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| **Council Working Group for Strategic and Financial Plans 2024-2027 Third meeting – 21 and 22 February 2022** |  |
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|  | **Document CWG-SFP-3/11-E** |
| **7 February 2022** |
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| Contribution from the Russian Federation | |
| PROPOSALS CONCERNING DOCUMENT CWG-SFP-3/5  annex 2 to resolution 71: Situational analysis | |

Introduction

The Russian Federation hereby submits proposals and questions regarding parts of document CWG-SFP-3/5, taking into account the results of the discussion at the second meeting of the Council Working Group for Strategic and Financial Plans on 13 and 14 January 2022. That document contains information on the results of the elaboration of a situational analysis for the draft ITU strategic plan for 2024-2027, reflecting the linkages between the current strategic plan and the one being developed. Thus, the document 1) describes the role of ITU as a part of the United Nations system; 2) describes important developments since the Plenipotentiary Conference (Dubai, 2018) (PP-18); 3) lists important developments in the telecommunications/ICT landscape; 4) summarizes progress on meeting the goals of the ITU 2020-2023 Strategic Plan (growth, inclusiveness, sustainability, innovation and partnership), contributing to the achievement of elements of the Connect 2030 Agenda; 5) assesses the value proposition of ITU and its organizational effectiveness; 6) summarizes ITU’s strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT matrix).

While analysis of the SWOT matrix in that document shows that, compared with the initial version presented by the Dalberg consultants, the suggestions and wishes expressed by the Member States have on the whole been followed in a correct and useful manner, and the new matrix is an improvement on the original one, it can still be improved and serve as the basis for further work, to define concrete performance indicators and content for the operational plans of the Sectors.

At the second meeting of CWG-SFP, the Russian Federation expressed concern about the formulation “Complex governing structure, limiting organizational agility and quick decision-making”, identified as a “weakness” of ITU. The formulation does not make it clear what structure is meant: ITU itself, with its federative structure that includes the three Sectors, or the structure of the General Secretariat. The CWG-SFP chairman asked the Russian Federation to submit a contribution on the question of the place of the ITU management structure in the SWOT analysis.

The proposals are intended as recommendations, for consideration and discussion by CWG-SFP.

Proposals:

1. We consider that it would be useful to remove from the list of weaknesses the formulation "Complex governing structure, limiting organizational agility and quick decision-making", which is imprecise and does not reflect the real capabilities of ITU’s unique structure to adapt to the needs of the membership; in our view, it is one of the strengths of the Union, as we show below, first and foremost because such a structure is an important feature and advantage of ITU as an international professional telecommunication/ICT organization and can be considered as a strength given that it enhances the value proposition of the Union for the membership, on condition that certain actual weaknesses are overcome.

In addition, a distinction needs to be made between the structure of ITU as reflected in its basic texts and its “internal management”, which determines the organizational and management capabilities of the Union’s staff to implement the decisions of the membership.

2. It is proposed to consider the following as being among the strengths of ITU, which the Union can use to realize its potential:

– The diversity of the mandates of the Sectors of ITU, which allows for a broad collaboration within the Union that contributes to the achievement of its mission (*on condition that the possibilities of utilizing the synergies of all ITU Sectors are realized*);

– The federal structure of ITU, which makes it possible to meet the diverse needs of the membership in an optimum manner within the framework of ITU’s mandate and Sector specialization (*by making use of the regional presence function, increased delegation to the staff of authority and the corresponding responsibility and accountability on the basis of performance-driven talent management, and so on*).

3. Consider and discuss at CWG-SFP the possibility of reflecting in Annex 2 to Resolution 71 the descriptions of the weaknesses of ITU that are given in the table in the Annex to this proposal.

4. Wherever possible, we propose to avoid the use of abbreviations, acronyms and other short forms in Resolution 71 documents and annexes if the document is not accompanied by a glossary, as the Russian Federation has repeatedly requested. For example, § 6 of the document in question reads "To ensure the UN system works for ITU, the Union can continue to engage with the reformed UNDS, especially with the new RC system"; the abbreviation “RC system” should be explained (or a reference cited), see for example <https://unsdg.un.org/ru/node/508>: "The UN Resident Coordinator (RC) system encompasses all organizations of the United Nations system dealing with operational activities for development, regardless of their formal presence in the country. The RC system aims to bring together the different UN agencies to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of operational activities at the country level."

annex

table

Weaknesses of ITU

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| § | Secretariat opinion | Russian Federation proposals (revision marks) | Comments |
| 1 | Inefficiencies and bureaucracy, leading to reactive and slow processes |  | The Russian Federation does not agree that ITU lacks an effective professional management (“Inefficiencies”); were that the case, the Union would not have survived for more than 160 years. |
| 2 | Complex governing structure, limiting organizational agility and quick decision-making | - The existence of two spheres of management at the Union, an internal one (the General Secretariat) and an external one that is embodied in the action of the independent Member States in accordance with the mandate of ITU; this can slow down the decision-making processes | ITU is not a commercial organization and does not engage in entrepreneurship. The membership of the Union takes complex decisions that touch on the interests of the entire telecommunications/ITU world, which is why the Union by its nature does not seek out risks but strives to avoid mistakes wherever possible. What is absolutely certain is that the Union and its entire organizational culture are oriented, not towards constraining innovation, including innovation that aims to improve internal processes, but towards the incorporation and the utilization of innovation for the benefit of the international community. |
| 3 | Siloed approach with limited cross-functional collaboration that impedes potential synergies and operational efficiencies | - Duplication of activities resulting from a lack of coordination of Sector activities, for example, which can reduce potential synergies and operational efficiencies within the General Secretariat | It is not true that ITU has an “approach” that causes the activities of the Sectors to be segregated in silos (it has a common overall strategic plan in Resolution 71 and other statutory texts on cooperation and collaboration). |
| 4 | Risk-averse organizational culture and processes, constraining innovation, and bottom-up entrepreneurship |  | ITU does not engage in entrepreneurship. One of the most important core objectives of ITU is to support innovation in the domain of telecommunications/ICT. As to risks, see the comments on § 2 above. |
| 5 | Limited resource mobilization capacity, constraining the organization’s ability to enhance support for its members | - Limited resource mobilization capacity, constraining the organization’s capabilities due to the nature of Member State funding resulting from constraints on the size of the contributory unit, variations in Member State commitments in choosing the class of contribution, and the arrears incurred by the membership before the Union. | The Dalberg report, informal consultations, the ITU Secretary-General’s message to the second meeting of CWG-SFP in January 2022, difficulties in adopting a financial plan for ITU that balances revenue and expenses (Decision 5). |
| 6 |  | - ITU is an organization within the United Nations system that is directed by independent Member States, and this can lead to the blurring and dilution of its core competencies, diminishing its value to the ITU membership. | Dual lines of responsibility are a particularly intractable problem in the management of organizations. |
| 7 |  | - Limited possibilities for a rapid re-orientation of the domain of activity, because of the relatively slow procedure for changing the mandate (the Constitution and Convention of ITU) and the inherent characteristics of an international organization | Analysis of ITU experience |
| 8 |  | - Regional and area offices are relatively distant from the operational mainstream | Analysis of ITU experience and consultant recommendations |

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