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|  | **Document C23/111-E** |
| **1 September 2023** |
| **Original: English** |
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| SUMMARY RECORD  OF THE  SIXTH PLENARY MEETING | |
| Friday, 21 July 2023, from 1115 to 1205 hours  **Chairman:** Mr C. MARTINEZ (Paraguay) | |
| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | **Subjects discussed** | **Documents** | | 1 | Strategy for the coordination of efforts among the three Sectors of the Union (continued) | [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) | | 2 | Report on ITU’s role in implementing the outcomes of WSIS and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development as well as in their follow-up and review process (continued) | [C23/61](https://www.itu.int/md/S23-CL-C-0061/en), [C23/71](https://www.itu.int/md/S23-CL-C-0071/en), [C23/81](https://www.itu.int/md/S23-CL-C-0081/en), [C23/83](https://www.itu.int/md/S23-CL-C-0083/en), [C23/85+Corr.1,2](https://www.itu.int/md/S23-CL-C-0085/en), [C23/96](https://www.itu.int/md/S23-CL-C-0096/en), [C23/DT/9](https://www.itu.int/md/S23-CL-230711-TD-0009/en), [C23/DT/10](https://www.itu.int/md/S23-CL-230711-TD-0010/en) | | 3 | Statement by Tunisia on the Djerba Declaration of the XVIIIth Conference of Heads of State and Government of French-speaking countries | [C23/INF/18](https://www.itu.int/md/S23-CL-INF-0018/en) | | 4 | Twenty-five years of ITU’s work programme on gender equality (continued) | [C23/6](https://www.itu.int/md/S23-CL-C-0006/en), [C23/76(Rev.1)](https://www.itu.int/md/S23-CL-C-0076/en), [C23/91(Rev.1)+Corr.1](https://www.itu.int/md/S23-CL-C-0091/en) | | 5 | Obsolete Council resolutions and decisions | [C23/3(Rev.1)](https://www.itu.int/md/S23-CL-C-0003/en) | | |

**1 Strategy for the coordination of efforts among the three Sectors of the Union (continued) (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)**)**

1.1 The representative of the General Secretariat thanked councillors for the comments made at the previous plenary meeting, which had been noted for future consideration. Providing further clarifications following the previous discussion, he emphasized that the Coordination Committee (CoCo) retained oversight of all inter-Sectoral coordination decisions. Programmatic coordination, led by the Management Coordination Group (MCG) would continue the work of the Inter-Sectoral Coordination Task Force (ISC-TF). The D.2 group would undertake discussion of performance and transformation decisions at a more informal level, and make recommendations on organizational matters for consideration by CoCo. It was worth noting that the D.2 group was not a new entity, but had been in operation since 2008.

1.2 One councillor, recalling again that ISC-TF was referenced in Resolution 191 (Rev. Bucharest, 2022), did not believe that the Council had the authority to eliminate it in favour of a new group (MCG). Council decisions must be in line with resolutions of the Plenipotentiary Conference. A revised version of Document C23/27 that aligned with Resolution 191 (Rev. Bucharest, 2022) should be presented to the Council at its next session.

1.3 A second councillor concurred that replacing ISC-TF was at odds with Resolution 191 (Rev. Bucharest, 2022) and was of the view that strategic planning and coordination should remain with ISC-TF, improving that body as necessary. Regarding the D.2 group, if it was a channel for informal discussion, there should be a mechanism for sharing the information it considered on a broader basis and its reporting lines needed to be clarified in order, *inter alia*, to avoid potential conflict with the formal reporting lines to the Directors of the Bureaux.

1.4 One councillor, while appreciating the secretariat’s explanations of how the strategy flowed from the historical coordination, understood the concerns raised about consistency with resolutions and clarity on the informal role of the D.2 group. Those matters should thus be referred to the Council Working Group on financial and human resources (CWG-FHR) for refinement.

1.5 One councillor called for more precise reporting on the three thematic areas, with clear objectives, targets and key performance indicators that would enable the Council to assess the progress made in implementing inter-Sectoral strategy.

1.6 The representative of the General Secretariat said that councillors’ concerns were duly noted and the secretariat would report back to the Council and CWG-FHR on the alignment of the new mechanism with Resolution 191 (Rev. Bucharest, 2022).

1.7 In the absence of further comments, and in the light of the discussion of the documents under that agenda item, the Chairman invited the Council to transmit Document C23/27 to CWG-FHR.

1.8 It was so **agreed**.

**2 Report on ITU’s role in implementing the outcomes of WSIS and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development as well as in their follow-up and review process (continued) (Documents** [**C23/61**](https://www.itu.int/md/S23-CL-C-0061/en)**,** [**C23/71**](https://www.itu.int/md/S23-CL-C-0071/en)**,** [**C23/81**](https://www.itu.int/md/S23-CL-C-0081/en)**,** [**C23/83**](https://www.itu.int/md/S23-CL-C-0083/en)**,** [**C23/85+Corr. 1 and 2**](https://www.itu.int/md/S23-CL-C-0085/en)**,** [**C23/96**](https://www.itu.int/md/S23-CL-C-0096/en)**,** [**C23/DT/9**](https://www.itu.int/md/S23-CL-230711-TD-0009/en) **and** [**C23/DT/10**](https://www.itu.int/md/S23-CL-230711-TD-0010/en)**)**

2.1 The councillor from Saudi Arabia, reporting on the result of discussions in an ad hoc group, based on the five contributions submitted under the agenda item, introduced Document C23/DT/9, which contained a proposal to revise Council Resolution 1334 (C11, last amended C15), and Document C23/DT/10, which contained a proposal to revise Council Resolution 1332 (C11, last amended C19). The ad hoc group had reached consensus on the documents, which were presented for adoption by the plenary.

2.2 Councillors commended the chairman and members of the ad hoc group for having reached agreement on the important documents which would strengthen the role of ITU in the follow‑up of WSIS outcomes.

2.3 The Council **adopted** the revision to Council Resolution 1334 (C11, last amended C15) set out in Document C23/DT/9 and the revision to Council Resolution 1332 (C11, last amended C19) set out in Document C23/DT/10.

**3 Statement by Tunisia on the Djerba Declaration of the XVIIIth Conference of Heads of State and Government of French-speaking countries (Document**[**C23/INF/18**](https://www.itu.int/md/S23-CL-INF-0018/en)**)**

3.1 The councillor from Tunisia, drawing attention to Document C23/INF/18, said that the XVIIIth Conference of Heads of State and Government of French-speaking countries, held in Djerba, Tunisia, on 19-20 November 2022, had addressed a theme that was intimately linked to the work of WSIS and ITU, namely “Connectivity in diversity: digital technology, a vector for development and solidarity in the French-speaking world”. It had adopted the Djerba Declaration, which pointed to the opportunities for cooperation, development and innovation that digital solutions could offer and underscored the role of digital technologies in ensuring connectivity; promoting shared social values, peace, tolerance and dialogue; fostering learning and knowledge-sharing; creating growth and new revenue-generating activities adding value in all sectors of the economy; modernizing public administration and improving accessibility. The declaration also reiterated the mandate to agencies in Geneva for implementing the United Nations Secretary-General’s digital cooperation roadmap and for review of follow-up of the WSIS Tunis outcomes in 2025.

3.2 Tunisia was also pleased to note the signing in Paris on 3 April 2023 of a joint Declaration of Cooperation between ITU and the International Organization of La Francophonie (OIF) to strengthen the partnership between the two organizations.

3.3 Councillors thanked Tunisia for its statement and for the efforts deployed to promote connectivity and diversity. The councillor from France said that she hoped that synergies between the work of OIF and ITU would continue to be built upon. France would shortly take up the presidency of OIF and would seek to continue the good work begun by Tunisia.

**4 Twenty-five years of ITU’s work programme on gender equality (continued) (Documents** [**C23/6**](https://www.itu.int/md/S23-CL-C-0006/en)**,** [**C23/76(Rev.1)**](https://www.itu.int/md/S23-CL-C-0076/en) **and** [**C23/91(Rev.1)+Corr.1**](https://www.itu.int/md/S23-CL-C-0091/en)**)**

4.1 The councillors from Spain and Egypt said that, as a result of informal consultations with interested Member States, revised Documents C23/91(Rev.1)+Corr.1, containing a draft Council decision on the implementation of Resolution 70 (Rev. Bucharest, 2022), and C23/76(Rev.1), containing a proposal for the empowerment and inclusion of women in the activities of ITU, were submitted for approval by the plenary.

4.2 The Council **approved** Document C23/76(Rev.1) and **adopted** the decision set out in Document C23/91(Rev.1).

**5 Obsolete Council resolutions and decisions (Document** [**C23/3(Rev.1)**](https://www.itu.int/md/S23-CL-C-0003/en)**)**

5.1 A representative of the General Secretariat introduced Document C23/3(Rev.1), containing a list of Council resolutions and decisions to be abrogated.

5.2 Some councillors objected to the proposed abrogation of Decision 500 (C-2000), on the use of the term “chairman”, on the grounds that the word “chairman” was widely understood to be gender neutral and was the term used in the basic texts of the Union. Its replacement with the word “chair” – a term that reflected the position of only a certain number of Member States – could have consequences for texts in the other official languages. Consistency needed to be maintained across all official languages of ITU. It was proposed that the issue be referred to the Council Working Group on languages or the Coordination Committee for Terminology for further examination.

5.3 Several councillors expressed support for the abrogation of Decision 500 (C-2000), arguing that the use of the word “chairman” for a woman was inappropriate and that ITU should seek to reduce gender bias in its documents by adopting suitable language.

5.4 The representative of the General Secretariat said that, following the adoption of Resolution 70 (Rev. Bucharest, 2022), Decision 500 (C-2000) had become outdated. Use of the word “chair” would be in line with long-standing, well-established practice within the United Nations. The proposed change would be applicable to English-language texts only and would not be retroactively applied. It would have no financial implications.

5.5 The Legal Counsel confirmed that the proposed change would have no legal ramifications.

5.6 The Chairman said that the discussion of the item would resume in the seventh plenary meeting.

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

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