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| **Virtual consultation of councillors  starting 9 June 2020** |  |
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|  | **Document VC\5-E**  **29 May 2020**  **Original English** |

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| **Name of the submitting Member State(s):** | **Republic of India** |
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| **Document title:** | **Hosting of ITU-World Telecommunication Standardization Assembly (WTSA) in India** |
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| **Ref. to draft agenda of the virtual consultation:** | [**Document C20/24**](https://www.itu.int/md/S20-CL-C-0024/en) |
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| Comments relating to Document C20/241 Background 1.1 The Telecommunication Standardization Bureau (TSB) of International Telecommunication Union (ITU) conducts the World Telecommunication Standardization Assembly (WTSA) once in Four (4) years to plan its standardization program for the next 4 years. WTSA is held for ITU members to refine the strategic direction of the ITU Telecommunication Standardization Sector (ITU-T). The event is attended by delegates from 193 Member States, World / Regional / National Standardization Bodies and the Telecom / ICT Industry from across the globe.  1.2 A proposal for hosting WTSA 2020 in India was submitted to ITU Council by Republic of India vide [Document C19/24](https://www.itu.int/md/S19-CL-C-0024/en) dated 4th June 2019 (Annex 1) prior to June 2019 meeting of ITU Council. ITU Council during its meeting from 10 to 20 June 2019, conveyed its decision (Decision 608) vide [Document C19/125](https://www.itu.int/md/S19-CL-C-0125/en) dated 20th June 2019 (Annex 2) that, “subject to the concurrence of the majority of the Member States of the Union, the next World Telecommunication Standardization Assembly (WTSA-20) will take place in Hyderabad India, from 16 to 27 November 2020” and instructed the Secretary-General “to carry out a consultation with all Member States on the exact dates and precise place of WTSA-20”.  1.3 Accordingly, Secretary-General of the ITU initiated the consultation vide Circular letter 19/33 dated 22nd July 2019 (Annex 3) inviting to inform the Secretary-General of their concurrence for holding of WTSA-20 at Hyderabad, India from 17 to 27 November 2020 preceded by the Global Standards Symposium (GSS-20) on 16 November 2020.  1.4 Secretary-General of the ITU vide Circular Letter 19/45 dated 3 October 2019 (Annex 4) informed about receiving the agreement of required majority of the Member States of ITU for holding of WTSA-20 at Hyderabad, India from 17 to 27 November 2020 preceded by the Global Standards Symposium (GSS-20) on 16 November 2020. |

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| **2 Current situation due to COVID-19**  2.1 ITU Office in Geneva is closed due to outbreak of COVID-19. Several meetings have been postponed or converted into virtual mode due to international travel restrictions. ITU Council meeting 2020 scheduled to be held in June 2020 is proposed to be held on virtual mode.  2.2 Due to outbreak of COVID-19 in several countries, it would take some months before the situation stabilises and life becomes normal. Several countries have banned international travels till end of 2020.  2.3 In view of the uncertainty created by outbreak of COVID-19, delegates from different Member States may find it difficult to travel to India and participate in WTSA-20. Restrictions on travel, lockdowns and health related concerns may prevent participation of delegates from several countries.  **3 Proposal**  3.1 Considering the aspects mentioned in above paragraphs, and to ensure a successful event with a good participation from all the Member States, it becomes necessary to postpone the event scheduled in November 2020 to the year 2021.  3.2 Since WTDC-2021 is scheduled in November 2021, Indian Administration therefore proposes that as per the current circumstances, hosting of WTSA in the first quarter of 2021 would be suitable.  3.3 In view of above it is proposed to reschedule the hosting of WTSA-21 on 23 February – 05 March 2021, preceded by GSS-21 on 22 February 2021 at Hyderabad, India. It is proposed for consideration of the Council that the postponement of WTSA to above dates may be subject to the restoration of normalcy and ease of travel restrictions in India as well as in other Member States.  3.4 The above proposal of Republic of India is placed before ITU Council for its consultation and concurrence.  **Annexes 4**  [Annex 1](https://www.itu.int/md/S19-CL-C-0024/en) - Document C19/24 dated 4th June 2019: Report by the Secretary-General on Preparations for The World Telecommunications Standardization Assembly 2020  [Annex 2](https://www.itu.int/md/S19-CL-C-0125/en) - Document C19/125 dated 20th June 2019: Decision 606 (adopted at the first Plenary Meeting) on Convening of the next World Telecommunications Standardization Assembly (WTSA-20)  [Annex 3](https://www.itu.int/md/S19-SG-CIR-0033/en) - Circular Letter 19/33 dated 22nd July 2019: Seeking concurrence from Member States on Places and dates of WTSA-20, WTDC-21, and PP-22  [Annex 4](https://www.itu.int/md/S19-SG-CIR-0045/en) - Circular Letter 19/45 dated 3 October 2019: Confirmation on Places and dates of WTSA-20, WTDC-21, and PP-22 |