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| **Agenda item: ADM 1** | **Document C24/39-E** |
| **9 April 2024** |
| **Original: English** |
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| Report by the Secretary-General | |
| NEW REQUESTS FOR EXEMPTION FROM FEES FOR ORGANIZATIONS OF AN INTERNATIONAL CHARACTER | |
| **Purpose**  Each year, ITU receives requests from organizations of an international character seeking exemption from membership fees and other financial contributions to the Union based on reciprocity. These new requests are reviewed by the secretariat according to criteria established by the Council.  **Action required by the Council**  The Council is invited **to consider** the recommendations of the Secretary-General regarding new requests for exemption.  **Relevant link(s) with the Strategic Plan**  Partnerships and International Cooperation.  **Financial implications**  115k CHF per annum in exempted membership fees.  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  **References**  [*C2000/28(Rev.1)*](http://www.itu.int/itudoc/gs/council/c00/docs/28rev1.html),[*Council Resolution 925*](https://www.itu.int/md/S19-CL-C-0141/en)*,* [*Council Criteria for Exemptions (Rev. 2017)*](https://www.itu.int/hub/membership/our-members/exempted-entities/) | |

**1 Background**

1.1 Each year, ITU receives requests from organizations of an international character seeking exemption from membership fees and other financial contributions to the Union. These requests are considered as per the procedure established by the Council at its 2000 session ([C2000/28(Rev.1)](http://www.itu.int/itudoc/gs/council/c00/docs/28rev1.html)) and in accordance with No. 476 of the Convention and [Council Resolution 925](https://www.itu.int/md/S19-CL-C-0141/en), as well as criteria established by the Council, revised in 2017 (see point 1.5 below).

1.2 Exemption from fees is granted by the Council following an analysis of the relevant Bureaux and a recommendation by the Secretary-General. If approved, they become Sector Members or Associates under the terms of No. 231 of the Convention.

1.3 Currently, there are 137 exempted organizations of an international character. A full list is available [here](https://www.itu.int/hub/membership/itu-family/organizations/exempted-entities/).

1.4 In Resolution 187 (Busan, 2014), the 2014 Plenipotentiary Conference instructed the Council to “review the practice and criteria for exempting entities from membership fees and, if necessary, make changes to tighten the criteria to help bring greater clarity, consistency and fairness between paying and non-paying members and to reduce the total of exempted entities.”

1.5 Council-17 approved revised criteria, available [here](https://www.itu.int/hub/membership/itu-family/organizations/exempted-entities/exemption-criteria/). Since then, each Council has reviewed new applications according to these criteria.

1.6 This document addresses only new requests for fee exemption since the last Council.

**2** **New Requests and Recommendations**

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| **Organization** | **Sector** | **Recommendation** |
| **African Technology Innovation Hubs Institute (Afrilabs)** | ITU-D | Yes |

AfriLabs, founded in 2011, is a network organization supporting over 400 innovation centres across 52 African countries. Its mission is to foster high-potential entrepreneurs to stimulate economic growth and social development in Africa. The AfriLabs Secretariat is based in Abuja, Nigeria, with 419 member hubs operating in 52 African countries. As a regional organization with member hubs, in the view of the secretariat, this entity meets the criteria established by the Council for fee exemption.

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| **Organization** | **Sector** | **Recommendation** |
| **Environmental Coalition on Standards (ECOS)** | ITU-D | Yes |

Founded in 2001, ECOS, Environmental Coalition on Standards, is an international NGO with a network of members and experts advocating for environmentally friendly technical standards, policies and laws. ECOS works towards a more inclusive, open and transparent standardization system, internationally and at the European and national levels, at the same time ensuring the appropriate use of standards in support of environmental legislation and policy. This organization is an ITU-T exempted entity. As an international organization with NGO members, in the view of the secretariat, this entity meets the criteria established by the Council for fee exemption.

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| **Organization** | **Sector** | **Recommendation** |
| **European Digital SME Alliance** | ITU-T | Yes |

The European Digital SME Alliance represents more than 45,000 ICT small and medium enterprises in Europe. The Alliance is a collaborative initiative of 30 national and regional SME associations from EU member states and neighbouring countries. Its primary goal is to cultivate an SME-friendly digital environment, with a strategic focus on standardization. Actively participating in various European Commission bodies and EU-funded ICT standard projects, the Alliance also supports a broad network of SME ICT experts across different Standards Developing Organizations. As a regional organization with a member network, in the view of the secretariat, this entity meets the criteria established by the Council for fee exemption.

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| **Organization** | **Sector** | **Recommendation** |
| **House of Africa** | ITU-D | No |

House of Africa, based in N’Djamena, Chad, is a pan-African organization established in 2017. The organization is focused on the advancement of ICTs in Africa. House of Africa aims to foster development in the fields of ICT and Internet Governance in Africa, contribute to the UN’s Sustainable Development Goals, and support the African Union’s 2063 Agenda. The organization also provides a collaborative platform for African youth, women, and children, and is committed to promoting human rights education. In the view of the secretariat, based on the information available, this entity does not meet the membership criteria established by the Council for fee exemption.

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| **Organization** | **Sector** | **Recommendation** |
| **Human Rights and Forest Brain Africa (Hurifba)** | ITU-R | No |

HURIFBA is a non-profit organization based in Cameroon. Its mission is to work towards the comprehensive development of the poor and improvement of their living conditions on social, health, economic, and environmental levels. HURIFBA is actively involved in combating societal issues such as desertification, poverty, and the promotion of sustainable development. The organization strives to associate intellectuals, artists, and social innovators in its strategy and actions, promoting a regenerated and solidarity-based socio-economic practice. In the view of the secretariat, based on the information available, this entity does not meet the membership criteria established by the Council for fee exemption.

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| **Organization** | **Sector** | **Recommendation** |
| **International Think Tank for Landlocked Developing Countries (ITTLLDC)** | ITU-D | Yes |

The International Think Tank for Landlocked Developing Countries (ITTLLDC) works towards addressing the specific needs and challenges faced by Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDCs). Its primary focus aligns with the implementation of the Vienna Programme of Action, supporting initiatives to improve transport, infrastructure, and air connectivity for LLDCs. The organization conducts research and prepares policy briefs on socioeconomic issues pertaining to LLDCs, strengthening its capacity to help these countries overcome their unique challenges. As an intergovernmental organization representing landlocked developing countries, in the view of the secretariat, this entity meets the criteria established by the Council for fee exemption.

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| **Organization** | **Sector** | **Recommendation** |
| **ROPTIC-UEMOA**  **Regroupement des Organisations des Professionels des TIC de l’UEMOA** | ITU-D | Yes |

The Regroupement des Organisations Professionnelles des TIC (ROP-TIC) is an interprofessional grouping of digital professionals from the UEMOA region, composed of different associations and organizations from various member countries. The main objective of ROP-TIC is to organize cooperation among its members and drive the digitalization of the UEMOA region through its ICT companies. To achieve this, ROP-TIC sets specific goals that include being a center of thought and proposal development, training, informing, and defending the interests of its members, promoting digital culture, and encouraging investment in digital technology. ROP-TIC is headquartered in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso. As a regional association of professional organizations, in the view of the secretariat, this entity meets the criteria established by the Council for fee exemption.

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| **Organization** | **Sector** | **Recommendation** |
| **SNESC - DIGITAL SOLIDARITY IN THE FIELD OF EDUCATION AND HEALTH CASTRES** | ITU-D | No |

Solidarité Numérique Éducation et Santé Castres (SNESC) is a non-profit organization whose main objective is to promote distance learning or "e-learning". Their work involves providing advice, producing educational content, distributing educational materials, and offering expertise. In the view of the secretariat, based on the information available, this entity does not meet the membership criteria established by the Council for fee exemption.

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| **Organization** | **Sector** | **Recommendation** |
| **The Unconnected Foundation** | ITU-D | No |

Unconnected.org, founded in 2020 and based in London, is a philanthropic fundraising organization committed to bridging the digital divide. They aim to connect 1 billion unconnected people to the internet, focusing on those among who still lack access. They run global projects addressing education, commerce, jobs, safety, and health, believing that internet access can reduce inequality, boost development, and ensure sustainability. In the view of the secretariat, based on the information available, this entity does not meet the membership criteria established by the Council for fee exemption.

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| **Organization** | **Sector** | **Recommendation** |
| **World Smart Sustainable Cities Organization (WeGo)** | ITU-T | Yes |

The World Smart Sustainable Cities Organization (WeGO) is an international association with more than 200 members. It is made up of local governments, smart technology solution providers, and various institutions. Founded by 50 member cities in 2010, WeGO is committed to the transformation of cities into smart sustainable cities by facilitating public-private partnerships (PPP). Today, WeGO serves as an international platform for its members to improve the quality of life, innovate in the delivery of public services, and strengthen regional competitiveness. As an international association with local government members, in the view of the secretariat, this entity meets the criteria established by the Council for fee exemption.

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| **Organization** | **Sector** | **Recommendation** |
| **WHSF - World Humanitarian Support Foundation** | ITU-R  ITU-T  ITU-D | No  No  No |

The World Humanitarian Support Foundation (WHSF) is an NGO with a mission to provide humanitarian support through poverty alleviation, with a focus on maintaining human dignity, enhancing communities, and developing individuals to reach their full potential. Based in Nigeria and the USA, the organization aims to alleviate poverty through education and skills training for marginalized individuals and their communities. In the view of the secretariat, based on the information available, this entity does not meet the membership criteria established by the Council for fee exemption.

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| **Organization** | **Sector** | **Recommendation** |
| **Digital Cooperation Organization (DCO)** | ITU-T | Yes |

The Digital Cooperation Organization (DCO) is an international entity that seeks to promote digital cooperation among its members and foster the role of technology and digitalization in the development of nations. It aims to strengthen the global digital economy, build a digital society that ensures a future of prosperity, innovation, and sustainable growth, and establish a digital environment that safeguards the world’s digital security. DCO is an ITU-D exempted sector member. As an international organization with Member States, in the view of the secretariat, this entity meets the criteria established by the Council for fee exemption.

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