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| **Virtual consultation of councillors  starting 16 November 2020** |  |
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|  | **Document VC-2\14-E**  **14 January 2021**  **Original English** |

SUMMARY RECORD

OF THE

FIFTH MEETING

Friday, 20 November 2020, from 1200 to 1625 hours

**Chairman:** Mr S. BIN GHELAITA (United Arab Emirates)

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|  | Subjects discussed | Documents |
| 1 | Outcomes of discussions held on 19 November 2020 | [VCC-2/DT/1(Rev.3)](https://www.itu.int/md/S20-CLVC2-201116-TD-0001/en) |
| 2 | Report on the hiring of an independent external management consultancy, including recommendations and various strategies | [C20/10](https://www.itu.int/md/S20-CL-C-0010/en) |
| 3 | Arrears and special arrears accounts | [C20/11(Rev.1)](https://www.itu.int/md/S20-CL-C-0011/en) |
| 4 | Contributory shares of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan for defraying Union expenses | [C20/73](https://www.itu.int/md/S20-CL-C-0073/en) |
| 5 | Report on overall review, including suggesting appropriate measures to ensure continued effectiveness and efficiency of the ITU regional presence, including recommendations of the external consultant study | [C20/74](https://www.itu.int/md/S20-CL-C-0074/en), [C20/75](https://www.itu.int/md/S20-CL-C-0075/en) |
| 6 | Impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the functioning and activities of ITU | [VC/2](https://www.itu.int/md/S20-CLVC-C-0002/en), [VC/10](https://www.itu.int/md/S20-CLVC-C-0010/en), [VC/13(Rev.1)](https://www.itu.int/md/S20-CLVC-C-0013/en),  [VC-2/6(Corr.1)](https://www.itu.int/md/S20-CLVC2-C-0006/en), [C20/INF/22](https://www.itu.int/md/S20-CL-INF-0022/en) |
| 7 | Business continuity: business case for information management | [C20/53](https://www.itu.int/md/S20-CL-C-0053/en) |
| 8 | Support for TSB | [C20/14(Rev.1)](https://www.itu.int/md/S20-CL-C-0014/en) |
| 9 | Report on the implementation of the risk management action plan | [C20/61(Rev.1)](https://www.itu.int/md/S20-CL-C-0061/en) |
| 10 | Requests for exemptions | [C20/39(Rev.1)](https://www.itu.int/md/S20-CL-C-0039/en) |
| 11 | Postponement of items to Council-21 | [C20/19(Rev.1)](https://www.itu.int/md/S20-CL-C-0019/en), [C20/25](https://www.itu.int/md/S20-CL-C-0025/en), [C20/59](https://www.itu.int/md/S20-CL-C-0059/en) |
| 12 | Closure of the virtual consultation | - |

1. **Outcomes of discussions held on 19 November 2020 (Document** [**VCC-2/DT/1(Rev.3)**](https://www.itu.int/md/S20-CLVC2-201116-TD-0001/en)**)**
   1. Document VCC-2/DT/1(Rev.3) was **noted**.

1.2 The Chairman informed the meeting that, regarding the issue of the next WTPF, a modified Decision 611 had been published in Document VC-2/DT/3, taking into account the new dates and updated schedule for the preparatory process, and would be submitted for the councillors’ approval by correspondence. Regarding the interest of a Member State in hosting WTPF, the Secretary-General would inform the Council Member States accordingly if a confirmed offer was made.

1.3 The councillor from Switzerland informed the meeting that, should the decision ultimately be taken to hold the next WTPF in Geneva, CICG would only be available from 16 to 18 December 2020.

**2 Report on the hiring of an independent external management consultancy, including recommendations and various strategies (Document** [**C20/10**](https://www.itu.int/md/S20-CL-C-0010/en)**)**

2.1 The representatives of Dalberg presented an assessment of ITU Telecom events and suggested options for the way forward, supplemented by the slide presentation contained in Document C20/10. In conclusion, they recommended that consideration be given to investigating the development and organization of “Digital for Good” exhibition and forum sessions as part of an annual global ITU-level event that integrated WSIS and/or the AI for Good Global Summit.

2.2 Several councillors said that the recommendations made by Dalberg were far-reaching and that more time was required to discuss and digest them. It would be advisable to defer a decision on them to the next physical session of the Council.

2.3 One councillor agreed with that point of view, but she added that ITU Telecom events were the only platform at which developing country small and medium-sized enterprises could showcase their innovation capabilities. In order to ensure that they could continue to do so while at the same time guaranteeing the events’ sustainability, any consultation on the way forward should include major telecommunication companies as well as ITU Member States and Associates in order to ascertain why the uptake for Telecom events was so low.

2.4 Another councillor said that ITU Telecom was in urgent need of transformation, at the risk of losing an opportunity and money. A swift decision was called for, as there was no way of knowing whether the Council would be able to meet physically in 2021.

2.5 A further councillor agreed that Dalberg’s recommendations required further study but were in line with the External Auditor’s report discussed at VCC-1 (Document [C20/41](https://www.itu.int/md/S20-CL-C-0041/en)). Both reports showed that ITU Telecom events had become diminished in terms of deliverables and value. They should be adapted in the light of the uncertainty related to the COVID-19 pandemic, to ensure that they achieved their goals efficiently and effectively.

2.6 In reply to a councillor’s query regarding the relevance of having ITU play a more central role in general and strengthen cooperation with other United Nations agencies, in the same spirit as it did for WSIS, a representative of Dalberg said that the recommendation was to more closely integrate ITU Telecom events with WSIS, positioning both in the light of the SDGs under the Digital for Good umbrella. The aim was not to have VCC-2 make a decision, but rather to promote further investigations with a view to laying a more precise proposal before the Council.

2.7 The Chairman took it that councillors wished to conclude by agreeing to further consider the report in Document C20/10 and make recommendations at the 2021 session of the Council.

2.8 It was so **concluded**.

**3 Arrears and special arrears accounts (Document** [**C20/11(Rev.1)**](https://www.itu.int/md/S20-CL-C-0011/en)**)**

3.1The Chief of the Financial Resources Management Department (FRMD) introduced Document C20/11(Rev.1) describing the situation of arrears and special arrears accounts and said that arrears were decreasing progressively owing to the sanctions imposed through Resolutions 41 (Rev. Dubai, 2018) and 152 (Rev. Busan, 2014), and the measures taken to encourage the settlement of debts. Four administrations had failed to comply with their repayment schedules; their special arrears accounts had been cancelled in 2019. Regarding satellite network filings, of the 28 administrations and operators entitled to have their invoices revised, 27 had settled their debts. The Council was requested to approve the writing off of interest on arrears and irrecoverable debts totaling CHF 2.7 million and to adopt the draft decision contained in Annex B to the document.

3.2 The Chairman took it that councillors wished to conclude that, keeping in mind the fact that that item was urgent, a consultation by correspondence of Council Member States would be undertaken: 1) to take note of Document C20/11(Rev.1); to authorize the Secretary-General to write off CHF 2 720 252.63 of interest on arrears and irrecoverable debts; and 3) to adopt the draft decision attached in Annex B to Document C20/11(Rev.1).

3.3 It was so **concluded**.

**4 Contributory shares of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan for defraying Union expenses (Document** [**C20/73**](https://www.itu.int/md/S20-CL-C-0073/en)**)**

4.1 The Chief of FRMD introduced Document C20/73 containing a request from the Administration of Pakistan to reduce its contribution to defraying the expenses of the Union to one contributory unit (from two units), from 2018. In 2017, Pakistan had announced its intention to increase its contribution from one to two units from 2018. Due to domestic administrative issues, that increase had not been approved by Pakistan’s finance authorities. The Administration of Pakistan had not informed the Union of the issue at the time and was requesting a retroactive reduction in its contributions. Under No. 165A of the Constitution, under exceptional circumstances, the Council could authorize a reduction in the number of contributory units when requested by a Member State. A request to do so retroactively was, however, unprecedented, and would imply writing off three years’ arrears and their corresponding interest. The Council was invited to consider the request and adopt the draft resolution contained in Annex C to the document.

4.2 The ITU Legal Adviser added that, thus far, the Council had only ever approved future reductions in the number of contributory units, had never applied No. 165A of the Constitution retroactively and had never written off Member States’ debt capital as such, only the interest on arrears after the repayment agreement had been signed and duly executed.

4.3 The Chairman noted that the date of entry into effect of the resolution remained in square brackets for the Council’s consideration.

4.4 The councillor from Pakistan said that the COVID-19 pandemic was having catastrophic economic consequences for the Government and people of Pakistan. His administration faced severe financial constraints, and he urged fellow councillors to consider his country’s request favourably.

4.5 In the ensuing discussion, councillors concurred that further consultation on the decision would be needed, and any agreement to retroactively reduce Pakistan’s contributions and thereby write off its arrears should not set a precedent.

4.6 The Chief of FRMD said that, should the Council decide not to apply the decision retroactively to account for Pakistan’s internal administrative issues, but wish to apply the decision to take account of the effects of COVID-19, it could agree to retain 1 January 2020 as the date of entry into effect of the decision.

4.7 The Chairman took it that councillors wished to conclude that, keeping in mind the fact that that item was urgent, a consultation by correspondence of Council Member States would be undertaken to approve the draft resolution contained in Annex C to Document C20/73 related to the contributory shares of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, with the agreed date of 1 January 2020, as well as the payment of the supplementary unit in 2018 and 2019 for a total of CHF 636,000, with the understanding that that should not create a precedent.

4.8 It was so **concluded.**

4.9 The councillor from Pakistan thanked his fellow councillors for their support.

**5 Report on overall review, including suggesting appropriate measures to ensure continued effectiveness and efficiency of the ITU regional presence, including recommendations of the external consultant study (Documents** [**C20/74**](https://www.itu.int/md/S20-CL-C-0074/en) **and** [**C20/75**](https://www.itu.int/md/S20-CL-C-0075/en)**)**

5.1 The representative of PwC Switzerland presented the findings of PwC’s comprehensive review of ITU’s regional presence in Document C20/74. He outlined the areas PwC had looked into and the research conducted, noting PwC’s finding that the current operating model in the regions was not sustainable. PwC identified inconsistencies with regard to strategic planning noting ITU’s different planning cycles between the BDT and the ITU, and the need for human resources and talent management to be enhanced. He enumerated the six principles based on which the recommendations emanating from the review had been drawn up, noting that PwC was recommending reassignment of staff between headquarters and the field, deployment of resources of TSB and BR at regional level, and consolidating the regional offices to reduce their number from 14 to 10.

5.2 A second representative of PwC Switzerland then explained the four options considered for revising the long-term operating model for ITU’s regional presence, the first being to maintain regional and area offices; the second being to maintain area offices only; the third being to consolidate area offices into regional hubs; the fourth being to establish global thematic hubs. The four options had been evaluated, with the second emerging as PwC’s recommended way forward for reasons and with implications he identified. A transition period, estimated at three years, would be recommended to minimize disruption, although planning would need to be revised owing to the impacts of COVID-19.

5.3 The Deputy Director of BDT introduced Document C20/75, comprising initial summary comments of the Secretariat on the PwC report, and noting that a a task force made up of staff from all relevant departments was analyzing the report further with a view to producing a more detailed report. According to Document C20/75, the PwC report presented a reasonable, robust and well supported overview of ITU’s regional presence at the time that PwC’s information-gathering work had been undertaken. However, significant corrective measures for many of the matters raised had already been undertaken by ITU. Some of PwC’s findings could impact delivery of ITU’s overall mandate and should be considered carefully by the ITU membership before implementation. COVID-19, while recognized as a driver of increased demand for ITU’s work, had impacted ITU and the global society as a whole more significantly than foreseen, making working methods for the regional and area offices considerably more global and potentially calling for even more aspects to be improved or changed in ITU’s regional presence. The proposed action plan would benefit from further consideration at ITU’s various decision-making levels, begging the question of whether all decisions required to implement the proposed changes could, or should, be taken by the Council, or whether a mandate from other governing bodies would be required.

5.4 Councillors thanked PwC for the comprehensive review and expressed concern that the report described ITU as top-heavy and hierarchical. The report, and the proposals contained therein, required careful consideration. It should be submitted to an ad hoc meeting of CWG-FHR for more detailed assessment, to ensure that any decisions on restructuring the regional presence were as well informed as possible. Any future operational model should strengthen the regional presence and increase the Union’s support to Member States. One councillor stressed the importance of ensuring that any organizational restructuring must be in line with the reform of the United Nations Development System.

5.5 Responding to a question by a councillor, the Director of BDT confirmed that the report from PwC was indeed the final report on the assessment. As to arrangements for in-kind contributions to finance regional initiatives, she said that such contributions must be auditable; the matter could be discussed when the Council took up the strengthening of regional presence (Document [C20/25](https://www.itu.int/md/S20-CL-C-0025/en)).

5.6 The Chairman took it that councillors wished to note the reports contained in Documents C20/74 and C20/75, and agreed that the report would be further considered in CWG-FHR or an ad hoc group of CWG-FHR.

5.7 It was so **concluded**.

**6 Impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the functioning and activities of ITU   
(Documents** [**VC/2**](https://www.itu.int/md/S20-CLVC-C-0002/en)**,** [**VC/10**](https://www.itu.int/md/S20-CLVC-C-0010/en)**,** [**VC/13(Rev.1)**](https://www.itu.int/md/S20-CLVC-C-0013/en)**,** [**VC-2/6(Corr.1)**](https://www.itu.int/md/S20-CLVC2-C-0006/en), [**C20/INF/22**](https://www.itu.int/md/S20-CL-INF-0022/en)**)**

6.1 The Chairman recalled that Documents VC/2 and VC/10 had been discussed during VCC-1.

6.2 The Chief of the Strategic Planning and Membership Department (SPM) introduced Document VC/13(Rev.1), updated as requested at VCC-1, summarizing the continuing impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the functioning and activities of ITU, new initiatives and work programmes implemented, and measures introduced in response to COVID-19. It also covered actions for the transition to virtual operations, support for developing countries, safety and security, internal communications, financial implications and the impact on staff.

6.3 The councillor from the Russian Federation, on behalf of the four submitting administrations, introduced Document VC-2/6(Corr.1), which proposed various measures to optimize expenditure and the use of human resources in organizing and conducting virtual meetings.

6.4 During the ensuing discussion, support was expressed for the recommendations set out in Document VC-2/6(Corr.1), which responded to concerns shared by other administrations. One councillor suggested that a report should be submitted to the Council at its next physical session on action taken to implement them. Particular emphasis was placed on the need to streamline procedures for accessing virtual meetings across the Union, including by settling on the use of a single online meeting platform. The councillor from the United Arab Emirates said that whatever system was selected would need to be compatible with the technological support tools financed by his administration over recent months for installation in ITU meeting rooms. Several councillors highlighted the technological difficulties faced by developing countries in accessing virtual meetings; one requested increased secretariat support for developing countries in that regard, to enhance the efficiency of meetings held online. Another suggested that the Secretary-General should consult the Directors of the Bureaux on how virtual meetings could be made more user-friendly and report back to the Council, via one of its working groups if appropriate.

6.5 The Chairman took it that councillors wished to conclude by agreeing to encourage the secretariat to continue any ongoing measures and to implement the recommendations included in contribution VC-2/6(Corr.1), as far as possible and within available resources, and to present an updated document to the 2021 session of the Council.

6.6 It was so **concluded**.

**7 Business continuity: business case for information management (Document** [**C20/53**](https://www.itu.int/md/S20-CL-C-0053/en)**)**

7.1 The Chief of the Information Services Department (IS) introduced Document C20/53, which outlined three areas in which investment was required to ensure that the Union’s information infrastructure was fit for purpose and secure; met the needs of its staff, members and other stakeholders; provided for business continuity, risk management and disaster recovery, taking into account lessons learned from the COVID-19 crisis; and was prepared for the working environment in the new ITU headquarters building. An estimated CHF 13 million would be required over five years, either from savings, the Reserve Account and voluntary contributions or through inclusion in the 2022–2026 strategic and financial plan.

7.2 Councillors expressed support for efforts to update the Union’s information infrastructure, but several emphasized the need to safeguard its financial stability, taking into account the current budgetary and financial situation. One councillor, supporting the proposal in Document C20/53, said that, even without the impact of a pandemic, it was essential to upgrade the Union’s information infrastructure. Another, commenting that Document C20/53 contained insufficient detail to justify the substantial investments it proposed, requested the secretariat to prepare separate costings based on the existing proposal and on the absolute minimum investment required. It was vital to consider the matter in conjunction with the new headquarters building project and in the broader context of strategic and financial planning. One councillor suggested that savings could be made by reducing the Union’s reliance on outsourcing; another emphasized the need to prioritize savings and voluntary contributions as sources of investment.

7.3 It was suggested that the CWG-FHR be asked to consider the proposal in Document C20/53, together with the additional information requested from the secretariat.

7.4 The Chairman took it that councillors wished to conclude by agreeing to continue the discussion of the proposal contained in Document C20/53 at CWG-FHR and report to the Council in 2021; and, in that regard, to invite the secretariat to prepare detailed projects for consideration by CWG-FHR.

7.5 It was so **concluded**.

**8 Support for TSB (Document** [**C20/14(Rev.1)**](https://www.itu.int/md/S20-CL-C-0014/en)**)**

8.1 The Deputy Director of TSB introduced Document C20/14(Rev.1), which provided additional information and clarification in support of TSB’s request for additional staff, further to the discussions at VCC-1. Further background information was provided in Document C20/INF/7. He noted that the spectacular increase in ITU-T membership between 2017 and 2019 had generated additional income of CHF 650 000; that the request was based on current demand for services; and that the increased workload was having a proportionally greater impact on the health of TSB staff. In 2019, TSB had published only two vacancy announcements notwithstanding its 66 budgeted posts. It was requesting an additional seven posts at an annual cost of CHF 880 000.

8.2 In the ensuing discussion, the Chairman asked – in view of the limited time – those member states which have requested the floor and which were in support of the TSB proposal, to withdraw their request and that they would be counted in support of the proposal. Ten councillors expressed support for the additional human resources requested by TSB for the reasons stated by TSB; additional points made were that the proposal was well founded; only 8% of ITU’s staff work in TSB; ITU-T is the driving force for excellent ICT expertise; the membership was likely to continue to increase as more SMEs joined. One councillor asked whether fewer additional posts might be a possibility. Another suggested that vacancies in other Sectors might be used to support TSB and that prioritization of all current vacancies in ITU would be useful.

8.3 One councillor said that the increase in contributions from Associates could not compensate for the constant and significant reduction in contributions from Sector Members since 2000, with the exception of 2019. TSB already had a number of vacant posts. In view of human and financial resource constraints and in the spirit of one ITU, it was important to ensure that the additional posts being sought were in line with the mandate of TSB and would not lead to duplication of work. The Secretary-General and the Director of TSB should make every effort to ensure increased financial support to TSB from Sector Members and Associates, optimize human and financial resources by avoiding duplication, including with the work other Sectors, and prepare a report on certain aspects, in particular §1.2 of the document. The item should be considered further at the next physical Council session.

8.4 The Deputy Director of TSB explained that four of the seven positions requested were particularly urgent. Of the vacant posts listed on the ITU website, one was a funds-in-trust position, two were in the process of being filled and three of the remaining four would have to stay vacant in the first quarter of 2021 to comply with the 5 per cent vacancy requirement. While there might appear to be a contradiction between the increase in ITU-T membership and the reported deficit between budgeted and actual revenue from membership contributions, he observed that, in the past, budgeted revenue from membership contributions had always been higher than actual revenue. The over-optimistic reporting had been rectified in the budget for 2019–2020, and the recent strong increase in Sector Members and Associates had brought in additional income.

8.5 Two councillors suggested that further consideration of the request be deferred to the next physical Council session in view of the significant financial implications, which needed to be examined in the context of discussions on the draft budget for the next biennium, and the fact that WTSA was likely to generate additional requests. Another two councillors asked whether the estimated annual costs per post were correct since they were much lower than for other Sectors.

8.6 The Chairman suggested that the meeting consider a request for the four urgent posts and defer further discussion on the three remaining posts to Council-21.

8.7 While some councillors supported the Chairman’s suggestion, one councillor could not accept the proposals made or any decision on the matter by correspondence. He would, however, be prepared to waive the 5 per cent vacancy requirement for TSB so that all vacant posts could be used.

8.8 The Director of TSB said that to waive the five per cent vacancy requirement would be helpful. TSB would provide Council-21 with a more comprehensive evaluation of the situation.

8.9 The Chief of FRMD recalled that the 5 per cent vacancy requirement was built into the budget; if the requirement was waived, TSB would run the risk of overspending and of being in deficit at the end of the year.

8.10 The Chairman took it that councillors wished to conclude as follows:

* The councillors noted the support of many Member States, but considering that there was no consensus, it was agreed to postpone the discussion to the 2021 session of the Council.
* The Russian Federation proposed to waive the 5 per cent vacancy requirements for TSB to provide emergency post relief without exceeding the budget. The Secretary-General noted that proposal and informed councillors that he would work with the TSB Director to make sure that all possible means would be used to try to strengthen their team.

8.11 It was so **concluded**.

**9 Report on the implementation of the risk management action plan (Document** [**C20/61(Rev.1)**](https://www.itu.int/md/S20-CL-C-0061/en)**)**

9.1 A representative of the secretariat introduced Document C20/61(Rev.1), containing a report on implementation of the risk management action plan and, in annex thereto, the revised ITU risk management policy and risk appetite statement, which were the product of consultation with many internal and external stakeholders and consideration of best practices at other United Nations and comparable agencies. The revised policy clarified the risk governance structure and internal controls; defined the “Three Lines of Defence” model for ITU; and outlined key roles and responsibilities in risk management. The risk appetite statement outlined the amount of risk that ITU was willing to accept in pursuit of its strategic goals. The secretariat was working on the second phase of the project, having already concluded a first round of workshops for ITU staff for the revision of risk registers, and was also creating a new risk management dashboard, which would be presented to Council-21.

9.2 Noting the recommendation on the creation of a new function on risk and internal control “within available budget”, one councillor asked if there was a budget ceiling in place. Another councillor, reiterating that the whole process should be completed within available budget, suggested including a glossary to the risk management policy, in particular to define the term “risk”, given that it could be understood differently.

9.3 The Chairman said that that suggestion would be noted and took it that councillors wished to conclude that, keeping in mind that that item was urgent, a consultation by correspondence of Council Member States would be undertaken on the approval of the recommendations in the report contained in Document C20/61(Rev.1), as well as the revised ITU risk management policy and risk appetite statements, to be implemented within the available budget.

9.4 It was so **concluded**.

**10 Requests for exemptions (Document** [**C20/39(Rev.1)**](https://www.itu.int/md/S20-CL-C-0039/en)**)**

10.1 A representative of the secretariat introduced Document C20/39(Rev.1), containing requests for the exemption of ten entities from Sector membership fees. The Council was invited to consider the requests and approve the recommendations of the Secretary-General.

10.2 Responding to a question from a councillor, the Director of TSB explained that the secretariat was recommending the deferral of exemption requests to the following Council session for the Latin America and Caribbean Internet Addresses Registry (LACNIC), the Asia Pacific Network Information Centre (APNIC) and the American Registry for Internet Numbers (ARIN) to allow the secretariat further time to investigate any potential conflicts of interest and ensure that the three entities qualified for exemption for ITU-T membership. While the three were recognized as non-profit organizations, many of their members were likely involved with ISPs.

10.3 Several councillors expressed support for the full exemption of those three organizations as members of ITU-T, considering that they fulfilled the relevant criteria.

10.4 The Chairman took it that councillors wished to conclude that, keeping in mind that that item was urgent, a consultation by correspondence of Council Member States would be undertaken on the approval of all of the requests for exemptions contained in Document C20/39(Rev.1).

10.5 It was so **concluded**.

**11 Postponement of items to Council-21 (**[**C20/19(Rev.1)**](https://www.itu.int/md/S20-CL-C-0019/en)**,** [**C20/25**](https://www.itu.int/md/S20-CL-C-0025/en)**,** [**C20/59**](https://www.itu.int/md/S20-CL-C-0059/en)**)**

11.1 As time did not allow for the consideration of Document C20/19(Rev.1), containing the report on ITU Telecom World events, Document C20/59, containing the report from the Ethics Office, or Document C20/25, on strengthening the regional presence, the Chairman took it that councillors wished to postpone their consideration to the 2021 session of Council.

11.2 It was so **concluded**.

**12 Closure of the virtual consultation**

12.1 The Secretary of the meeting listed all the outcomes arrived at during VCC-2, including issues provisionally agreed pending consultation by correspondence; provisionally agreed arrangements for future events pending consultation by correspondence; issues referred to CWGs; and issues postponed to, or to be discussed further at, Council-21. A revised version of Document VCC-2/DT/1 containing all outcomes would be published later that evening.

12.2 The Secretary-General expressed sincere appreciation for the cooperation and support shown by all parties during VCC-1 and VCC-2, allowing all urgent matters before Council-20 to be dealt with and ensure business continuity for the Union. He had continued to receive invitations to participate in multilateral forums from ITU members and non-members alike, showing that ITU was in good standing and allowing him to maintain a sharp focus on ITU’s basic mandate. He appreciated the concern expressed by Member States for ITU staff during the pandemic; fortunately, there had been no casualties and only a few cases. Morale had remained high throughout. He thanked all those involved in ensuring the success of the meeting, reserving special thanks for the Chairman, to whom a medal would be awarded in recognition of his outstanding efforts.

12.3 The elected officials wished all participants continued safety and good health and thanked them for their support and cooperation. They hoped that a change in situation would allow for an in-person meeting as soon as possible.

12.4 The Chairman thanked councillors and the secretariat for the opportunity afforded him. He had learned a lot, principally that, while matters never seemed to get easier, everyone grew stronger and more adaptable working together, thus ultimately achieving more. In closing VCC-2, he thanked all ITU and conference staff for making the meeting possible.

The Secretary-General: The Chairman:

H. ZHAO S. BIN GHELAITA

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