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| **Council 2020 Geneva, 9-19 June 2020** |  |
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| **Agenda item:** | **Document C20/66-E** |
| **28 May 2020** |
| **Original: Russian** |
| Note by the Secretary-General | |
| CONTRIBUTION FROM the RUSSIAN FEDERATION | |

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| Draft resolution [COVID-19]  Use of telecommunications/information and communication technologies to support the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic and recovery efforts |

I have the honour to transmit to the Member States of the Council a contribution submitted by the Russian Federation.

Houlin ZHAO  
 Secretary-General

Russian Federation

Draft resolution [COVID-19]

Use of telecommunications/information and communication technologies to support the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic and recovery efforts

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| **Summary**  The present document contains a draft Resolution [COVID-19] entitled "Use of telecommunications/information and communication technologies to support the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic and recovery efforts".  **Action required**  The Council is invited to review this document and approve the draft Resolution [COVID-19] entitled "Use of telecommunications/information and communication technologies to support the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic and recovery efforts". |

resolution [COVID-19]

Use of telecommunications/information and communication technologies to support the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic and recovery efforts

The Council,

recalling

*a)* Article 40 of the ITU Constitution, on priority of telecommunications concerning safety of life;

*b)* Chapter VII of the Radio Regulations, on distress and safety communications, and Article 5 of the International Telecommunication Regulations, on safety of life and priority of telecommunications;

*c)* Resolution 136 (Rev.Dubai, 2018) of the Plenipotentiary Conference, on the use of telecommunications/information and communication technologies (ICTs) for humanitarian assistance and in emergency and disaster situations, including health-related emergencies;

*d)* Resolution 202 (Busan, 2014), on using ICTs to break the chain of health-related emergencies such as Ebola virus transmission;

*e)* Resolution 74/270 of the General Assembly of the United Nations, on global solidarity to fight the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19), calling on the United Nations system to work with all relevant actors in order to mobilize a coordinated global response to the pandemic and its adverse social, economic and financial impact on all societies;

*f)* paragraph 20 c) ("E‑environment") of Action Line C7 of the Geneva Plan of Action adopted by the first phase of the World Summit on the Information Society in 2003, calling for the establishment of monitoring systems using ICTs to forecast and monitor the impact of natural and man-made disasters, particularly in developing countries[[1]](#footnote-1);

*g)* Sustainable Development Goal 3 ("Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages"), Goal 9 ("Build resilient infrastructures, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation"), and Goal 11 ("Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable") of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,

recognizing

*a)* the seriousness and magnitude of potential disasters, including outbreaks of diseases such as COVID-19, that may cause dramatic human suffering;

*b)* the significant role of telecommunications/ICTs in ensuring a more effective response to the emergencies related to the COVID-19 pandemic and more effective prevention and mitigation of those emergencies;

*с)* the tragic events in the world connected to the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic that clearly demonstrate the need for high-quality communications infrastructure and for the collection and dissemination of relevant information to assist public-safety, health and disaster-relief agencies, and to ensure continuity in the educational process and to safeguard jobs, especially for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), by making use of the possibilities offered by telecommunications/ICTs;

*d)* the need to minimize risk to human life and health and to cover the necessary general public information and communication needs, which requires the effective functioning of telecommunication/ICT systems indispensable for the provision of effective and appropriate humanitarian assistance as well as the adoption of measures to mitigate the social impact and to restore the economy for a sustainable and comprehensive recovery;

*e)* that information needs to be accessible to all social groups and disseminated in local languages so as to ensure its maximum use;

*f)* the social and economic dangers of using telecommunications/ICTs knowingly to disseminate false and even life-threatening information during an emergency;

*g)* the need for close cooperation between the State and private sectors for prevention, mitigation and relief measures in pandemic-related emergencies;

*h)* the need for a common understanding of which network infrastructure components are required in order to provide rapidly-installed, interoperable, robust telecommunication/ICT capabilities in humanitarian-assistance and disaster-relief operations for epidemic-related emergencies and to mitigate their adverse social, economic and financial impact,

considering

*a)* the broad range of ITU standards and regulations that make it possible to use telecommunication/ICT systems and applications to meet various social, economic and operational objectives such as remote work, distance learning and telemedicine for relief operations in various emergency situations;

*b)* the Union's experience with best practices on how ICTs can be used to manage the communications infrastructure to support the exchange of timely information on health-related emergencies such as Ebola virus transmission;

*с)* initiatives to harness information technologies for defeating COVID-19 launched by ITU and jointly with other organizations of the United Nations system and the private sector, including the Global Network Resiliency Platform, the webinar series "Digital Cooperation During COVID-19 and Beyond", and so forth,

resolves

1 that the Union under its mandate should continue to collaborate with all relevant parties, including United Nations agencies, and in particular the World Health Organization, in order to define and engage in programmes to respond to and address COVID-19-related emergencies;

2 to continue to support the rapid development and adoption of telecommunication/ICT innovations aimed at developing and rapidly deploying telecommunication/ICT infrastructure that will help to improve the effectiveness of humanitarian assistance and disaster and emergency relief in pandemic-related situations and mitigate their adverse social, economic and financial impact for all countries;

3 to continue to assist the Member States, when so requested, in the implementation of urgent measures to mobilize the support of governments, the industry and other partners so as to break the chain of pandemic-related emergencies and help provide online services to the entire population, safeguard jobs, particularly for SMEs, and ensure continuity in the educational process,

*instructs the Secretary-General*

1 to coordinate cross-sectoral activities in the Union and collaborate with other relevant United Nations agencies and stakeholders in implementing this resolution;

2 to ensure implementation of this resolution within the allocated resources in the 2020-2023 financial plan and biennial budget as approved by the ITU Council;

3 to provide a comprehensive report to the Council at its 2021 session detailing the activities, actions and engagements that the Union is undertaking in response to this resolution,

instructs the Directors of the three Bureaux

1 to develop guidelines and compile best practices on how telecommunications/ICTs can be used to identify the communications infrastructure needed to support the exchange of timely information on pandemic-related emergencies and response measures, to mitigate their impact and provide relief to the population, and to mitigate the adverse social, economic and financial consequences for all countries, taking into account the experience acquired through the implementation of Resolutions 136 and 202 of the Plenipotentiary Conference;

2 to conduct studies into the changed situation with regard to telecommunication/ICT networks and services under pandemic conditions, including new aspects of ICT use such as ubiquitous alerts and information, the steep increase in demand for social connections and working remotely, access to virtual government, cultural, domestic and other services, the legal status of decisions taken at electronic meetings, and so on;

3 in close cooperation with the telecommunication market participants, to disseminate examples of best practices in the use of telecommunications/ICTs during the pandemic and the recovery, to analyse the statistical data and to identify critical questions on which ITU may need to focus efforts in the future;

4 to promote the rapid development of standards to support the greater use of telecommunication/ICT systems and applications in emergency situations, with particular emphasis on epidemic and pandemic-related disasters;

5 to conduct a study of technical options for preventing the growing threat of the dissemination of misinformation in telecommunication/ICT networks, in particular options for authenticating the identity of service users on the Internet;

6 to provide technical assistance and support to developing countries, at their request, in developing their telecommunication/ICT infrastructure and building capacity to support the strengthening of their respective telecommunications/ICT-centric innovation ecosystems and the provision of distance learning and remote working, particularly for SMEs;

7 to encourage a stronger partnership between the State and private sectors for the development of an inclusive, safe, robust and physically and economically accessible telecommunication/ICT infrastructure that can give the population, especially persons with disabilities or special needs and other vulnerable groups in the population, access to timely information about pandemic-related emergencies and response, mitigation and relief measures;

8 to support the development of the potential and digital literacy of the population to increase the possibilities for their swifter and easier transition to working and learning remotely and the adoption of the widespread and safe use of different tools to facilitate this process, thereby supporting continuity for economic, social and financial activities so as to maximize resilience during the pandemic and recovery efforts;

9 to continue to cooperate with other related international and regional organizations on enhancing the Digital Skills Toolkit to support Member States in designing national and regional strategies for combating the pandemic and its consequences,

invites Member States and other members of the Union

1 to cooperate with and offer all possible forms of assistance and support to consumers, organizations and, where possible, to other countries, especially developing countries, as regards humanitarian assistance, as well as to industries involved in telecommunications/ICTs with a view to, *inter alia*, tracking infections, providing a response, informing the population about measures adopted, taking steps to safeguard jobs, when possible, and ensuring continuity in the educational process during the pandemic and the mitigation of its adverse social, economic and financial consequences;

2 to promote international, regional, subregional, multilateral and bilateral projects and programmes to address the need to use telecommunications/ICTs as a tool to support the mitigation of the consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic so as to break the chain of emergencies it has caused and facilitate recovery, including through the provision of life-saving infrastructure and information to local communities, especially in local languages;

3 to take an active part in the development of standards, guidelines and examples of best practices on the use of telecommunications/ICTs during emergencies and disasters related to epidemics or pandemics.

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1. These include the least developed countries, small island developing states, landlocked developing countries and countries with economies in transition**.** [↑](#footnote-ref-1)