

**Second virtual consultation of councillors  
starting 16 November 2020**



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**Document VC-2/7-E  
2 November 2020  
Original: English**

**Name of the submitting  
Member State(s):**

**CANADA**

**Document title:**

**Virtual and Physical WTSA**

**Ref. to draft agenda of the  
virtual consultation:**

**Documents C20/24R1, C20/72, C20/37R1**

## **1- Background:**

In light of the pandemic conditions preventing a physical meeting in 2020, the first virtual consultation of Councilors (VCC1) held in June 2020 agreed to modify Decision 608 to change the dates of the 2020 World Telecommunication Standardization Assembly (WTSA) from 16 -27 November 2020 to 23 February – 5 March 2021.

As the COVID pandemic continues to spread and disrupt travel, Council should conclude that a physical WTSA in the first quarter (Q1) of 2021 is not feasible. At this time, Canada believes that alternative options should be considered to allow ITU-T's work to continue in a manner not to burden Member States with an excessive number of meetings in a short time span.

## **2- Discussion**

Canada thanks the Government of India for its generous offer to host the WTSA and is further grateful for its flexibility concerning the dates of the WTSA.

Canada also takes note of an announced proposal to host a physical WTSA in Q1 of 2022 provided public health concerns have abated and normal travel conditions restored.

While Canada supports the option of a physical WTSA in Q1 2022, we also propose that a virtual-limited-agenda-WTSA be held in Q1 2021. The purpose of this virtual WTSA would be to proceed with the appointment of TSAG and Study Groups Chairs and Vice-Chairs, and at the same time discuss and agree on any other matters that would facilitate the Union's work and decisions at a physical WTSA in 2022.

In the case of the appointment of Chairs and Vice-Chairs, delaying a decision to a physical WTSA in 2022 could have significant consequences for the current Chairs and Vice-Chairs and their successors. The former would be burdened with unduly and extended mandates while the latter would be deprived of their full-length four-year mandate.

Although most of the preparatory work for a physical WTSA in Q1 of 2022 would be concluded in 2021, we should be cognizant that a physical WTSA in 2022 would add significant pressure to the Union and its Member States, as a 12 month period starting in November 2021 would include:

- WTDC (Addis-Ababa)
- WTSA (Hyderabad)
- Council (Geneva)
- WTPF (Geneva)
- PP (Bucharest)
- Council WGs and Expert Groups
- Advisory Groups and Study Groups of the three sectors

In considering if, and when, to hold both a virtual and a physical WTSA, Council should review, discuss and modify the current schedule of conferences, assemblies and meetings of the Union for 2020-2023 to reduce the number of meetings in the 2021-2022 period to the strictly essential ones.

**3- Proposed way forward**

**That Council agrees to a virtual-limited-agenda-WTSA in Q1 2021 to appoint the Chairs and Vice-Chairs of TSAG and of Study Groups, and discuss and agree on any other matters that would facilitate the Union's work and decisions at a physical WTSA in 2022.**

**That Council reviews the schedule of meetings for the 2021-2022 period and postpone those that are not essential to the day-to-day work of the Union.**

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