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| **Council 2020** |  |
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| **Agenda item: PL 2.8** | **Revision 1 to Document C20/30-E** |
| **5 October 2020** |
| **Original: English** |
| Report by the Secretary-General | |
| WORLD TELECOMMUNICATION DEVELOPMENT CONFERENCE 2021 | |

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| Summary  This document covers the preparations so far for the organization of the World Telecommunication Development Conference 2021 (WTDC-21) that is scheduled to take place in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, from 8 to 19 November 2021.  Action required  The Council is invited **to note** this report. |

1. **Background**
   1. No. 141 of the ITU Constitution stipulates that there shall be a World Telecommunication Development Conference (WTDC) between two Plenipotentiary Conferences.
   2. Resolution 77 (Rev. Dubai, 2018) resolves to hold the WTDC in the last quarter of 2021.
   3. WTDC Resolution 31 (Rev. Buenos Aires, 2017) expresses the firm convictionthat the coordination of preparations at regional level for the six regions of the ITU Telecommunication Development Sector (ITU-D) are of great benefit to Member States.
2. **Place, duration, dates, and venue for WTDC-21**
   1. At its 2019 session, the ITU Council noted with appreciation the official invitation from the Government of Ethiopia to host WTDC‑21 in Addis Ababa from 8 to 19 November 2021 and approved the precise place and exact dates.
   2. By [Circular Letter No. 19/33](https://www.itu.int/md/S19-SG-CIR-0033/) of 22 July 2019, ITU Member States were invited to confirm, in writing, their agreement with the precise place and exact dates of WTDC-21 by 30 September 2019.
   3. By [Circular Letter No. 19/45](https://www.itu.int/md/S19-SG-CIR-0045/) of 3 October 2019, ITU Member States were informed that the consultation carried out as outlined above had received the agreement of the required majority of ITU Member States, in accordance with Nos. 42 and 213 of the ITU Convention.
   4. It is envisaged that a Youth Summit will be held on 6 and 7 November 2021, just prior to WTDC-21, also in Addis Ababa.
   5. The current COVID-19 pandemic has caused the World Telecommunication Standardization Assembly 2020 (WTSA-20) to be postponed to dates in the first quarter of 2021 (23 February-5 March 2021), during the WTDC-21 preparatory process. The secretariat is monitoring these developments to ensure that the preparatory process and conference is not adversely impacted.
3. **Latest developments**

3.1 A first site visit took place from 30 September to 3 October 2019 by an ITU team to visit potential venues to hold the events, and to visit the potential hotels where participants and ITU staff will be staying.

3.2 A draft Host Country Agreement was shared with H.E. Dr Abraham Belay, Minister of Innovation and Technology, on 26 February 2020. Negotiations between Ethiopia and ITU relating to the holding, organizing and financing of WTDC-21 and of the Youth Summit are now under way.

3.3 Mr Reba Balcha, Director General of the Ethiopian Communications Authority, participated in the Web Dialogue on WTDC that took place online on 24 March, confirming Ethiopia’s commitment to the holding of WTDC-21 in Addis Ababa. Mr Balcha stated that Ethiopia had already put in place an Organising Committee and various subcommittees and had started internal preparations. The signature of the Host Country Agreement is currently being discussed with the Ethiopian government and is likely to take place in early November, marking the start of the official one-year count-down to WTDC-21.

3.4 Discussions on the Conference preparatory process and the development of impact-oriented outcomes began in a brainstorming session during [TDAG-19](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Conferences/TDAG/Pages/TDAG24/default.aspx). These discussions have been further informed through a [membership-wide survey](https://itu-d.limequery.com/365362?newtest=Y&lang=en), as well as a [TDAG web dialogue](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Conferences/TDAG/Pages/TDAG25/default.aspx). The ongoing consultations continued up to the TDAG meeting in June 2020, which decided to create three working groups, two of which are directly linked to WTDC-21, and hold an extraordinary meeting on 23 November 2020 (TDAG-20/3) to endorse the proposals from these working groups:

a) The TDAG Working Group on WTDC Preparations (TDAG-WG-Prep), which will work until TDAG-20/3 and submit its proposals to this meeting, for endorsement. This group picked up from the above-mentioned discussions. The terms of reference and other information about the work of this group may be found on the [TDAG-WG-Prep webpage](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Conferences/TDAG/Pages/TDAG_WG_WTDC_Prep.aspx).

b) The TDAG Working Group on WTDC Resolutions, Declaration and Thematic Priorities (TDAG-WG-RDTP). The work of this group will continue until TDAG-21. The terms of reference and other information about the work of this group may be found on the [TDAG-WG-RDTP website](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Conferences/TDAG/Pages/TDAG_WG_WTDC.aspx).

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