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| **Agenda item: ADM 2** | **Document C24/78-E** |
| **21 May 2024** |
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| Contribution by Australia and Canada |
| CODE OF CONDUCT FOR ITU EVENTS |
| **Purpose**This contribution proposes the development of a Code of Conduct for ITU meetings and events to promote a professional, inclusive, respectful and safe environment for all delegates and other participants.**Action required by the Council**Council is invited to **endorse** the concept of a Code of Conduct for ITU Events as detailed in this proposal, and to **instruct the Secretariat** to develop a draft Code of Conduct for ITU Events (perhaps via a dedicated group) for submission to Council in 2025 for approval.\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**References** [*ITU Council document C24/4 Outcome of consultations on proposed improvements to the Plenipotentiary Conference*](https://www.itu.int/md/S24-CL-C-0004/en)*;* [*Service Order No. 11/02: Code of Ethics for ITU Personnel*](https://www.itu.int/en/ethics/Documents/SO-2011-002-en.pdf)[*Service Order No. 22/03: ITU Policy Addressing Harassment, including sexual harassment, Abuse of Authority, and Discrimination*](https://www.itu.int/en/ethics/Documents/SO-2022-003-en.pdf)[*Service Order No. 20/06: ITU Policy for the Protection of Personnel Against Retaliation for Reporting Misconduct*](https://www.itu.int/en/ethics/Documents/SO-2020-006-en.pdf)[*Service Order No. 17/07: Standards of Conduct for the International Civil Service*](https://www.itu.int/en/ethics/Documents/SO-2017-007-en.pdf)[*Model Code of Conduct to Prevent Harassment, Including Sexual Harassment, at UN System Events*](https://www.un.org/en/content/codeofconduct/) |

**Introduction**

It is important for all UN System organisations to uphold the fundamental human rights of all persons, and promote ethics, integrity and international cooperation in pursuit of its vision. Core to this is ensuring a professional, inclusive, respectful and safe environment for all delegates and other participants at meetings and events. The importance of fostering this type of environment has been reaffirmed in many recent publications, including the [Report of the Joint Inspection Unit Review of Measures and Mechanisms for Addressing Racism and Racial Discrimination in the UN System Organizations](https://www.unjiu.org/es/node/31225) (2023) and the [International Labour Organisation Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work and its Follow-up](https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_norm/---declaration/documents/normativeinstrument/wcms_716594.pdf) (Rev. 2022).

In similar vein, Australia welcomes the outcome of the ITU’s recent consultation on proposed improvements to the Plenipotentiary Conference (Council document [C24/4](https://www.itu.int/md/S24-CL-C-0004/en)), which highlighted the need for enhanced policies to promote a safe and respectful environment for delegates, and specifically identified the development of a new Code of Conduct for ITU as a fundamental step in promoting a respectful and harassment-free environment.

**Discussion**

The ITU has several regulatory instruments that apply to ITU staff and/or personnel more broadly, including the [Code of Ethics for ITU Personnel](https://www.itu.int/en/ethics/Documents/SO-2011-002-en.pdf), [ITU Policy Addressing Harassment, including sexual harassment, Abuse of Authority, and Discrimination](https://www.itu.int/en/ethics/Documents/SO-2022-003-en.pdf), [ITU Policy for the Protection of Personnel Against Retaliation for Reporting Misconduct](https://www.itu.int/en/ethics/Documents/SO-2020-006-en.pdf), and [Standards of Conduct for the International Civil Service](https://www.itu.int/en/ethics/Documents/SO-2017-007-en.pdf). However, there is currently no ITU policy that outlines expected behaviour of delegates and other non-staff participants of ITU meetings and events.

The ITU currently endorses the UN’s broader [Model Code of Conduct to Prevent Harassment, Including Sexual Harassment, at UN System Events](https://www.un.org/en/content/codeofconduct/). However, the UN Model Code of Conduct was originally created as a model for UN institutions to use as a basis for developing their own organisation-specific code. The ITU could benefit from implementing its own bespoke Code of Conduct for non-personnel attendees at ITU meetings and events, in order to fully capture the range of unacceptable behaviours which may occur, along with an appropriate response procedure to such behaviours should they occur.

For these reasons, there is need to develop a Code of Conduct for ITU meetings and events to ensure the safety and wellbeing of delegates and non-personnel participants, and to promote a respectful and productive negotiating environment. By developing a Code of Conduct that is fully implementable, with clear reporting and recourse avenues, the ITU can help prevent harassment, bullying, intimidation and other behaviours that can undermine the effectiveness of ITU meetings and events.

A Code of Conduct underpinned by principles of equity, inclusion and non-discrimination can also help support ITU-wide diversity initiatives, encouraging greater participation by women, youth, academia, civil society, and those from all regions of the Union. An increasingly diverse ITU membership will more effectively advance the goals of the Union, ensuring its work takes into account the unique challenges and strengths of particular groups, and delivers the benefits of digital connectivity to all.

**Proposal**

Given the pressing need for an ITU-specific Code of Conduct for delegates, Australia proposes that Council agree to a pathway to develop a Code of Conduct for ITU Events, as set out below.

We propose that as a first step Council endorses the concept of a Code of Conduct for ITU Events as detailed in this paper, emphasising the need for all participants to behave in a respectful and professional manner and promote a safe and productive event environment.

Australia proposes that Council further instruct the Secretariat to develop a draft Code of Conduct for ITU Events (perhaps via a dedicated group), with the view to submitting the finalised Code for approval to the next Ordinary Session of Council in 2025.

Australia suggests that the Code of Conduct for ITU Events could use the UN Code of Conduct as a basis, while adapting the text based on existing ITU ethical conduct policies and, where relevant and useful, the Codes of Conduct of other similar UN agencies. Australia further suggests the relevant section in the ITU event registration form be appropriately updated to require delegates and other participants to agree to abide by the Code of Conduct for ITU Events as a prerequisite to participation in an ITU event.

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