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| **Agenda item: PL 3** | **Document C23/2-E** |
| **12 June 2023** |
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| Report by the Secretary-General |
| PROPOSED DATES AND DURATION OF THE 2024, 2025, AND 2026 SESSIONS OF THE COUNCIL ALONG WITH THE PROPOSED DATES OF CLUSTERS OF COUNCIL WORKING GROUPS AND EXPERT GROUPS FOR THE SAME PERIOD |
| **Purpose**In line with Resolution 77 (Rev. Bucharest, 2022) of the Plenipotentiary Conference which instructs the ITU Council, at each ordinary session, to schedule its next three ordinary sessions in June-July and to review the Council's schedule on a rolling basis, and considering Annex 2 to Decision 5 (Rev. Bucharest, 2022) of the Plenipotentiary Conference on options for reducing expenses, it is proposed to reduce progressively the duration of forthcoming ordinary Council sessions, and to organize one of the clusters of Council Working Groups and Expert Groups (CWGs & EGs) in every year to be held in a virtual format.**Action required by the Council**The Council is invited to **confirm** the dates for its 2024, 2025, and 2026 sessions together with the dates of the clusters of CWGs & EGs for the same period, and to **adopt** the draft Decision contained in Annex to this document.**Relevant link(s) with the Strategic Plan**Convening platform **Financial implications:** * The costs for holding the 2024 and 2025 Council sessions and the clusters of Council Working Groups and Expert Groups at ITU are covered by the 2024-2025 biannual budget.
* If a Council session is held in the International Conference Center Geneva (CICG), additional costs would be incurred, estimated at CHF 34 163 for a Council session of six days, CHF 39 496 for a Council session of seven days; CHF 43 998 for a Council session of eight days or CHF 51 250 for a session of nine days.
* If the clusters of Council Working Groups and Expert Groups are held in the CICG, the additional costs incurred are estimated at CHF 26 173 for two weeks.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**References**[*Rule 1, Council Rules of Procedure*](http://www.itu.int/council/pd/rop-e.pdf)*; Resolution 77 (Rev. Bucharest, 2022),* [*Resolution 111 (Rev. Busan, 2014)*](https://www.itu.int/en/council/Documents/basic-texts/RES-111-E.pdf) *of the Plenipotentiary Conference; Council* [*Decision 626*](https://www.itu.int/md/S22-CL-C-0098/en) *(C22); Council documents* [*C22/2*](https://www.itu.int/md/S22-CL-C-0002/en)*;* [*C23/37*](https://www.itu.int/md/S23-CL-C-0037/en)*, and* [*C23/7*](https://www.itu.int/md/S23-CL-C-0007/en)*;*  |

**Introduction**

1. The ITU Council at its 2022 session adopted [Decision 626](https://www.itu.int/md/S22-CL-C-0098/en) regarding the dates and duration of the 2023, 2024, 2025, and 2026 sessions of the Council, along with the clusters of Council Working Groups and Expert Groups for 2023, 2024, and 2025.

2. The dates of the Council sessions and clusters of Council Working Groups approved in Decision 626 took into account major religious periods and the availability of the International Conference Center Geneva (CICG) during the demolition and early construction phase of the headquarters premises project.

3. Nevertheless, in light of the progress on the implementation of the Union’s headquarters premises project as explained in Council document [23/7](https://www.itu.int/md/S23-CL-C-0007/en), but without prejudice to any decisions and guidance that might be provided by the Council in this regard, it may be possible to reconsider organizing the 2024 and 2025 of the Council in June in ITU.

4. At the Plenipotentiary Conference (Bucharest, 2022), Member States further stressed the need to reduce the number and duration of physical meetings. [Decision 11](https://www.itu.int/en/council/Documents/basic-texts-2023/DEC-011-E.pdf) (Rev. Bucharest, 2022) of the Plenipotentiary Conference on the creation and management of Council working groups refers to Annex 2 to [Decision 5](https://www.itu.int/en/council/Documents/basic-texts-2023/DEC-005-E.pdf) (Rev. Bucharest, 2022) of the Conference on options for reducing expenses, which includes, *inter alia*, reduction of the number of CWGs to the absolute minimum necessary and reduction, to the extent possible, of the number and duration of physical meetings of CWGs and, under paragraph 14, optimization of the number and duration of meetings.

5. Since the secretariat has taken steps to improve the decision-making process at the Council, including scheduling a series of thematic virtual briefings with the Member States of the Council to discuss important subjects in advance of the session, it could be considered reducing the duration of the Council annual sessions.

6. In view of the religious periods and the Geneva motor show to be held from 26 February to 3 March 2024 and given the potential availability of ITU Headquarters, it is proposed to advance the first Council Working Group cluster to the period 22 January to 2 February 2024.

**Proposal**

7. Bearing in mind the above-mentioned points, it is proposed:

1. to organize the first cluster of Council Working Groups and Expert Groups in 2024 to be held from 22 January to 2 February 2024 as physical meetings in Geneva;
2. to progressively reduce the duration of each ordinary session of the Council every year by one day, so as to move from nine working days to six, and therefore:
	* to organize the 2024 ordinary session of the Council from Tuesday, 4 June to Thursday, 13 June 2024,
	* to organize the 2025 ordinary session of the Council from Tuesday, 10 June to Wednesday, 18 June 2025**;**
	* to organize the 2026 ordinary session of the Council from **Tuesday, 28 April to Tuesday, 5 May 2026;**
3. to hold one of the two clusters of Council Working Groups and Expert Groups every year in a fully virtually format;

8. The Council is invited to **adopt** the draft new Decision in the Annex, agreeing on the dates and format (with remote participation or fully virtual) of the Council sessions and the clusters of Council Working Groups and Experts Groups.

*Annex:* ***1***

Annex

DRAFT DECISION [...]

Dates and duration of the 2024, 2025, and 2026 sessions of the Council, along with the clusters of Council Working Groups and Expert Groups
for 2024, 2025 and 2026

The ITU Council,

bearing in mind

1. Resolution 77 (Rev. Bucharest, 2022) of the Plenipotentiary Conference, which instructs the Council“at each ordinary session, to schedule its next three ordinary sessions in June-July and to review the Council’s schedule on a rolling basis”;
2. Resolution 111 (Rev. Busan, 2014) of the Plenipotentiary Conference, which resolves “that the Union and the Member States of the Council should make every effort, as far as practicable, in order that the planned period of any Council session not be scheduled during a period which is considered a major religious period by a Member State of the Council”;
3. Decision 619 on Headquarters Premises adopted at the additional 2019 session of the Council,

recalling

Council Decision 626 (C22) confirming the dates and duration for the 2023, 2024, 2025, and 2026 sessions of the Council, along with the cluster of Council Working Groups and Expert Groups for 2023, 2024, and 2025,

considering

the need to schedule ordinary sessions of the Council as much as possible around the same time-frame each year in order to facilitate the arrangement of other ITU events,

considering further

the need to organize the ordinary session of the Council taking place in a plenipotentiary conference (PP) year early enough to allow any Council reports intended to be further considered at PP to be published reasonably far in advance,

emphasizing

that scheduling the clusters of Council Working Groups and Expert Groups (CWGs & EGs), over the next three years, would not only improve the overall planning of ITU events, but also reduce the risk of overlapping,

*acknowledging*

the constraints linked to meeting room availabilities during the demolition and early construction phase of the Headquarters Premises,

mindful

of Decision 11 (Rev. Bucharest, 2022) of the Plenipotentiary Conference on the creation and management of Council Working Groups, referring to Annex 2 to Decision 5 (Rev. Bucharest, 2022) of the Conference on options for reducing expenses,

decides

1 that the 2024 session of the Council will open in Geneva for a period of eight working days, and will hold its clusters of CWGs & EGs as follows:

* First cluster: from Monday, 22 January to Friday, 2 February (with remote participation)
* **Council-24: from Tuesday, 4 June to Thursday, 13 June 2024** (with remote participation)
* Second cluster: from Monday, 30 September to Friday, 11 October 2024 (fully virtual);

2 that the 2025 session of the Council will open in Geneva for a period of seven working days, and will hold its clusters of CWGs & EGs as follows:

* First cluster: from Monday, 10 February to Friday, 21 February 2025 (with remote participation)
* **Council-25: from Tuesday, 10 June to Wednesday, 18 June 2025** (with remote participation)
* Second cluster: from Monday, 8 September to Friday, 19 September 2025 (fully virtual);

3 that the 2026 ordinary session of the Council will open in Geneva for a period of six working days, and will hold its cluster of CWGs & EGs as follows:

- Sole cluster: from Monday, 12 January to Friday, 23 January 2026(with remote participation)

* **Council-26: from Tuesday, 28 April to Tuesday, 5 May 2026** (with remote participation), and shall have its final meeting on the Saturday prior to the start of the 2026 Plenipotentiary Conference.

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