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| **Agenda item: ADM 2** | **Document C23/69-E** |
| **27 June 2023** |
| **Original: English** |
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| Contribution from Australia |
| INCREASING TRANSPARENCY OF MEMORANDA OF UNDERSTANDING |
| **Purpose**This contribution recommends that ITU take steps to continue its momentum towards greater transparency and accountability of Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs), consistent with decisions of PP-18 and PP-22.**Action required by the Council**This document is submitted **for Council consideration**. Council is invited to **provide guidance** on the proposal.\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**References*** PP-18 decision on MoUs at 2.13 of [Document PP-18/173](https://www.itu.int/md/s18-pp-c-0173)
* Re-confirmation of the PP-18 decision at PP-22 (recommendation 3 in the [Committee 5 Chair’s report to Plenary (Document PP-22/189)](https://www.itu.int/md/S22-PP-C-0189/en), which was approved at the 16th Plenary Meeting at 3.9 of [Document PP-22/206](https://www.itu.int/md/S22-PP-C-0206/en)).
* [ITU MoU Dashboard](https://www.itu.int/en/council/dashboard/Pages/Mou.aspx)
* 2021 Council reporting of MoUs, [Document C21/45](https://www.itu.int/md/S21-CL-C-0045/en)
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**Introduction**

Transparency promotes accountability and contributes to building ITU Members’ knowledge and trust in ITU’s activities. With transparent reporting of MoUs, ITU Members are better informed and better positioned to generate insights that can help support ITU’s efficiency and effectiveness. ITU Member States can also be confident that their financial contributions are supporting resource mobilisation that contributes to achieving ITU’s mission, to connect the world.

Following extensive discussions on improving the transparency of ITU MoUs at PP-22, the conference reaffirmed the PP-18 decision (at 2.13 of [Document PP-18/173](https://www.itu.int/md/s18-pp-c-0173)), that the Secretary-General shall submit to the ordinary session of the Council for prior approval MoUs that have substantial financial and/or strategic implications; and that other (non-significant) MoUs should continue to be reported to Council (at PP‑22, this was recommendation 3 in the [Committee 5 Chair’s report to Plenary](https://www.itu.int/md/S22-PP-C-0189/en) (Document PP-22/189), which was approved at the 16th Plenary Meeting at 3.9 of [Document PP-22/206](https://www.itu.int/md/S22-PP-C-0206/en)).

Australia commends ITU’s progress to date to improve transparency and accountability, including launching the [ITU MoU Dashboard](https://www.itu.int/en/council/dashboard/Pages/Mou.aspx) that provides links to Council reporting on MoUs. Australia also notes that, since the PP-18 decision:

* ITU has not assessed any MoUs as having significant strategic or financial implications (this is evident as no MoUs have been provided to Council for approval)
* a number of MoUs appear not to have been reported to Council, perhaps as they are not specifically titled as such (for example, they may instead be labelled ‘Memorandum of Cooperation’ or ‘Memorandum of Agreement’).

This contribution from Australia proposes next steps to continue ITU’s momentum towards achieving greater transparency.

**Proposal**

Australia proposes that the ITU Secretariat provide to Council the criteria it uses to determine whether a MoU has significant strategic and/or financial implications, for review. This will build a mutual understanding of which MoUs are to be provided to Council for prior approval.

Australia further proposes that the ITU Secretariat update the MoU dashboard, to:

* review its presentation, so it can serve as a useful tool for analysis. For example, the dashboard could be laid out as a table with table headers, with each MoU entered in a separate line:
	+ ITU has previously used headers and these could be re-incorporated. Those headings include: Counterpart(s); Subject; Date of signature; ITU Focal Point, (see 2021 Council reporting, [Document C21/45](https://www.itu.int/md/S21-CL-C-0045/en))
	+ Additional useful headers could include: end date; status of MoU activities; financial and/or other resources expended by ITU in the performance of its obligations under the MoU; expected impact / outcomes.
* ensure it captures all MoUs, consistent with the spirit of the PP-18 decision re‑affirmed at PP‑22. This would include MoUs with alternate titles, such as: partnership agreements; collaboration arrangements; Memoranda of Cooperation; Member State Voluntary Contribution agreements; and agreements intended for pluri-regional, regional or national development initiatives.

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