct language.
   8. Banners and logos must not contain letters as a design element, nor should design elements be used as letters since they are difficult to adapt across languages.
   9. Translations must adhere to the highest standards. Machine translation is not acceptable for the ITU website, nor translations made by persons with only some knowledge of the language.
   10. When drafting content, authors must adhere to the ITU House Style Manuals for issues like the use of capital letters, acronyms, etc. The ITU terminology database known as [TERMITE](http://www.itu.int/terminology) must be used as the standard for ITU terminology.
   11. Footers and disclaimers must be in the official language selected.
   12. Contact pages and queries must be directed to the substantive offices and indicate the language(s) in which they operate.
   13. All (relatively) static content such as: About Us, Bios, Areas of Action, Regional Offices etc. must be in all six languages without exception.
   14. All pages shall have a back link option to the corporate home page of ITU.int in the respective language.
2. **Translation process**

Editorial instructions:

1. Limit the number of words per web page to [330] words.
2. All content of the web page must be accessible for translation (including banners, logos and slideshows).
3. Avoid all pictures, “labels” and graphics with text embedded in them in image format: These images cannot be edited to translate its content.
4. Web pages that are in the 6 languages must be as stable as possible.
5. Authors shall avoid creating pages for content that already exists in document form (Official Documents, Reports, Publications, etc.)
6. A unified page format shall be used whenever possible (Study Groups, Focus Groups, Workshops, and other groups; regular meetings (GSS, Telecom, etc.)
7. Reliable work forecasts must be established (indispensable to fulfill Council’s mandate).

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1. In ITU a microsite is understood as a website dedicated to a specific campaign, event or initiative which is not built on the ITU SharePoint CMS and/or incorporated into the corporate website but sits apart. An example would be the [ITU150 website](http://itu150.org/home/) developed with WordPress or the [Broadband Commission](http://www.broadbandcommission.org/Pages/default.aspx) which *is* built with SharePoint *but* has a separate identity and URL although fully developed and maintained by the ITU web team. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)