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| **Council 2022 Geneva, 21 – 31 March 2022** |  |
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| **Agenda item: ADM 8** | **Document C22/39** |
| **18 February 2022** |
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Report by the Secretary-General

EXEMPTIONS FROM FEES FOR ORGANIZATIONS   
OF AN INTERNATIONAL CHARACTER

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| **Summary**  Each year, ITU receives requests from organizations of an international character seeking exemption from membership fees and other financial contributions to the Union based on reciprocity. These new requests are reviewed by the secretariat according to criteria established by Council.  The secretariat is also reviewing the full list of exempted entities to assess whether they fully meet the criteria revised by Council in 2017. A full report is being prepared for the consideration of the next meeting of Council in September 2022.  **Action required**  The Council is invited **to consider** the recommendations of the Secretary-General regarding new requests for exemption.  **References**  [*C2000/28(Rev.1)*](http://www.itu.int/itudoc/gs/council/c00/docs/28rev1.html),[*Council Resolution 925*](https://www.itu.int/md/S19-CL-C-0141/en)*,* [*Council Criteria for Exemptions (Rev 2017)*](https://www.itu.int/hub/membership/our-members/exempted-entities/) |

# 1 Background

1.1 Each year, ITU receives requests from organizations of an international character seeking exemption from membership fees and other financial contributions to the Union. These requests are considered as per the procedure established by Council at its 2000 session ([C2000/28(Rev.1)](http://www.itu.int/itudoc/gs/council/c00/docs/28rev1.html)) and in accordance with No. 476 of the Convention and [Council Resolution 925](https://www.itu.int/md/S19-CL-C-0141/en).

1.2 Exemption from fees is granted by the Council following an analysis of the relevant Sectors and a recommendation by the Secretary-General. If approved, they become Sector Members or Associates under the terms of No. 231 of the Convention.

1.3 Currently, there are about 130 exempted organizations of an international character. A full list is available [here](https://www.itu.int/hub/membership/itu-family/organizations/exempted-entities/).

1.4 In Resolution 187 (Busan, 2014), the 2014 Plenipotentiary Conference instructed Council to “review the practice and criteria for exempting entities from membership fees and, if necessary, make changes to tighten the criteria to help bring greater clarity, consistency and fairness between paying and non-paying members and to reduce the total of exempted entities.”

1.5 Council 17 approved revised criteria, available [here](https://www.itu.int/hub/membership/itu-family/organizations/exempted-entities/exemption-criteria/). Since then, each Council has reviewed new applications according to these criteria.

1.6 At its 2019 session, Council decided to apply the revised criteria to new applications and maintain (i.e. “grandfather”) the existing list for another four years as a transitionary measure. In recent months, the secretariat has been contacting all entities that currently benefit from exemption to update their documentation and confirm if they wish to continue their status subject to reciprocity. On this basis, the secretariat is reviewing the entire list of exempted entities to assess whether they meet the revised criteria with the intention of providing a full report to the next session of Council for consideration.

# 2 New Requests and Recommendations

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| Organization | Sector | Recommendation: |
| **Digital Cooperation Organization (DCO)** | ITU-D | YES |

Headquartered in Saudi Arabia, DCO was established in 2020 by seven Member States to drive greater collaboration and cooperation across entrepreneurship, innovation, business growth and employment in a shared digital economy. Its seven founding member nations are Bahrain, Jordan, Kuwait, Nigeria Oman, Pakistan, and Saudi Arabia. The secretariat is of the view that this entity meets the criteria for exemption for ITU-D.

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| Organization | Sector | Recommendation: |
| **Telecommunications Standards Development Society, India (TSDSI)** | ITU-R  ITU-T | Defer to next session of Council as part of review of full list |

TSDSI was established as an autonomous body by Indian industry, academia, research entities and the Government of India as a not-for-profit entity, to drive telecom standardization activities in India and project Indian interests in global forums. TSDSI membership includes international companies and academic/ research institutions from numerous countries. TSDSI, has signed partnership agreements with several global SDOs and ICT forums and taken membership in ITU to contribute to international standards development. TSDSI is currently a fee-paying Associate Member of ITU-R and ITU-T.

While TSDSI is active internationally, including in ITU, and it has international members, their members are mainly for-profit companies. Furthermore, TSDSI it is established as a national entity rather than as an international-regional organization. The secretariat recommends that this application be deferred until the full list of exempted entities is reviewed against the criteria revised in 2017 by Council to ensure alignment among organizations of a similar nature.

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| Organization | Sector | Recommendation: |
| **IoT Lab** | ITU-T | Defer to next session of Council as part of review of full list |

Located in Switzerland, IoT Lab is an international platform of services and resources for the Internet of Things (IoT), bringing together: IoT Services, Privacy & Security, Testlab, Tech Transfer, SDGs and Network & Community. This request was deferred by Council 2021, pending further consultation and study. Given its mixed membership of industry and academia, the secretariat recommends that this application be deferred until the full list of exempted entities is reviewed against the criteria revised in 2017 by Council to ensure alignment among organizations of a similar nature.

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