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| Report by the Secretary-General |
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| Optimization of ITU’s High-Level Events of a global nature |

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| SummaryThe following document presents options to optimize ITU’s high-level events of a global nature by 2020, following the considerations made by the 2018 Session of ITU Council.Action requiredThe Plenipotentiary Conference is invited to **consider** this report.\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_References[C17/89](https://www.itu.int/md/S17-CL-C-0089/en), [CWG-FHR 8/28](https://www.itu.int/md/S18-CLCWGFHRM8-C-0028/en), [C18/55](https://www.itu.int/md/S18-CL-C-0055/en) |

1. **Background**
	1. The increasing complexity of the information and communication technology (ICT) sector has led to an increase in the total number of events organized by the Union throughout the year. As a reference, in 2018 ITU organized a broad variety of events, both in Geneva as well as hosted by ITU Member States, including ITU conferences, seminars, forums, symposiums, and workshops in addition to the traditional study group meetings.
	2. The ITU secretariat continues its efforts to develop a coordinated calendar of activities and events, taking account of the different audiences and topics for each event. This effort is led by the ITU Inter-Sectoral Coordination Task Force (ISC-TF). Despite the progress made in recent years, a number of ITU Member States have requested the secretariat to make additional efforts to further “optimize ITU high-level events of global nature”, which have grown in number in recent years.
	3. This document follows up on the discussion held at the 2017 and 2018 Sessions of the Council, as well as on the CWG-FHR on this issue, and presents options for consideration of the 2018 Plenipotentiary Conference.
2. **Considerations**
	1. *Scope.* The scope of the proposal presented in this document is to optimize ITU high-level events of a global nature such as ITU Telecom, Global Symposium for Regulators (GSR), World Telecommunication/ICT Indicators Symposium, WSIS Forum, World Telecommunication/ Information and Communication Technology Policy Forum (WTPF) and ITU Kaleidoscope Academic Conference, etc.
	2. *Events excluded from this exercise*. Following the discussions held during the 2018 Session of the Council, the present document excludes the conferences, assemblies and other meetings referred to in the ITU Constitution and Convention, such as the ITU Plenipotentiary Conference, the ITU Council, or the Sector conferences (world and regional) and assemblies.
	3. *Timeline.* To define a new schedule starting from 2020, taking into consideration that the development of ITU´s calendar of activities for 2019 has already started.
	4. *Rationalization.* The exercise of defining a new schedule for ITU events of global nature should aim at the rationalization of the annual calendar of ITU activities.
	5. *Co-location.* Take account of recent positive experiences in collocating several ITU events around the same venue and dates. Examples of this includes the organization of the 2016 ITU Kaleidoscope Academic Conference (hosted back-to-back with ITU Telecom World 2016), as well as the organization of the Smart ABC programme in ITU Telecom World 2017 and 2018 and the ITU-T Chief Technology Officers meeting. Such co-location allows each event to maintain a clear differentiation of audiences, focus, and agenda, while optimizing the cost and resources of organization.
	6. *Segmentation.* The optimization of events can be achieved by narrowing the target audience for each event, aimed at offering only one event per year for a particular topic of interest to each of the core audiences involved in ITU´s activities.
	7. *Events at ITU HQ and hosted events.* The proposal aims to balance ITU´s schedule of events in Geneva, with the recognized benefits of having ITU events hosted by Member States in the regions so as to facilitate participation and give the opportunity for ITU to become better known around the world.
	8. With these considerations, there appear two options which will be developed in sections 3 and 4.
* Option 1. Consolidation of ITU events around two periods per year.
* Option 2. As option 1 but to segment the events into topic areas.
1. **Option 1. Consolidation of ITU agenda**
	1. The optimization of ITU high-level events of global nature can be achieved by consolidating the agenda of activities around two periods per year: (a) *Period 1:* Hosted in Geneva in the first/second quarter (March-April); and (b) *Period 2.* Hosted by one ITU Member State, in the third quarter (September). See figure 1.

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| **ITU events in 2018** |
| **Jan** | **Feb** | **Mar** | **Apr** | **May** | **Jun** | **Jul** | **Aug** | **Sep** | **Oct** | **Nov** | **Dec** |
|  |  | WSIS Forum-18 |  |  | Capacity Building Symposium | GSR-18 |  | ITU Telecom World 2018 |  | Kaleidoscope | WTIS/18WRS-18 |

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| **ITU events in 2020** |
| **Jan** | **Feb** | **Mar** | **Apr** | **May** | **Jun** | **Jul** | **Aug** | **Sep** | **Oct** | **Nov** | **Dec** |
|  |  |  | 1st period  (GVA)( \*) |  |  |  |  |  | 2nd period (hosted) |  |  |  |

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| Event 1 | Event 2 | Event 3 |

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| Event 1 | Event 2 | Event 3 |

Figure 1. Consolidation of ITU events (Option 1)

(\*) Note: Events in this period may need to be also hosted away from Geneva during the timeline of the project for the New Building for ITU Headquarters

* 1. The consolidation of high-level events around two calendar periods per year would lead to a simplified ITU agenda. In addition, it would provide an opportunity for rationalizing the current cost of organizing events, as well as to modernize, restructure and streamline the running of the secretariat which supports organizing events. However, such consolidation would require increased internal coordination and more advanced planning to schedule and implement each event.
	2. With regards to organizing the second period in the regions, this option would provide an opportunity to modernize the organization of these events and to reduce their overall duration.
1. **Option 2. Segmentation of ITU events**
	1. The second approach to optimize ITU high-level events of global nature is to refine the focus of each event and identify a specific set of audiences depending on the topic. This will allow ITU to apply more detailed audience segmentation within each of its current stakeholder categories, to identify specific profiles of prospective attendees rather than issue blanket invitations.[[1]](#footnote-1) This will allow ITU to broaden its stakeholder base and engage in more targeted outreach for each event depending on the objectives and scope. It is important to note that the segmentation of content for these events will not affect the rights of participation of ITU Membership at these events, which will still be defined by ITU basic instruments.
	2. Such an approach will ensure that ITU events continue to benefit from multi-stakeholder participation, but will also ensure that each event identifies the common threads which link participants from different institutional settings, and that invitations are targeted to the right profile of participant from each of the organization’s core-stakeholder groups.
	3. The segmentation of high-level events would also require strengthening internal coordination to plan events, but each event would keep its current teams and resources. This approach would not reduce the total number of events nor reduce the resource implications for ITU.
2. **Next steps**
	1. The optimization of ITU high-level events of a global nature would depend on the approach adopted, considering the options presented above. The ITU Plenipotentiary Conference is invited to continue the discussions initiated at the 2018 Session of Council and provide further guidance to ITU secretariat to advance in the development an optimized calendar of activities starting from 2019:
* November 2018-June 2019. ITU secretariat to review ITU schedule of events and produce a new plan for 2020, taking into account the decisions made at PP-18.
* Starting from January 2019. ITU secretariat will issue a single invitation letter to all administrations announcing the calendar of ITU events of global nature for the year.
* July-November 2019. All bureaux to adjust their calendars and events to the new planning developed as per indications of ITU membership. When necessary, ITU secretariat to explore introducing efficiencies between teams organizing events. The ISC-TF to establish a team to coordinate content for ITU events to ensure consistency.
* January 2020. New calendar of ITU events to enter into force.

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1. *For example, from the public administration side the audience may be Ministers, regulatory agencies, broadcasters, or international / foreign affairs depending on the true focus of the meeting/event. Similarly, the private sector audience could also be differentiated by public policy, marketing and communications, supply chain management, R&D, engineering, product development, etc.* [↑](#footnote-ref-1)