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| **Informal Experts Group on WTPF-21****Third meeting – Virtual meeting, 14-16 September 2020** |  |
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|  | **Document IEG-WTPF-21-3/9-E** |
|  | **13 August 2020** |
|  | **English only** |

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| Compilation of responses to the Online Open Consultation |
| (April – June 2020) |

Based on the procedure for preparation of the report by the Secretary-General as set out in [Decision 611](https://www.itu.int/md/S19-CL-C-0128/en), the [third draft of the Secretary-General’s Report to the WTPF-21](https://www.itu.int/en/wtpf-21/Pages/sg-report.aspx) was made available for online open consultations from 1 April to 15 June 2020.

A compilation of the responses received has been set out below. The responses have been categorized into two sections for the purpose of this compilation: Contributions and Commentary on the Draft Report.

*NOTE: Please note that due to the different formats used by the online respondents:*

* *Inputs to the “Comment box” of the online form - serving either as sole contribution or summary - have been copied and pasted;*
* *When available, indicated summaries have been copied and pasted;*
* *Unless a summary is submitted, documents of up to 1000 words have been copied and pasted, as well as hyperlinked.*

**SECTION I. CONTRIBUTIONS**

1. **[Association for Progressive Communications (APC), USA](https://www.itu.int/en/consultations/Pages/wtpf-21/display-WTPF-21-second.aspx?ListItemID=4)**

**Summary:** Part of inclusive sustainable access requires that women, girls, and people of diverse sexualities and gender expressions be included. Inclusion requires that policy questions and outcomes include consideration of all people. One key issue in meeting the SDG priority of access for all, includes access for all marginalized groups and pervasive consideration of the gender dimensions of the digital divide.

1. [**Association for Progressive Communications (APC), USA**](https://www.itu.int/en/consultations/Pages/wtpf-21/display-WTPF-21-second.aspx?ListItemID=6)

**Summary:** The “Third Draft of the Report by the ITU Secretary-General for the Sixth World Telecommunication/Information and Communication Technology Policy Forum 2021” includes mention of environmental concerns with IOT as among the diverse issues that the digital economy must address, though it does not discuss the issue specifically in terms of requirements to respond to the climate crisis.

While the Third Draft has a mention of environmental concerns, it does not link those concerns to the new and emerging telecommunications/ICTs it plans to discuss from a policy perspective. Little is said about these concerns in the draft, but other UN and ITU documentation, including ITU L.1470[[1]](#footnote-1) that established an ITU standard ensuring that the Telecommunications/ICT industry limits emissions, clearly indicating that the climate is a paramount issue for the UN System in our age and time.

APC recommends that in the output of the WTPF-21, attention is paid to the creation of digital options that respond to the environmental crisis facing our planet. In order to meet the 17 Sustainable Development Goals, especially SDG 13, “Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts,” the ITU needs to be concerned with a sustainable planet to sustain those goals. While discussing options for “Policies for mobilizing new and emerging telecommunications/ICTs for sustainable development”[[2]](#footnote-2) it is important to ensure that the mobilization is done in a manner that also contributes to a sustainable natural environment as per SDG 13 on Climate.

1. [**United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (UN ECLAC), Chile**](https://www.itu.int/en/council/cwg-internet/Pages/consultation-sep2020.aspx)

**Summary:** "Without connectivity there is NO development", this should be considered the central message for the world. We are living in a period of structural changes that urgently call to create and develop new mechanisms of cooperation and development aid. And universal access to the Internet is a key part of this transformation. The #BuildBackBetter emerges as an urgent call from the community to rebuild and move towards a more inclusive and sustainable development system, and this is where the imperative need for the use and massification of digital technology arises, and where without connectivity it is impossible to resume the route to human-social, environmental and economic development. The pandemic caused by Covid-19 has exposed, in addition to the enormous connectivity gaps at a global level, that the Internet is a "vital" tool to save lives and to sustain the innumerable digital services that contribute to development in key areas such as education, employment, health and recently financial inclusion for the purposes of transfers to the high-risk population. We are at a point of no return to the conventional model and it is therefore the responsibility of the state, society and the private sector to contribute to this new development model based largely on digital technology and Internet access.

**SECTION II. COMMENTARY ON THE DRAFT REPORT**

1. [**Association for Proper Internet Governance, Switzerland**](https://www.itu.int/en/consultations/Pages/wtpf-21/display-WTPF-21-second.aspx?ListItemID=1)

**Summary:** We have discussed the key policies for mobilizing new and emerging telecommunications/ICTs for sustainable development in our submissions to the previous WTPF open consultation. Those submissions remain relevant for the present open consultation. We reiterate in particular the urgent need to reduce the cost of connectivity in developing countries. This can be achieved by fostering competition (which may include functional separation), funding infrastructure, taking steps to reduce the cost of international connectivity, supporting the development of local content, capacity building, and a proper governance system.

It is also necessary to improve trust and security. It is urgent to recognize that market failures are partly the cause of the current lack of security of the Internet. Steps must be taken to address the externalities arising from lack of security (entities that do not secure their systems sufficiently do not bear all the costs of security breaches), and to address information asymmetries (consumers have no way of knowing which services are sufficiently secure). At the same time, it is imperative to protect human rights, protect data privacy, protect consumers and workers (in particular against abuse by dominant platforms), curtail unnecessary and disproportionate mass surveillance, address the issue of job destruction and wealth concentration engendered by the Internet’s current governance mechanisms, address the ethical issues arising from automation and artificial intelligence, and deal with platform dominance.

**Proposals:**

2.7.1 Looking ahead, what are the new and emerging [digital technologies and trends] [telecommunications/ICTs] that ITU membership considers to be key enablers of the global transition to the digital economy? Given the inter-connections or -dependencies in the use and deployment of such [technologies] [telecommunications/ICTs], what is the role that policy-makers and other stakeholders can play in fostering an enabling environment that creates an agile ecosystem to enable their sustainable use?

*As stated in our previous contribution, the economic value of data, and the distribution of that value is the key enabler of the global transition to the digital economy. Many new services (e.g. search engines, social networks) are financed by monetizing data. Thus the key question is how to distribute the value of data. This topic is discussed in depth in our previous contributions, in particular:*

[*https://www.itu.int/en/Lists/consultationWTPF21/Attachments/17//First%20consult%20UNCTAD.pdf*](https://www.itu.int/en/Lists/consultationWTPF21/Attachments/17//First%20consult%20UNCTAD.pdf)

[*https://www.itu.int/en/Lists/consultationWTPF21/Attachments/19//First%20consult%20Bread.pdf*](https://www.itu.int/en/Lists/consultationWTPF21/Attachments/19//First%20consult%20Bread.pdf)

*https://www.itu.int/en/Lists/consultationWTPF21/Attachments/16//Opinion%2021.pdf*

2.7.3 What are the key opportunities and challenges facing the mobilization of such new and emerging [digital technologies] [telecommunications/ICTs] for sustainable development? What are the issues for their development and deployment?

*See comments on 2.7.1 above.*

2.7.4 What opportunities and challenges may arise from mobilizing new and emerging [digital technologies and trends] [telecommunications/ICTs]? What polices should be considered in this regard to protect interests of all people and especially the most vulnerable groups of the population? What role should ITU play in this process within its mandate?

*ITU has a clear and key role to play to address the security issues of new and emerging [digital technologies and trends] [telecommunications/ICTs]. Specific proposals are found in section 1.4 of our previous submission, cited above2.*

*For convenience, we reproduce below the policy suggestions set forth in our previous submission:*

*1) Recognize that access is a fundamental right and to take steps to provide access if market forces do not result in affordable access for all.*

*2) Invite IETF, ISOC, ITU, and OHCHR to study the issues of privacy, encryption and prevention of inappropriate mass surveillance, which include technical, user education, and legal aspects.*

*3) Invite IETF, ISOC, ITU, UNCITRAL, and UNCTAD to study the issue of externalities arising from lack of security, which has technical, economic, and legal aspects. In particular, UNCITRAL should be mandated to develop a model law on the matter.*

*4) Since the right of the public to correspond by telecommunications is guaranteed by Article 33 of the ITU Constitution (within the limits outlined in Article 34), invite IETF, ITU, OHCHR, and UNESCO jointly to study the issue of takedown, filtering, and blocking, which includes technical, legal, and ethical aspects.*

*5) Invite UNESCO and UNICTRAL to study the ethical issues of networked automation, including driverless cars, which include ethical and legal aspects. As a starting point, the study should consider the IEEE Global Initiative for Ethical Considerations in Artificial Intelligence and Autonomous Systems.*

*6) Invite ILO and UNCTAD to study the issues of induced job destruction, wealth concentration, and the impact of algorithms on social justice and that UNCTAD compile and coordinate the studies made by other agencies such as OECD, World Bank, IMF.*

*7) Invite ITU, UNCITRAL and UNESCO to study issues related to IoT (including security of IoT devices, use of data from IoT devices, decisions made by IoT devices, etc.), which include technical, legal, and ethical aspects (for a partial list of such aspects, see Recommendation ITU-T Y.3001: Future networks: Objectives and design goals). The studies should take into account Recommendation ITU-T Y.3013: Socio-economic assessment of future networks by tussle analysis.*

*8) Invite UNCTAD and UNCITRAL to study the issues related to the economic and social value or data, in particular “big data” and the increasing use of algorithms (including artificial intelligence) to make decisions, which issues include economic and legal aspects. In particular, UNCITRAL should be mandated to develop model laws, and possibly treaties, on personal data protection, algorithmic transparency and accountability, and artificial intelligence; UNCTAD should be mandated to develop a study on the taxation of robots; and the UN Conference on Disarmament should consider taking measures with respect to lethal autonomous weapons.*

*9) Invite UNCTAD to study the economic and market issues related to platform dominance, and to facilitate the exchange of information on national and regional experiences, and that the ILO be mandated to study the worker protection issues related to platform dominance and the so-called “sharing economy”.*

*10) Invite the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) and the UN HCHR to study the potential effects of platform dominance on elections and democracy.*

*11) Invite all stakeholders to consider whether it would be appropriate to include a general provision on OTT cost and price transparency in a future international instrument, for example in a future version of the International Telecommunication Regulations (ITRs).*

*12) Invite UNCITRAL to study the issue of intermediary liability, with a view to proposing a model law on the matter.*

*13) Recognize that access is a fundamental right and to take steps to provide access if market forces do not result in affordable access for all.*

*14) Invite IETF, ISOC, ITU, and OHCHR to study the issues of privacy, encryption and prevention of inappropriate mass surveillance, which include technical, user education, and legal aspects.*

*15) Invite IETF, ISOC, ITU, UNCITRAL, and UNCTAD to study the issue of externalities arising from lack of security, which has technical, economic, and legal aspects. In particular, UNCITRAL should be mandated to develop a model law on the matter.*

*16) Since the right of the public to correspond by telecommunications is guaranteed by Article 33 of the ITU Constitution (within the limits outlined in Article 34), invite IETF, ITU, OHCHR, and UNESCO jointly to study the issue of takedown, filtering, and blocking, which includes technical, legal, and ethical aspects.*

*17) Invite UNESCO and UNICTRAL to study the ethical issues of networked automation, including driverless cars, which include ethical and legal aspects. As a starting point, the study should consider the IEEE Global Initiative for Ethical Considerations in Artificial Intelligence and Autonomous Systems.*

*18) Invite ILO and UNCTAD to study the issues of induced job destruction, wealth concentration, and the impact of algorithms on social justice and that UNCTAD compile and coordinate the studies made by other agencies such as OECD, World Bank, IMF.*

*19) Invite ITU, UNCITRAL and UNESCO to study issues related to IoT (including security of IoT devices, use of data from IoT devices, decisions made by IoT devices, etc.), which include technical, legal, and ethical aspects (for a partial list of such aspects, see Recommendation ITU-T Y.3001: Future networks: Objectives and design goals). The studies should take into account Recommendation ITU-T Y.3013: Socio-economic assessment of future networks by tussle analysis.*

*20) Invite UNCTAD and UNCITRAL to study the issues related to the economic and social value or data, in particular “big data” and the increasing use of algorithms (including artificial intelligence) to make decisions, which issues include economic and legal aspects. In particular, UNCITRAL should be mandated to develop model laws, and possibly treaties, on personal data protection, algorithmic transparency and accountability, and artificial intelligence; UNCTAD should be mandated to develop a study on the taxation of robots; and the UN Conference on Disarmament should consider taking measures with respect to lethal autonomous weapons.*

*21) Invite UNCTAD to study the economic and market issues related to platform dominance, and to facilitate the exchange of information on national and regional experiences, and that the ILO be mandated to study the worker protection issues related to platform dominance and the so-called “sharing economy”.*

*22) Invite the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) and the UN HCHR to study the potential effects of platform dominance on elections and democracy.*

*23) Invite all stakeholders to consider whether it would be appropriate to include a general provision on OTT cost and price transparency in a future international instrument, for example in a future version of the International Telecommunication Regulations (ITRs).*

*24) Invite UNCITRAL to study the issue of intermediary liability, with a view to proposing a model law on the matter.*

2.7.8 How can policy-makers build an enabling environment for investment? What policies can help ensure that the regulatory and market environments help mobilize new and emerging [digital technologies and trends] [telecommunications/ICTs] for sustainable development?

*The key issue here is to recognize the dominant role of platforms in the digital economy and to apply/reform anti-trust and competition law accordingly. See 4.2 of our cited previous submission, and the UNCTAD paper “Restoring competition in ‘winner-took-all’ digital platform markets” (UNCTAD Research Paper no. 40), available at:*

[*https://unctad.org/en/PublicationsLibrary/ser-rp-2019d12\_en.pdf*](https://unctad.org/en/PublicationsLibrary/ser-rp-2019d12_en.pdf)

2.7.9 How can stakeholders build local and inclusive participation in policymaking and innovation ecosystems that enhance consumer trust and enable the deployment and use of new and emerging [digital technologies and trends] [telecommunications/ICTs] for sustainable development?

*See sections 1.3, 1.5, and 1.5 of our cited previous submission.*

2.7.12 How can ITU and other international fora continue to collaborate more closely, through the WSIS process, in supporting the use of new and emerging [digital technologies and trends] [telecommunications/ICTs] to achieve sustainable development?

*See comments on 2.7.4 above.*

1. [**Information and Communication Technologies Authority, Turkey**](https://www.itu.int/en/consultations/Pages/wtpf-21/display-WTPF-21-second.aspx?ListItemID=2)

**Proposals:**

2.8.2.2.e. *How can IoT technologies can use to identify, control and stop pandemic diseases such as Covid-19. What kind of IoT applications could use for medical staff to compete pandemies.*

2.8.3.2.d. *How can 5G technologies help countries to combat with pandemics such as Covid-19? How 5G can contribute to crete safer environments to scientists that working lab, medical staff and decreasing risks of contamination.*

2.8.4.3.e. *How can Big Data could use for immediate action to discover pandemic diseases such as Covid-19. How countries and medical staff can use Big Data to hinder and combat with pandemics. How internet data and traffic could use for vital measurements.*

2.8.5.3.g. *What indicators should be monitored to reveal the effects of OTTs on the electronic communications industry and telecom operators?*

2.8.6.2 Yet millions of people in new and emerging markets lack access to these services, due to the limited reach of reliable, secure, and affordable communications infrastructure in many countries. In addition, low income populations with access frequently do not use services, because of constraints arising from limited affordability and social norms that can bar access to communications technology to certain vulnerable populations such as women and girls and persons with disabilities and persons with specific needs. *After Covid-19 crisis, the work on assuring access to comprehensive, affordable and at least medium-quality connectivity could be vital to enable critical crisis responses in short term.*

1. **[Association for Progressive Communications (APC), USA](https://www.itu.int/en/consultations/Pages/wtpf-21/display-WTPF-21-second.aspx?ListItemID=5)**

**Summary:**​ Commitments for meaningful internet access and digital inclusion need to be reinforced before 1 the benefits of new and emerging technologies can be fully realised. To achieve this, innovative complementary solutions, beyond those listed as the example subthemes given in Decision 611 (Council 2019), are necessary. We welcome the addition to the third draft of the theme “Mobilizing New Solutions for Connectivity”. However, explicitly including questions in this subtheme regarding Community Networks (CN) should also be prioritised. The manner in which CN combines existing technology with new and innovative technology and methods, marks it as a major possible contribution to bringing the internet infrastructure to the half of the world that is still excluded from digital society. APC believes that an outcome on enabling policies must not overlook CN’s contribution to the SDG solution path. Community Networks are an epitome of ‘new solutions for connectivity’ that need policy enablement.

**Proposals:**

* We recommend rewriting the last sentence in 2.8.6.3 as follows:

“*and business models that deliberately enable local communities to be involved in ​providing services and bringing down barriers to technology use*​”

* We recommend exploring communities’ active involvement in “mobilizing new solutions for connectivity”, in a similar way that the upcoming CWG-Internet public consultation is doing by asking the following questions[[3]](#footnote-3):

“*What are the challenges and opportunities mobilizing new solutions for expanding Internet connectivity, particularly to remote and under-served areas? What are the roles of governments and non-government actors in overcoming these challenges?*

*How can small/community/non-profit operators help in promoting the increase of Internet connectivity?*”

* In addition, there are many specific areas in which ITU policy development could enable the creation of people-centered Community Networks with their ability to satisfy SDGs that cannot be completely met by the current broadband efforts. In a recent study paper, the ITU recommended, among other things, to “​Ease regulatory requirements for community network operators”[[4]](#footnote-4). Therefore, in “mobilizing new solutions for connectivity”, the role of policies and regulations to enable these solutions is critical and should be explored further. In the particular case of community networks regulatory barriers have been identified[[5]](#footnote-5), being the lack of an enabling licensing framework as well as spectrum management practices that prevent rural development, are among the most salient[[6]](#footnote-6). Exploring these challenges further should be also considered when analysing this sub-theme.
1. ITU (2020), ​*Recommendation L.1470*, ​<https://www.itu.int/rec/T-REC-L.1470-202001-I> [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. ITU (2020) ​*Third draft of the report by the Secretary-General*, ​ Op. cit [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. ITU (Retrieved 14 June, 2020), ​*CWG-Internet: Online Open Consultation (September 2020),* <https://www.itu.int/en/council/cwg-internet/Pages/consultation-sep2020.aspx> [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. ITU, (21 May, 2020), ​ *ITU launches new study paper on broadband and connectivity solutions for rural and remote areas​*, <https://news.itu.int/itu-launches-new-study-paper-on-broadband-and-connectivity-solutions-for-rural-and-remote-areas/> [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Belli, Luca, (209), *​Building Community network Policies: A Collaborative Governance towards Enabling Frameworks*.; 2019 Outcome of the Dynamic Coalition on Community Connectivity (DC3) of the United Nations Internet Governance Forum (IGF) <https://www.intgovforum.org/multilingual/index.php?q=filedepot_download/4391/1901> [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Song, S, Rey-Moreno, C., Jensen, M.,ISOC (2019*) ​Innovations in Spectrum Management* <https://www.internetsociety.org/resources/doc/2019/innovations-in-spectrum-management/> [↑](#footnote-ref-6)