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| **Council Working Group on International Internet-related Public Policy Issues Fifteenth meeting - Virtual Meeting, 27-28 January 2021** |  |
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|  | **Document CWG-Internet-15/12-E** |
| **28 January 2021** |
| **English only** |
| FINAL REPORT OF THE FIFTEENTH meeting of the  COuncil working group on international Internet-related public policy issues (cwg-internet) | |

1. **Introduction**

**1.1.** The fifteenth meeting of the CWG-Internet was held on 27-28 January 2021 under the Chairmanship of Mr. Majed Al-Mazyed.

**1.2.**  ITU Secretary-General Mr. Houlin Zhao welcomed participants to the meeting. He commended the successful outcome of the eighth open consultation on “*Expanding Internet Connectivity*” and the substantive inputs received, noting that the policy issues highlighted in the consultation, such as infrastructure, investment, affordability, innovation and a robust enabling environment, are critical to address current challenges as well as to advance sustainable development. The BDT Director, Ms. Doreen Bogdan-Martin, was also present at the meeting and noted the relevance of the consultation topic to WTDC-21 discussions.

**1.3** The Chairman thanked the ITU Secretary-General, Mr. Houlin Zhao, for his presence and support for the meeting, as well as the ITU Deputy Secretary-General, Mr. Malcolm Jonson, for his presence and support during the virtual meeting – physical open consultation.

**2.** [**CWG-Internet-15/1(Rev.1)**](https://www.itu.int/md/S21-RCLINTPOL15-C-0001/en)**: Agenda of the meeting**

The Chairman presented the Agenda (CWG-Internet-15/1(Rev.1)) which was adopted.

**3.** [**CWG-Internet 15/2**](https://www.itu.int/md/S21-RCLINTPOL15-C/en)**: Secretariat report on ITU Internet Activities: Resolutions 101, 102, 133, 180 and 206**

3.1 This report summarizes ITU’s activities related to Plenipotentiary Conference (PP) Resolution 101 (Rev. Dubai, 2018), “Internet Protocol-based networks”; Resolution 102 (Rev. Dubai, 2018), “ITU’s role with regard to international public policy issues pertaining to the Internet and the management of Internet resources, including domain names and addresses”; Resolution 133 (Rev. Dubai, 2018), “Roles of administrations of Member States in the management of Internationalized (multilingual) domain names”; Resolution 180 (Rev. Dubai, 2018), “Facilitating the transition from IPv4 to IPv6” and Resolution 206 (Dubai, 2018), “OTTs”.

**Discussions**

3.2 The Group noted the Internet Activities Report.

**4. Discussion of responses from the Open Consultation**

4.1 [**Summary of the online open consultation and physical open consultation meeting**](https://www.itu.int/md/S21-OPCWGINT8-C-0003/en)  
**(OC-CWG-Internet-8/3)**

4.1.1 The CWG examined the summary of the online open consultation and virtual meeting - physical open consultation held on 25 January 2021.

4.2 **Discussions**

4.2.1 The Group thanked all stakeholders for their active participation in the online and virtual meeting - physical open consultation on “*Expanding Internet Connectivity*”.

4.2.2 Noting the substantive output from the open consultation, some members suggested that the Secretariat develop a repository of all the consultations conducted so far, organized by subject. It was further suggested that the Directors of all the ITU bureaux be encouraged to consider the consultation responses in their work.

4.2.3 The Chairman invited the Group to consider the output from the consultation while identifying future topics for open consultations and asked the Secretariat to further develop the current consultation repository as suggested by the Group.

4.3 **Contributions from Member States (CWG-Internet-15/4 and CWG-Internet-15/8)**

The CWG also examined the various related contributions (in the order listed in the Agenda), which were noted by the Group. The summaries of the contributions (as submitted by the authors of the documents) and the corresponding discussions are provided below:

4.3.1 [**CWG-Internet-15/4**](https://www.itu.int/md/S21-RCLINTPOL15-C-0004/en)**: Contribution from the United Kingdom - Response to the consultation on expanding Internet connectivity**

**Summary**

The Internet is a critical enabler of economic and social development. However, in order to expand connectivity to all citizens, there are significant challenges that must be overcome. We need to 1) build an open, competitive market environment for broadband providers 2) develop policies to support infrastructure deployment 3) ensure effective spectrum management. The broader environment is also important in terms of skills, local content and languages and the business and legal environment. In addition, harnessing the potential of community networks and introducing measures to support landlocked countries will be key for reaching underserved regions.

**Discussion**

The contribution was noted by the Group. Some members additionally commended ITU’s efforts in the context of connecting the unconnected and highlighted the latest report on "Connecting Humanity" as well as other ongoing initiatives.

4.3.2 [**CWG-Internet-15/8**](https://www.itu.int/md/S21-RCLINTPOL15-C-0008/en)**: Contribution by the United States of America - Response to the consultation on expanding Internet connectivity**

**Summary**

The Internet is an engine for innovation and growth and is critical to full participation in the 21st century economy. The United States has looked for innovative ways to advance our efforts to increase broadband connectivity and enhance digital inclusion in the United States. Among the lessons from our experience to enhance broadband connectivity and digital inclusion are: 1) Improve data for better policies; 2) Modernize and streamline processes and procedures to speed deployment; 3) Improve funding streams and investment models; 4) Engage a whole of government approach; and 5) Build capacity and engage stakeholders.

The United States also recommends that the Council Working Group on Internet’s next open consultation expand consideration of the topic of Internet connectivity to include lessons learned during the global pandemic.

**Discussion**

The contribution was noted by the Group.

**5. Introduction and Discussion of other Contributions from Member States**

The CWG examined the various contributions (in the order listed in the Agenda), which were noted by the Group. The summaries of the contributions (as submitted by the authors of the documents) and the corresponding discussions are provided below:

**5.1** [**CWG-Internet-15/3**](https://www.itu.int/md/S21-RCLINTPOL15-C-0003/en)**: Contribution by the United Kingdom:  Topic for the next Council Working Group open consultation**

**Summary**

The United Kingdom is pleased to submit this contribution to the Council Working Group (Internet). We welcome the opportunities the Group provides to share experiences and perspectives on international Internet-related public policy issues and we look forward to future discussions. We invite the Council Working Group to consider the following topic for its next open consultation: The role of the internet in mitigating the impact of Covid-19 and possible future pandemics.

**Discussion**

Some members expressed support for the topic proposed by the UK due to its timeliness and the prominent positive role the Internet has played during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Some members were of the view that the topic was too broad for the remit of the CWG, noting overlap and duplication with other Groups and ongoing ITU work, preferring to focus more on issues specific to international Internet-related public policy issues.

The Group noted the contribution, and after discussing the other contributions containing proposals for topics for the online consultation, agreed to an amended form of the proposal from the UK as follows:

*“The role of the Internet and international Internet-related public policy in mitigating the impact of COVID-19 and possible future pandemics.”*

Given the wide-ranging nature of this topic, the Group decided not to include any questions for this topic.

**5.2** [**CWG-Internet-15/5**](https://www.itu.int/md/S21-RCLINTPOL15-C-0005/en)**: Contribution by the Russian Federation - Proposal to CWG-Internet Open Consultations**

**Summary**

The Russian Federation proposes to hold the following open consultations with all stakeholders on the topic “The current status of the global governance system for management and development Internet resource, including Internet domain names and addresses and critical Internet infrastructure and possible ways to overcome the challenges associated with dependence on the decisions of one national administration for further building an independent, democratic and equidistant from all states Internet governance system”.

**Discussion**

Some members expressed support for this contribution as they considered it timely and relevant to the mandate of the Group.

Some members noted several past developments on this topic and that it is already under consideration at different appropriate fora.

The Group noted the contribution.

**5.3** [**CWG-Internet-15/6**](https://www.itu.int/md/S21-RCLINTPOL15-C-0006/en)**: Contribution by the Russian Federation - Role of ITU and ITU Member States in ensuring trust and security in the Internet at the international level**

**Summary**

The Russian Federation proposes to discuss the following questions in the framework of topic "Role of ITU and ITU Member States in ensuring trust and security in the Internet at the international level".

1. Representatives of Member States discuss the status of global governance system for management and development Internet resource, including Internet domain names, addresses, and critical Internet infrastructure at the 17th CWG-Internet meeting.

2. Member States will conduct consultations with all stakeholders at the national level and present at the 16th meeting of the CWG-Internet their views on possible ways to overcome the existing challenges in the Internet governance system related to dependence on the decisions of one national administration.

3. Member States will conduct consultations with all stakeholders at the national level and submit to the 16th meeting of the CWG-Internet proposals for strengthening security measures in the framework of technical regulation of the Internet critical infrastructure.

4. Propose to hold the following open consultations with all stakeholders on the topic “The current status of the global governance system for management and development Internet resource, including Internet domain names and addresses and critical Internet infrastructure and possible ways to overcome the challenges associated with dependence on the decisions of one national administration for further building an independent, democratic and equidistant from all states Internet governance system”.

**Discussion**

Some members expressed support for this proposal, noting that members have the right to invite other interested members to deliberate or take actions on certain proposals. The Russian Federation invited Member States to provide contributions on the proposed topic in line with CWG-Internet scope.

Some members recognized the importance of multi-stakeholder consultations but also noted that it is the sovereign right of members to decide on carrying out any such consultations. Additionally, some members noted that there may be more relevant venues within ITU such as ITU-T SG17 or GCA-related consultations to discuss some of the topics highlighted in this contribution.

The Group noted the contribution.

**5.4** [**CWG-Internet-15/7**](https://www.itu.int/md/S21-RCLINTPOL15-C-0007/en)**: Contribution by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia - Topic for Next Open Consultation**

**Summary**

The following topic is suggested by Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to the Council Working Group (Internet) next open consultation: "The Impact of Internet and Digital technologies on Privacy".

**Discussion**

Some members expressed support for this proposal, noting the timeliness and relevance of the topic and highlighted the need to develop appropriate international recommendations related to privacy.

Some members acknowledged the importance of the topic but expressed concern that some aspects of it may fall outside the mandate of the Group, particularly as the issue of “privacy” is already under consideration by other UN agencies.

Some members were of the opinion that some of the questions in the contribution could be reformulated to make it pertinent to the work of the Group.

The Group noted the contribution.

**5.5** [**CWG-Internet-15/9**](https://www.itu.int/md/S21-RCLINTPOL15-C-0009/en)**: Contribution by the Republic of Paraguay - Challenges in landlocked countries to ensure affordable access to the Internet**

**Summary**

This document contains comments on the activities carried out by Paraguay in relation to international Internet connectivity. ITU is encouraged to continue discussing this issue and to contribute as a specialized agency of the UN to the Vienna Program of Action for Landlocked Developing Countries.

**Discussion**

Members expressed support for this contribution as it is an important area of work for ITU, noting the ongoing work on the subject.

The Group noted the contribution and requested the Secretariat to include updates on ITU’s activities on the topic, including those relating to the Vienna Program of Action in its future Internet Activities Reports.

**5.6** [**CWG-Internet-15/10**](https://www.itu.int/md/S21-RCLINTPOL15-C-0010/en)**: Contribution by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia - Safe Children in the Cyber World**

**Summary**

This document highlighted the Crown Prince Mohammed Bin Salman Initiative for “*Safe Children in the Cyber World”* and introduced the first practical step of the initiative, an agreement between ITU and NCA to implement a global programme on ‘Creating a safe and empowering cyber environment for children’. This new collaboration aims to develop and implement child online safety policies among governments, industry, and civil society to increase capacity development and knowledge sharing with all relevant stakeholders. The members of the CWG were kindly invited to share their respective experiences as well their suggestion as an input to the development of the strategy for the *“Safe Children in the Cyber World”* initiative including areas of focus, potential partners etc.

It is also proposed to organize interactive sessions with the members of the CWG. These sessions can be co-hosted by ITU and National Cybersecurity Agency (NCA).

**Discussion**

The Group noted the contribution.

**5.7** [**CWG-Internet-15/11**](https://www.itu.int/md/S21-RCLINTPOL15-C-0011/en)**: Contribution by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia - Strengthening Cyber Resilience on Mega events**

**Summary**

This contribution introduced the “G20 Cybersecurity Readiness and Resilience Program” which was developed National Cybersecurity Agency (NCA) following a rigorous methodology capitalizing on previous international experiences.

The Program makes use of a model to secure stakeholders and assets involved in G20 events throughout the G20 Presidency, leading up to the Leaders' Virtual Summit. The document also highlighted the program structure based on a two-tier model, with focus on adaptability and continuous improvement.

The document draws upon the successful NCA’s experience securing the G20 from a cybersecurity perspective. Its objective is to provide valuable insight that can be used to benefit future G20 host nations and other mega event organizers including ITU Assemblies and Conferences.

**Discussion**

The Group noted the contribution.

**6 Actions**

**6.1** ITU Secretariat will launch the next round of Open Consultations (February– September 2021) on the following topic as agreed by the fifteenth meeting of the CWG-Internet*:*

*“The role of the Internet and international Internet-related public policy in mitigating the impact of COVID-19 and possible future pandemics”*

**6.2** The summary of the eighth online consultation and the virtual meeting - physical consultation on “*Expanding Internet Connectivity*” will be submitted as part of the Chairman’s report to Council.

**6.3** ITU Secretariat will further develop the consultation repository in alignment with the recommendations made by this Group.

**6.4** Directors of all the ITU bureaux are invited to consider the consultation responses in their work, as appropriate.

**6.5** ITUSecretariat will include ITU’s activities relating to the Vienna Programme of Action (on addressing challenges faced by landlocked developing countries) in its Internet Activities Reports.

**7 Closing of the Meeting**

7.1 The report of the fifteenth meeting of the CWG-Internet was approved by the CWG-Internet and was posted on the CWG-Internet website (<http://www.itu.int/en/council/cwg-internet>).

7.2 In closing, the Chairman thanked all the ITU Member States who made contributions and participated in the work of the Group, the Vice-Chairmen, the ITU Elected Officials and the Secretariat, especially Ms. Sadhvi Saran, for their efficient assistance during the meeting.

7.3 The Group thanked the Chairman and Secretariat for their effective organization and management of the Group. The Group also thanked the remote moderator.

Mr. Majed Al-Mazyed **(Saudi Arabia), Chairman, CWG-Internet**