



General Secretariat (SG)

Geneva, 14 May 2020

Ref: **DM-20/1005**
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To Member States of ITU Council

Subject: **Organization of a virtual consultation of councillors**

Dear Madam/Sir,

Through [letter DM-20/1004](#), the ITU Secretary-General has carried out an informal consultation of Council Member States on a suggested virtual meeting of the 2020 session of the Council (9-19 June 2020).

An overall summary of the responses to the consultation can be found in [Annex 1](#).

I also would like to thank you for having participated in the technical rehearsal on 8 May. I am pleased to include in [Annex 2](#) an informal report of this rehearsal. The secretariat has duly taken note of the problems encountered and will do its utmost to address them.

In light of the replies received to the informal consultation, and in order to prepare for a physical meeting of the 2020 Council session, which, hopefully, can be held later in 2020 and having further discussed with Member States the concerns and conditions they have raised, I propose to organize a virtual consultation of councillors in an organized manner in line with Article 3.1 of the Rules of Procedures of the Council. The virtual consultation will be organized as outlined in [Annex 3](#).

I invite you to consult in [Annex 4](#) the items that the secretariat considers of an urgent nature and that should be discussed at the virtual consultation as well as the list of items the secretariat proposes to be addressed at the next physical session. Member States should indicate **by 22 May** if whether or not they wish a specific item to be discussed at the virtual consultation. Based on the responses from Member States of the Council, a draft Agenda and Time Management Plan of the virtual consultation will be communicated as soon as possible.

.../...

I hope you can agree with this proposed organization. Should you have any comments, please inform the Secretary-General as soon as possible.

We count on your active participation and goodwill to ensure that the virtual consultation be as constructive as possible.

(signed)

Dr Elsayed Azzouz
Chair of the Council

Annexes: 5

- [Annex 1](#) - Summary of the replies to the informal consultation of the Member States of the Council by the Secretary-General on a suggested virtual meeting of the 2020 session of the Council
- [Annex 2](#) - Report of the technical rehearsal, 8 May 2020
- [Annex 3](#) - Proposed organization of the virtual consultation of councillors
- [Annex 4](#) - Proposed list of items on draft agenda of the virtual consultation of councillors
- [Annex 5](#) - Template for Member States' contributions

ANNEX 1

Summary of the replies to the informal consultation of the Member States of the Council by the Secretary-General on a suggested virtual meeting of the 2020 session of the Council (DM-20/1004)

- 36 Member States of the Council have replied to the consultation.
- Many Member States supported option 1: To hold a virtual meeting of the 2020 session in June 2020 and to hold a shortened physical meeting of the 2020 Council session later in the year if the situation would permit it, keeping in mind that for any urgent decision that would be identified by the virtual meeting and cannot wait for an unknown delay, a formal agreement by correspondence would be applied.
- One Member State would prefer not to hold a virtual meeting of the ITU Council in June 2020 and would suggest to convene the session at a later date when the epidemiological situation would allow to hold a physical meeting in accordance with the Rules of Procedures of the Council.
- Several Member States supported option 1 but subject to conditions.
- The conditions are related to the format, the agenda, and the duration of the virtual meeting, and are summarized below.

Format:

- It should not be considered as a session of Council
- It should be of a non-decisional nature
- The virtual meeting should be considered as a consultation by correspondence, organized consistent with Rule 3.1 of the Rules of Procedure of Council

Duration:

The meeting should:

- Be shortened
- Not last more than 5 days
- The timetable should be condensed
- The meeting shall strictly adhere to the timing of 12.00-15.00 (Geneva time: CEST) each day, with no extensions

Draft Agenda:

It should be:

- Limited and reduced
- Only address urgent matters for the organization's functioning which cannot wait a next physical Council
- Only address non-controversial and non-contentious items

ANNEX 2

Report of the technical rehearsal, 8 May 2020

To prepare for the rehearsal, five days of test sessions were organized and attended by over 100 delegates. The purpose of the tests was to verify their connectivity and video/sound quality to the multi-lingual virtual meeting tool, Interprefy,¹ and to troubleshoot in case of problems.

The rehearsal, with interpretation in six languages, took place on 8 May 2020. Its result was encouraging. Over 120 participants from 42 Member States from all regions attended, with participants from 23 countries taking the floor. The quality of both video and sound was generally good, with the level of the sound quality mostly sufficient for interpreters to provide the interpretation service to all remote participants.

During the rehearsal, one participant failed to take the floor; one took several attempts before succeeding (problem caused by local cybersecurity measures); many took over 20 seconds to get on to the floor; but some managed to take the floor within three seconds. The ITU technical team has been in contact with the participants to resolve all the technical issues. The long delay in taking the floor was mostly due to lack of familiarity with the tool and the electronic procedures to be followed. It was noted that the beginning of some interventions were cut off by the continuing interpretation of the previous speaker. Comments and suggestions raised by delegates for enhancements and improvements to the platform are being implemented. They include, but are not limited to:

- There was an “echo” on the interpreted language channel when a speaker on the floor-channel spoke the same language as the interpreted channel selected.
- Participants would like to be able to see themselves in the list of event participants and especially in the list of participants having “raised the hand” to request the floor.

To improve the efficiency of the process and reduce the time needed to bring a speaker on the floor (“raise hand”, “connect audio/video”, “disconnect”), ITU will organize more training and test sessions from now until June. This will provide Councillors and their teams more opportunities to verify their equipment and connectivity, thereby allowing them to become more familiar with the web-conference platform and to feel comfortable with the “raise-hand” (function for asking for the floor) and the procedure for taking the floor (start streaming and speaking).

The secretariat is confident that the above measures will enable the Member States to continue the business of the Union during this extraordinary period, when an onsite meeting with all participants under one roof may not be possible in the foreseeable future.

¹ Interprefy provides remote simultaneous interpreting for multilingual on-site and online meetings. It is a cloud-based platform that enables interpreters to work from anywhere, anytime

ANNEX 3

Proposed organization of the virtual consultation of councillors

This virtual consultation is held in an organized manner in line with Article 3.1 of the Rules of Procedures of the Council.

3.1 Between sessions, councillors may consult each other by correspondence:

- *either informally,*
- *or in an organized manner, through the offices of the chairman or, if the chairman is not available, the Vice-Chairman of the Council, with the assistance of the Secretary-General.*

Draft Agenda

The virtual consultation will address agenda items considered as urgent.

You will find in [Annex 4](#) the items that the secretariat considered as urgent and proposed to be discussed at the virtual consultation as well as the list of items the secretariat proposes to be addressed at the next physical session. Member States should indicate **by 22 May** whether or not they wish a specific item to be discussed at the virtual consultation.

In light of the replies, the draft Agenda and Time Management Plan will be communicated to the Member States of the Council as soon as possible after 22 May.

Chairmanship

As the main objective of the virtual consultation is to prepare for the physical 2020 session, it is proposed that the Vice-Chair of the Council, Mr Saif Bin Ghelaita, lead the discussions.

Participation

The virtual consultation will be open to all members of the delegations of Council Member States, Observer Member States, Observer from the State of Palestine, and Sector Members (3 per Sector).

Conduct of the discussion

- The virtual consultation will be of a strict, consultative and non-decisional nature.
- In the discussion, the floor will be given in priority to Member States of the Council.
- If a consensus is not reached and any one Council Member State wants a document or conclusion deferred, it will be moved to the subsequent physical 2020 Council session.
- If during the discussion of a document on the agenda in the virtual consultation, a consensus is not reached and any one Council Member State proposes to suspend discussion or objects to the proposed conclusion on the document, it will be deferred to the subsequent physical 2020 Council session.
- To facilitate and structure the discussions, Member States can send contributions **by 29 May** to contributions@itu.int, using the template in [Annex 5](#). Contributions should be short (2 pages maximum).
- Member States will still be able to take the floor to make an intervention during the discussions even if they have not sent in a contribution.

Outcome

- The virtual consultation will be of strict consultative nature and will not take any decisions. It will only draw proposed conclusions pending formal decisions at the subsequent physical 2020 Council session. Proposed conclusions will be compiled in a report to be submitted by the Secretary-General as an input document for consideration to the subsequent physical 2020 session of the Council.
- For proposed conclusions on items that would call for an urgent decision by the Council and that cannot wait for a physical meeting, the virtual consultation could give orientations to the Chair of the Council and the Secretary-General, on the opportunity to activate the procedure to take decisions by correspondence as per rules 3.2 of the Rules of Procedure of the Council. If need be, the usual procedure for decision by correspondence would be followed. A simple majority of Council Member States having the right to vote would apply.
- It is understood that no proposed conclusion will be final, and that the discussion could be reopened on the occasion of the subsequent physical 2020 session on any conclusion.

Date and duration

- The virtual consultation will start on 9 June, 12:00-15:00 Geneva time.
- The actual duration will be proposed based on the replies from Member States on the agenda items but will not exceed five days.

IT support to be provided

- Interprety platform, captioning, and webcast.
- There will be full interpretation in 6 languages using Interprety.
- Individual IT support by email, chat and telephone.

Test of the platform

A global test of the platform will be organized on 29 May at 12:00 Geneva time. Invitations will be sent in due course.

Registration

Registration is mandatory to be able to participate online. Registration opened on 10 March. It is presently open and will be continued.

Registered participants will receive guidelines and links to join the virtual consultation in due course.

ANNEX 4

Proposed list of items on draft agenda of the virtual consultation of councillors

1. List of urgent items that the secretariat proposes to be discussed during the virtual consultation

The virtual consultation will only draw proposed conclusions pending formal decisions at the subsequent physical 2020 session of the Council. For proposed conclusions on items that would call for an urgent decision by the Council and that cannot wait for a physical meeting, the virtual consultation could give orientations to the Chair of the Council and the Secretary-General, on the opportunity to activate the procedure to take decision by correspondence as per Rule 3.2 of the Rules of Procedure of the Council. Member States should inform the secretariat **by 22 May** if whether or not they wish a specific item to be discussed at the virtual consultation by indicating YES or NO in the last column. Should a contribution relating to a subject below be submitted by a Member State **by 29 May**, it will also be included in the draft agenda.

	Subject	C20/#	Contains Decision or Resolution	On virtual consultation agenda Yes/No
				Council Member State proposal
1	List of candidature for Chairs and Vice-Chairs of CWGs, EGs, IEGs	21	no	
2	World Telecommunication and Information Society Day (<i>Res. 68</i>)	17	no	
3	Proposed dates and duration of the 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025, and 2026 sessions of the Council and the CWG clusters for 2020 and 2021 (<i>Res. 77, 111, D 612</i>) (<i>support doc 37</i>)	2	Decision	
4	Preparations for WTSA-20	24	no	
5	World Radiocommunication Conference 2023	55	Resolution	
6	Cost Recovery for the processing of Satellite network Filings (<i>D 482(MOD)</i>)	16	Decision	
7	Support for TSB	14	no	
8	Audited accounts: Audited Financial operating report for 2019	42	Resolution	
9	External Auditor report: Union's accounts 2019	40	no	
10	External Auditor report: Union's account of ITU TELECOM World 2019	41	no	
11	Report on progress on the Union's headquarters premises project (<i>Res. 212, D 619</i>)	7	No	
12	Summary report on the work of the Member States Advisory Group (MSAG) on the Union's Headquarters premises project (<i>Res. 212</i>)	48	Decision	
13	Outcome of WRC-19 with financial implications	56	no	
14	New investigation function and process	60	Decision	

2. Items that the secretariat proposes to be deferred to the subsequent physical meeting:

Member States should inform the secretariat **by 22 May**, whether or not they wish to discuss the item at the virtual consultation, by indicating YES or NO in the last column.

	Subject	C20/#	Contains Decision Resolution	On virtual consultation agenda Yes/No
				Council Member State proposal
1	Report on the outcomes of the CWG-WSIS&SDG activities (<i>Res. 140, R 1281, R 1332(MOD), R 1334 (MOD)</i>)	8	no	
2	Report by the Chair of the Council Working Group on International Internet-Related Public Policy Issues (CWG-Internet) (<i>R 1305, R 1336(MOD)</i>)	51	no	
3	ITU Internet activities: Resolutions 101, 102, 133 and 180	33	no	
4	ITU activities on strengthening the role of ITU in building confidence and security in the use of ICTs (<i>Res. 130, 174</i>)	18	no	
5	Report on how ITU is currently utilizing the GCA framework	36	no	
6	Guidelines for the utilization of the GCA by ITU	65	no	
7	Report of the Council Working Group on Child online protection (<i>Res. 179, R 1306 (MOD)</i>)	57	no	
8	Report of the Council Working Group on Languages (<i>Res. 154, R 1372 MOD</i>)	12	no	
9	Report from EG-ITRs (<i>Res. 146, R1379 (MOD)</i>)	26	no	
10	ITU's activities related to Resolution 70 (Rev. Dubai, 2018)	6	no	
11	Draft four-year operational plan for the General Secretariat for 2021-2024 (CV 87A, 181A, 205A, 223A)	28	Resolution	
12	Report on ITU Telecom World events (<i>Res. 11, R 1292</i>)	19	no	
13	Report on the hiring of an independent external management consultancy, including recommendations and various strategies (<i>Res. 11</i>)	10	no	
14	Proposed improvements to Plenipotentiary Conference	13	no	
15	Implementation of Recommendations 6 and 7 of PP-18 Committee 5 (electoral process)	4	no	
16	Report on RA-19 and WRC-19	27	no	
17	Schedule of future conferences, assemblies and meetings of the Union: 2020-2023 (<i>Res. 77, 111</i>)	37	no	
18	Preparations for WTPF-21 (<i>Res. 2, D611</i>)	5	no	
19	Preparations for WTDC-21	30	no	
20	Report on the implementation of the strategic plan and the activities of the Union for 2019-2020 (CV 61, CV 102, CV 82)	35	no	
21	New ITU index	62	no	
22	Report on the Standing Committee on Administration and Management	-	no	

	Subject	C20/#	Contains Decision Resolution	On virtual consultation agenda Yes/No
				Council Member State proposal
23	Obsolete Council Resolutions & Decisions	3	no	
24	Revenue and expenses (Dec. 5): Annual review of revenue & expenses (Dec. 5) and Efficiency measures	9	no	
25	Provisional participation of entities dealing with telecommunication matters in the activities of ITU	20	no	
26	Report by the Chairman of the Council Working Group on Financial and Human Resources (CWG-FHR) (D 558, D 563(MOD)) (Res. 151, 152, 158, 169, 170, D 558, D 563(MOD))	50	Decision Resolution Mod FinReg	
27	Report by the working group on internal controls	63	no	
28	Status Report on Implementation of Council Decision 600 and 601 (UIFN, IIN)	47	no	
29	Organization Resilience Management System (ORMS)	15	no	
30	ITU participation in memoranda of understanding with financial and/or strategic implications	45	no	
31	Compilation of the decisions adopted by PP-18 which were captured in the Summary Records of its Plenary Meetings in particular, those decisions based on the recommendations of the Committees and Working Group of the Plenary	58	no	
32	Improvement of management and follow-up of the defrayal of ITU expenses by Sector Members, Associates and Academia	52	no	
33	Arrears and special arrears accounts (Res. 41)	11	Decision	
34	Requests for exemption	39	no	
35	Information and Communication Technologies Development Fund (ICT-DF) (Dec. 11)	34	no	
36	Report of the Independent Management Advisory Committee (IMAC) (Res. 162) (D 565)	22	no	
37	Appointment of a new External auditor (Res 94, D 614)	49	Decision	
38	The After-Service Health Insurance (ASHI) liability	46	no	
39	Report of the Internal Auditor on internal audit activities	44	no	
40	Strategy for the coordination of efforts among the three Sectors of the Union (Res. 191)	38	no	
41	Staff Working Conditions Strategy and Implementation Plan (D 619)	29	no	
42	Report on analysis and review of current training and capacity-building activities undertaken by the Group on Capacity Building Initiatives, the ITU Academy and centres of excellence, and the possible creation of a capacity-building institute in ITU.	32	no	
43	ITU Accountability Framework	43	no	
44	Strengthening the Regional Presence (Res. 25)	25	no	
45	Progress 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 (Res.25, D 616)		no	

	Subject	C20/#	Contains Decision Resolution	On virtual consultation agenda Yes/No
				Council Member State proposal
46	Interim report if any of the external enterprise concerning the Forensic Audit		no	
47	Decisions of the UNGA on the conditions of service under the UN common system	23	Resolution	
48	Progress report on the implementation of the Human Resources strategic plan and of Resolution 48 (Rev. Dubai, 2018)	54	Resolution Decision	
49	Membership of the ITU Staff Pension Committee	--	--	
50	Report from the Ethics Office	59	no	
51	Report on the implementation of risk management action plan	61	no	
52	Business continuity: business case for information management	53	no	
53	Measures taken by ITU on conditions for on-site emergency medical support at ITU conferences and meetings held away from Geneva	31	no	

ANNEX 5

Template for Member States' contributions

Virtual consultation of councillors
starting 9 June 2020



**Contribution from Member State(s) on items of
draft agenda of the virtual consultation of councillors**

Name of the submitting
Member State(s):

Document title:

Ref. to draft agenda of the
virtual consultation:

Document C20/##

Contribution from Member State(s): *Contributions should be concise (a maximum of 2 pages is recommended) and should facilitate the discussions.*

Comments relating to Document C20/xx

Proposed way forward

Contributions are to be sent to the ITU Council Secretariat by 29 May 2020 at:

contributions@itu.int

In case this contribution is submitted by multiple Member States, kindly ensure that the focal point(s) of each Member State is/are copied on the message sent to the ITU Council Secretariat.

For ease of reference, list of the focal points of ITU Member States can be found [here](#).
