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**United Kingdom**

UK PROPOSALS REGARDING THE ITU STRATEGIC PLAN FOR 2020-23

# CONTRIBUTION TO THE THIRD MEETING OF THE COUNCIL WORKING GROUP FOR STRATEGIC AND FINANCIAL PLANS 2020-2023

1. **Introduction**

The UK believes that telecoms/ ICTs have a vital role in transforming social and economic development in every part of the world and the ITU’s role is integral in facilitating that. However, the environment in which the ITU works has been completely transformed over recent years as telecoms/ ICTs has expanded and developed and the regulatory and standardisation landscape has become more complex and difficult to navigate.

In this new environment it is not possible or appropriate for one organisation to tackle every issue by itself. There are many other competent organisations that develop telecoms/ ICT standards, with strong private sector engagement, dynamic technical expertise and robust, evidence-based decision-making processes. We need an ITU that is adaptive and responsive to this new 21st century environment and which keeps pace with best practice in order to continue to serve the needs of all its members.

The ITU can best serve the interests of its Members by engaging the capacity of the whole sector and by collaborating and working in genuine partnership with others to minimise conflict of work, achieving effective use of resources and harnessing and supporting expertise from outside the ITU.

We believe that the ITU has a vital strategic role helping its members to understand this new and more complex landscape, acknowledging explicitly where other organisations take the lead, supporting members to navigate this diverse landscape and sign-posting them to other relevant organisations where appropriate.

The ITU should act in the wider telecoms/ICTs environment as an advocate for the needs of developing countries and act in the wider global environment as a champion for the contribution that telecommunications/ICTs can make to sustainable development.

We want an ITU which continues to be a global leader for the 21st century, engaging and connecting all parts of the sector in order to help extend the benefits of the new telecoms/ ICT applications and services to all countries and so bridge the digital divide and make a strong contribution to delivering the Sustainable Development Goals.

In the light of the above, the UK wishes to make the following comments on the proposed Vision, Mission, Values and Goals for ITU for 2020-23.

1. **Vision, Mission, Values and Goals**

The UK has reviewed Resolution 71 (Busan 2014) and, in particular, the existing Vision, Mission, Values and Goals for the ITU which are set out in Annex 2. The UK has also reviewed the proposed modifications to the Vision, Mission, Values and Goals which the ITU Secretariat has proposed in its Contribution to this meeting (CWG-SFP 3/5) building on the proposals made at the second meeting of the CWG-SFP in September 2017. The UK offers the following comments:

General

The UK notes that the purpose of an institution’s ‘Vision’ is to be an aspirational statement as in ITU Secretariat’s proposal: ‘*the better world ITU wants to see’.* The Mission, as ITU Secretariat points out, describes an institution’s *‘main overall purposes’.* Similarly, ‘Goals’ set out the key attainments that an institution strives for in undertaking its Mission.

However, ‘Values’ are a different concept. Unlike the Vision, Mission and Goals, they refer not to ‘what’ is to be done and achieved but the ‘how’. Values relate to the philosophies and principles that guide an institution’s conduct and its relationship with the external world. Further, it is better that an institution articulates just a few values that is those that are most important. This is so staff who are responsible for achieving the Mission and Goals can more easily identify the values and work in accordance with them more readily and effectively.

Vision and Mission

We consider that the current Vision and Mission has served the ITU well for the period 2016-2019 and consider that they are still appropriate. However, the UK has reviewed the slightly modified versions as proposed by the ITU Secretariat in its Contribution (CWG-SFP 3/5) and we consider that these texts represent an improvement and so support them.

Values

The UK has reviewed the Values in Annex 2 of Resolution 71 (Busan 2014) and the revised text relating to Values contained in the ITU Secretariat’s proposal to this meeting.

The UK agrees that the Values set out in Section 1.3 of the Secretariat’s Contribution to this meeting of CWG-SFP are valuable but would propose a different formulation closer to the concept of ‘Values’ set out above:

* **Excellence (new)**

focusing on core strengths, make decisions on evidence and consensus, taking effective action and monitoring outputs, avoiding internal ITU duplication, championing the SDGs

* **Innovation (existing text but rewritten to be clearer)**

maintaining a focus on ICT innovation and network issues, seeking continuous improvement in existing standards and ways of working; genuine collaborating with other SDOs to stimulate innovation and synergy

* **Listening (new)**

Collaborating effectively with other technical and standards organisations to understand how each can add value, listening to the needs of all its Members but also the private sector, civil society and technical community

* **Universality and neutrality (existing – ie unchanged from 2014 text)**

As a United Nations specialized agency, ITU reaches, covers and represents all parts of the world. Within the remit of the Basic Instruments of the Union, its operations and activities reflect the express will of its membership. ITU also recognizes the overarching pre-eminence of human rights, including the right to freedom of opinion and expression, which includes the freedom to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers, and the right to not be subjected to arbitrary interference with privacy

Goals

We have reviewed the ITU’s Strategic Goals set out in Annex 2 of Resolution 71 (Busan 2014) and the revisions proposed by ITU Secretariat in its Contribution (CWG-SFP 3/5). The UK considers that the headline goals of ‘Growth, Inclusiveness, Sustainability and Innovation and Partnership’ are still relevant and supports the separation of ‘Innovation’ and ‘Partnership’. However, the UK proposes some tightening of the wording and some modifications to reflect a bit more ITU’s role in contributing to the United Nation’s Sustainable Development Goals.

The UK proposes the following modifications (the track changes are against the text in document CWG-SFP 3/5 including the track changes in that text):

**Goal 1 – Growth: Enable and foster access to and increased use of telecommunication/ICT in support of the digital economy and society**

, ITU will work to enable and foster access to, and significantly increase the use of, telecommunications/ICTs. Growth in the use of telecommunications/ICTs has a positive impact on short- and long-term socio-economic development, as well as on the growth of the digital economy, towards building an inclusive digital society. T

Goal 2 – Inclusiveness: Bridge the gaps for an inclusive digital society and provide broadband access ‘leaving no one behind’

Being committed to ensuring that everyone without exception benefits from telecommunications/ICTs, ITU will work to bridge the digital divides for an inclusive digital society and enable the provision of broadband access for all, leaving no one behind. Bridging the digital divide focuses on global telecommunication/ICT inclusiveness, fostering telecommunication/ICT access, accessibility, affordability and use in all countries and regions and for all peoples, including marginal and vulnerable populations, such as women and girls, youth, people with different income levels, indigenous peoples, older persons and persons with disabilities.

Goal 3 – Sustainability: Manage emerging risks and challenges resulting from the rapid growth of telecommunication/ICT

To promote the beneficial use of telecommunications/ICTs, ITU recognizes the need to manage emerging risks and challenges from the rapid growth of telecommunications/ICTs. The Union focuses on enhancing high quality, reliable, and resilient networks and systems and the sustainable and safe use of telecommunications/ICTs working effectively in close collaboration with all organizations and entities. Accordingly, the Union will work towards minimizing the negative impact of undesired collaterals, such as cybersecurity threats, including potential harm to the most vulnerable parts of society, in particular children, and negative effects on the environment, including e-waste.

**Goal 4 – Innovation: Enable innovation in telecommunication/ICT in support of the digital transformation of society**

Fostering an innovative ecosystem and adapting to the changing telecommunication/ICT environment. In the rapidly evolving environment, the Union seeks to contribute to the development of an environment that is sufficiently conducive to innovation, where advances in new technologies become a key driver for the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development.

Goal 5 –Partnership: Strengthen cooperation among ITU membership, private sector including SMEs, academia, intergovernmental organizations and all other stakeholders in support of the ITU strategic goals

In order to facilitate the achievement of the above strategic goals, the Union recognizes the need to foster engagement and cooperation among entities, such as Sector Members, academia, private sector, other SDOs, other United Nations entities, international financial institutions, foundations, non-governmental organizations and other relevant partners. The Union also recognizes the need to contribute to the global partnership to strengthen the role of telecommunication/ICTs as means of implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals.

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