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|  | **Document C23/110-E** |
| **1 September 2023** |
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| SUMMARY RECORD  OF THE  FIFTH PLENARY MEETING | |
| Thursday, 20 July 2023, from 1435 to 1600 hours  **Chairman:** Mr C. MARTINEZ (Paraguay) | |
| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | **Subjects discussed** | **Documents** | | 1 | Announcement by the Director of BR | - | | 2 | ITU’s role in the implementation of the "Space2030" Agenda: space as a driver of sustainable development, and its follow-up and review process | [C23/58](https://www.itu.int/md/S23-CL-C-0058/en) | | 3 | ITU training activities | [C23/5](https://www.itu.int/md/S23-CL-C-0005/en) | | 4 | Tasks and functions of the Deputy Secretary-General | [C23/29](https://www.itu.int/md/S23-CL-C-0029/en) | | 5 | Strategy for the coordination of efforts among the three Sectors of the Union | [C23/27](https://www.itu.int/md/S23-CL-C-0027/en),  [C23/72(Rev.1)+Corr.1](https://www.itu.int/md/S23-CL-C-0072/en),  [C23/79](https://www.itu.int/md/S23-CL-C-0079/en) | | |

**1 Announcement by the Director of BR**

1.1 The Director of BR was pleased to announce that ITU had been awarded a prestigious Emmy Technology and Engineering Awardfrom the National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences. The award recognized the work of ITU-R Study Group 6 and Recommendation ITU-R BT 2100, on image parameter values for high dynamic range television (HDR-Tv) for use in production and international programme exchange.

1.2 The recommendation had impacted the whole television industry and was used by virtually all major television events, galvanizing the development of both professional and consumer display products. It was the third time that ITU-R had been honoured in such a way, the other two awards having been received in 1983 and 2011. The critical international standards developed by ITU‑R served to foster the widespread adoption and enjoyment of broadcasting services.

**2 ITU’s role in the implementation of the “Space2030” Agenda: space as a driver of sustainable development, and its follow-up and review process (Document**[**C23/58**](https://www.itu.int/md/S23-CL-C-0058/en)**)**

2.1 A representative of BR introduced Document C23/58, which addressed ITU’s role in implementing the “Space2030” Agenda and contained in annex the three reports requested by Resolution 218 (Bucharest, 2022) of the Plenipotentiary Conference.

2.2 Annex 1 reported on the status of the plans governed by Appendices 30, 30A and 30B to the Radio Regulations. It should be noted that a number of administrations did not have a national allotment in the Appendix 30B fixed-satellite service (FSS) plan, essentially because they joined the Union after the plan had been established in 1988; action to address that situation was in progress in ITU-R. Annex 2 described how each of the five thematic priorities in the Union’s strategic plan contributed to the implementation of the “Space2030” Agenda and its four overarching objectives, structured around the four pillars of space economy, space society, space accessibility and space diplomacy. Annex 3 reported on the 41st session of the United Nations Inter-Agency Meeting on Outer Space Activities (UN-Space).

2.3 Councillors emphasized the importance of the Space2030 Agenda and its four overarching objectives in a world where space constituted a priority and a significant tool for socio-economic development. The reports presented were helpful in providing up-to-date information, and ITU should continue to play a vital role. One councillor said that the activities of BR in space constituted one of the most distinguished practices of organizations in the United Nations system. In order to economize and exploit space, ITU and BR should undertake innovative activities to strengthen and promote connectivity and digital inclusion and guarantee equitable access to space resources for all Member States.

2.4 Another councillor said that, while the work done to address the deterioration of the reference situations in Appendices 30, 30A and 30B to the Radio Regulations was commendable, it was also necessary to ensure that ITU, in particular BR, continued to provide support to complete the implementation of Resolution 559 (WRC-19). Noting the significant degradation in reference situations for developing countries due to the application of the implicit agreement, she wondered whether the concept of implicit agreement needed to be revised in order to support developing countries which did not have the requisite resources to protect their national allotments. Consideration should be given going forward to extending the planned bands to other FSS bands, continuing to ensure equitable access to satellite/orbit resources for all Member States, and helping developing countries leverage space for the benefit of their socio-economic development.

2.5 Another councillor commended BR’s work in implementing Resolution 559 (WRC-19), which was a major outcome of WRC-19 benefiting 45 administrations and agreed that the question of planned bands needed to be reviewed. Moreover, BR should consider equitable access to non-GSO orbits, given that technology in that field was evolving rapidly.

2.6 The representative of BR said that the issue of implicit agreement was being studied by ITU-R and would be on the agenda of WRC-23. Extensions of plans to other frequencies or orbits would be discussed in ITU-R Study Group 4 in the coming cycle, although different approaches might be required for non-GSO orbits.

2.7 The Council **noted** the reports contained in Document C23/58.

**3 ITU training activities (Document** [**C23/5**](https://www.itu.int/md/S23-CL-C-0005/en)**)**

3.1 A representative of BDT introduced Document C23/5, which reported on progress made on ITU capacity development and training activities with respect to the proposals presented by the ITU secretariat to the 2022 session of the Council. Council-22 had approved the proposals and invited future sessions to review periodically the implementation of ITU training activities.

3.2 Councillors commented that ITU’s training activities were an integral part of its services to Member States, underscoring the importance of the ITU Academy for developing countries in particular. The ITU Academy training centres (ATCs) would make capacity-development work at ITU fit for the future, and Member States relied on ITU and ATCs to work together and in partnership with other organizations in order to provide high-quality training for ICT professionals and officials, with a focus on developing countries. The virtual nature of the ITU Academy had proven particularly useful during COVID-19 lockdowns. Ideally, programmes should be offered by the Academy without reliance on stakeholders less experienced than ITU. Two councillors considered that the Union should form the hub of digital capacity-building for the entire United Nations system.

3.3 Two councillors emphasized that the ITU Academy should be strongly promoted in the regions and countries, to ensure that ministries and potential partners were aware of its existence and thus increase community and sector sign-ups to the programmes. One councillor observed that countries should be able to benefit from the training delivered to ITU staff in LearningLabs, especially on important emerging issues such as ChatGPT.

3.4 One councillor said that additional training for women in leadership positions such as the women’s empowerment initiative led by the Government of Australia in 2022 would help increase their influence in decision-making. Another said that disaggregated statistics on the composition of training courses, with particular reference to people in remote and rural communities and gender balance, would be helpful. A further councillor said that the reasons why a substantial proportion of participants had not completed ITU Academy certifying courses in 2022 should be examined and appropriate steps taken to allow participants to make the most of courses.

3.5 The councillor from Saudi Arabia said that his country would like to cooperate closely with ITU to offer free programmes to Member States. The councillor from China said that her country wished to use its voluntary contribution to support relevant work. The councillor from Canada, recognizing that many countries in the Americas region had benefited from training from the ITU Academy, offered ongoing cooperation and collaboration within his region and within CITEL.

3.6 Responding to the matters raised, the representative of BDT said that suggestions made had been duly noted. The Union had worked with several Member States, one example being the delivery of successful online training with Saudi Arabia on the ITU Academy platform. The secretariat was working actively on promotion, and hoped that members would likewise promote ITU Academy training courses in their respective administrations and regions. Disaggregated statistics were available, but not all were included in the report. The women’s leadership training had indeed been successful and ways of replicating it and also ways to provide the LearningLabs more widely to the membership would be considered.

3.7 The Director of BDT said that ITU was working to strengthen its capacity-building efforts and thanked the many administrations supporting its efforts to bridge the skills divide. The secretariat had taken into account the point raised concerning the use of the ITU Academy as an instrument of the Union: relevant content was provided on the ITU Academy platform in collaboration with BR and TSB, one notable example being courses on spectrum management accredited to provide exemptions up to Master’s level. Efforts to ensure the provision of ITU training to all countries, whether in rural or urban areas, would continue.

3.8 The Council **noted** the report contained in Document C23/5.

**4 Tasks and functions of the Deputy Secretary-General (****Document [C23/29](https://www.itu.int/md/S23-CL-C-0029/en))**

4.1 The Chief of the Human Resources Development Department introduced Document C23/29. The document contained a report prepared pursuant to Resolution 148 (Rev. Bucharest, 2022) of the Plenipotentiary Conference, which instructed the Secretary-General to prepare specific directives on the tasks delegated to the Deputy Secretary-General (DSG), in accordance with Article 11 of the ITU Constitution and Article 5 of the ITU Convention, and submit them to the next ordinary session of the ITU Council for its consideration, as appropriate; and to issue clear and specific directives on the tasks delegated to the DSG, and make them available to the membership of the Union, as well as to the staff of ITU.

4.2 Several councillors expressed support for the document, which the Council had been invited to note.

4.3 Two councillors said that since inter-Sectoral coordination strategies and mechanisms, referred to in § 1(c) of the document, were tabled for discussion under Document C23/27, it would be preferable to discuss both documents together in order to better understand the DSG’s specific functions in implementing them. One noted that the paragraph in question differed substantially from the previous version.

4.4 One councillor asked whether the Deputy Secretary-General had been delegated additional tasks, or whether some had been removed.

4.5 Responding to councillors’ questions on the changes made, the Secretary-General drew attention to the addition under § 1(b), which reflected the spirit of the new management team, namely to share resources and mutually reinforce the different tasks that it was implementing. With regard to § 1(c), she noted that inter-Sectoral coordination had always been within the DSG’s remit; indeed, the previous Deputy Secretary-General had regularly reported to the Council on inter-Sectoral coordination matters. The reference to the “One ITU” concept drew on Resolution 191 (Rev. Bucharest, 2022) of the Plenipotentiary Conference.

4.6 The Council **noted** the report contained in Document C23/29.

4.7 The Deputy Secretary-General thanked councillors for noting the document, the Secretary-General for her trust and fellow officials for their collegiate approach to making the Union more relevant. He would spare no effort in the service of the Union.

**5 Strategy for the coordination of efforts among the three Sectors of the Union (****Documents** [**C23/27**](https://www.itu.int/md/S23-CL-C-0027/en)**,** [**C23/72(Rev.1)+Corr.1**](https://www.itu.int/md/S23-CL-C-0072/en) **and** [**C23/79**](https://www.itu.int/md/S23-CL-C-0079/en)**)**

5.1 A representative of the General Secretariat introduced Document C23/27, containing the new strategy for the coordination of efforts among the three Sectors of the Union and the General Secretariat further to the decisions taken by the Member States at the Plenipotentiary Conference (Bucharest, 2022) (PP-22). Under Service Order 23/06, the Secretary-General had delegated the implementation of inter-Sector coordination strategies and mechanisms to the DGS to facilitate collaboration and coordination of activities within the Union and achieve "One ITU". The secretariat had mapped all the resolutions from ITU’s major conferences and assemblies, including resolutions calling for inter-Sector coordination, so as to be able to avoid duplication and optimize the use of resources. In order to address the growing number of areas of mutual interest, with a clear purpose and reporting lines as well as monitoring and evaluation mechanisms, the new strategy proposed an inter-Sector coordination mechanism to be driven on three tracks: strategic leadership, coordinated and reviewed at the Coordination Committee (CoCo) level; programmatic coordination, replacing the Inter-Sectoral Coordination Task Force (ISC-TF), and led by the Management Coordination Group (MCG); and performance and transformation decisions, under the lead of the Deputy Secretary-General with the D.2 group, to reflect the work in accordance with “One-ITU”.

5.2 The Chairman of the Inter-Sector Coordination Group (ISCG) reported that ISCG had held a physical meeting in May 2023, with remote participation, at which it had considered the thematic priorities of accessibility, climate change, remote participation/e-meetings and improvement and harmonization of Sector webpages. The next meeting was planned for autumn 2023.

5.3 The Chairman recalled that the multi-country contribution sponsored by 13 Member States on e**nsuring a One ITU approach for sound financial planning, accountability and agility for the benefit of all countries and the future of the Union contained in** Document C23/72(Rev.1)+Corr.1 had been presented and discussed in the standing committee.

5.4 The councillor from China introduced Document C23/79, setting out proposals from her administration for the comprehensive implementation of the “One ITU” concept, which should be based on a number of key principles, namely: promoting unity and collaboration among Member States; serving the purposes of the Union as enshrined in the ITU Constitution; and maintaining the stability of the current organizational structure.

5.5 Two councillors asked why the Inter-Sectoral Coordination Task Force (ISC-TF) had been replaced with MCG when Resolution 191 (Rev. Bucharest, 2022) specifically instructed the Secretary-General to continue to ensure close interaction and regular exchange of information between ISCG and ISC-TF.

5.6 Several councillors emphasized that no clear definition or description of the concept of “One ITU” existed. However, such an agreed definition was indispensable in the interest of common understanding. The tracks put forward in the document were premised on the concept of One ITU; that concept must thus be clearly defined in order to better guide the work of all Member States and the secretariat and to provide an unequivocal framework defining their vision of what the Union needed to become. The actions to be coordinated under the three tracks only constituted general directions, and the details remained unclear.

5.7 Two councillors stated that the implementation of One ITU must not have any impact on the structure of the organization, comprising the three Sectors and the General Secretariat.

5.8 One councillor, noting that the mapping exercise provided a perspective on activities across the different Sectors, conferences and assemblies that was useful in support of streamlining of resolutions, sought confirmation that the themes to be championed under the track on strategic leadership were those identified by the membership through the various resolutions.

5.9 Three councillors asked about the rationale for the proposed engagement between the DSG and the deputies to the Directors within the D.2 group and how the mechanism would work in practice, in particular whether the deputies would report to the Directors of the Bureaux and how the active participation of the Directors was to be ensured on an important track that pertained to performance and transformation decisions.

5.10 Four councillors underlined the need to ensure that the regional presence was duly covered in all inter-Sectoral coordination activities: regional directors should be fully involved and the concept should extend to the regions.

5.11 One councillor requested clarification on the membership of ISCG and the coordinator role.

5.12 One councillor said that, given the lack of inter-Sectoral objectives in the strategic plan for 2024-2027, the reporting under Resolution 191 (Rev. Bucharest, 2022) should articulate inter-Sectoral objectives and identify areas for enhancement at the inter-Sector and Sectoral levels. Furthermore, it would be helpful for the Council to receive better reporting on the issues addressed in CoCo.

5.13 With regard to the next steps in the process, while Document C23/79 proposed that the Council Working Group on Financial and Human Resources (CWG-FHR) carry out extensive discussions on the "One ITU" concept and submit a report to the Council-24 for consideration, a number of councillors took the view that, since PP-22 had mandated the Secretary-General to present a report on implementation of the concept of One ITU to Council-24 and Member States were already given the possibility to comment, no further input was required in that regard. CWG-FHR need not engage in defining the concept.

5.14 Several councillors said that it would be helpful to include one page clarifying the acronyms used in relation to inter-Sectoral coordination.

5.15 In reply to questions raised, the representative of the General Secretariat said that the coordination strategy had been split into three tracks because the areas of common interest for inter-Sectoral coordination identified in the mapping exercise were too numerous (42) for a single body to handle efficiently. The footnotes in Document C23/27 explained the composition of each of the groups. As could be seen, MCG+ was effectively a continuation of the current ISC-TF, responsible for coordination on programmatic themes, and included the regional directors. With regard to the D.2 group, which dealt with more operational themes in areas that did not necessarily involve offering products or services to the membership, the deputies would of course report to their Directors. The themes on the three tracks had been developed hand in hand with the Sectors. Indeed, the entire framework before the Council was the result of extensive internal consultations among all the Sectors and the General Secretariat, within the D.2 group and in CoCo, and had been approved by MCG+. It should be emphasized that periodic reports on all three tracks would be submitted to CoCo, and internal checks and balances were in place to improve coordination and communication between internal governance bodies while allowing technical teams the flexibility to work in the common interest as they saw fit. A tracker had been set up where the plans of each group would be monitored, and it was intended to institute a dashboard to provide the Council with information on the work done under the three tracks. Regarding inter-Sectoral objectives in the current strategic plan, he drew attention to the last enabler in the strategic plan for 2024-2027 (Excellence in human resources and organizational innovation), which was directly relevant to inter-Sectoral coordination. A section on acronyms would be included in the induction guide for new delegates to ITU’s governing body.

5.16 The Chairman of ISCG said that ISCG was composed of representatives of each of the Sector advisory groups. The ISCG coordinators were selected for their competence and professional authority, in order to better harmonize efforts and avoid divergence. The regional directors had been invited to participate in the most recent meeting, which they had done remotely. He anticipated that the newly created MCG would report regularly to ISCG, as ISC-TF had done in the past.

5.17 Responding to a further question on the definition of the concept of “One ITU”, the representative of the General Secretariat cited a number of sources in ITU instruments and texts. In the strategic plan for 2020-2023 in Resolution 71 (Rev. Dubai, 2018), “Working as One ITU” was referenced in the situational analysis and identified as an implementation criterion for the strategic plan, with an associated definition; and “Implement the concept of One ITU” constituted inter-Sectoral output I.6-2. Working as One ITU had been one of the principles defined from the outset by the Council Working Group for strategic and financial plans (CWG-SFP). At PP-22, the plenary had approved the recommendation by Committee 6 to instruct the Secretary-General, working in coordination with the Directors of the Bureaux, to submit a report on implementation of the concept of “One ITU” to Council-24, and that the Council be instructed to evaluate the Secretary-General’s report and report to the next plenipotentiary conference on the implementation of the “One ITU” concept, including, *inter alia*, the activities of regional and area offices. The secretariat was working as One ITU and was striving to provide, as one, products and services for the membership.

5.18 The Chairman said that discussion of the item would resume in the sixth plenary meeting.

The Secretary-General: The Chairman:  
D. BOGDAN-MARTIN C. MARTINEZ

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