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| **Agenda item: PL 3** | **Document C24/84-E** |
| **21 May 2024** |
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| Contribution from the Russian Federation | |
| VIOLATION OF THE WORKING METHODS AND PROVISIONS OF THE CONSTITUTION AND CONVENTION OF ITU WITH RESPECT TO THE REPLACEMENT OF THE CONSTITUTIONAL TERMS "CHAIRMAN/CHAIRMEN" AND "VICE-CHAIRMAN/VICE-CHAIRMEN" WITH NON-CONSTITUTIONAL TERMS | |
| **Purpose**  The aim of this contribution is to identify a solution with respect to the holding of discussions and taking of a decision on the need for the introduction of non-constitutional terminology in ITU documents, involving in particular the replacement of the constitutional terms "Chairman/Chairmen" and "Vice-Chairmen/Vice-Chairmen" with non-constitutional terms.  **Action required by the Council**  The Council is invited to consider the proposals contained in this contribution and to provide appropriate guidance to the Council Working Group on the use of the six official languages of the Union.  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  **References**  [ITU Constitution and Convention](https://www.itu.int/pub/S-CONF-PLEN-2022) | |

# I Background

The terms "Chairman/Chairmen" and "Vice-Chairman/Vice-Chairmen" are used in the ITU Constitution in Article 3 and in the ITU Convention in Articles 2, 4, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11A, 13, 14A, 15, 16, 17A, 20 and 31 and in resolutions of the Plenipotentiary Conference.

With regard to the gender neutrality of terminology used in the six official languages of the Union, the ITU Constitution contains the following note: "The language used in the basic instruments of the Union (Constitution and Convention) is to be considered as gender neutral".

At the 2023 ordinary and additional sessions of the Council, there was not a single contribution from any Member State proposing to consider the terminology used in the ITU Constitution and Convention.

At the 2023 ordinary and additional sessions of the Council, no decision was taken on the use of any terminology other than that contained in the ITU Constitution and Convention.

Furthermore, the 2022 ITU Plenipotentiary Conference did not instruct the Council to review or revise the Constitution and Convention.

During the 2023 session of the Council, the councillors from Saudi Arabia, Algeria, the United Arab Emirates, China, Bahrain, Egypt and Cuba expressed the view that such matters should initially be studied in the Council Working Group on the use of the six languages of the Union.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, the ITU secretariat has allowed the wilful introduction of the terms "Chair" and "Vice-Chair", unapproved by Member States, in the working documents of the Union, which runs contrary to the Constitution, Convention and resolutions of the Plenipotentiary Conference of ITU.

# II Conclusions

1 We do not consider it legitimate to use the abrogation of Council Decision 500 (C2000) (Document [C23/3](https://www.itu.int/md/S23-CL-C-0003/en)) and the related contents of the summary record of the seventh and last plenary meeting of the ITU Council (Document [C23/112](https://www.itu.int/md/S23-CL-C-0112/en)) to amend the ITU English Language Style Guide, with the subsequent replacement of the terms "Chairman/Vice-Chairman" with "Chair/Vice-Chair" in ITU documents.

2 We are convinced that any changes that are not accepted by all ITU Member States and are contrary to the ITU Constitution and Convention and resolutions of the Plenipotentiary Conference are unacceptable, undermine the legitimacy of the very documents in which they are applied and jeopardize the possibility of their application in activities of the Union. All existing and revised texts should remain unchanged with regard to the use of the terms "Chairman/Vice-Chairman" in accordance with the provisions of the ITU Constitution and Convention.

3 We are convinced that the ITU secretariat should act in strict accordance with the ITU Constitution and Convention with respect to the use of the terms "Chairman/Chairmen" and "Vice-Chairman/Vice-Chairmen", at least until appropriate changes are made by consensus to the basic instruments of the Union.

4 We are convinced that the replacement of the constitutional terms "Chairman/Chairmen" and "Vice-Chairman/Vice-Chairmen" with non-constitutional terms is not limited in significance to the use of a single language; rather, it is an issue that is common to and affects all ITU Members, as English is the primary working language and language of professional communication in the activities of the Union, and, because of this status, all changes to the English language terminology used must be agreed by consensus by all ITU Member States.

# III Proposal

1 Taking into account the comments contained in §§ I and II above, no changes shall be made to existing texts unless a corresponding consensus-based decision is adopted by the Plenipotentiary Conference. All existing texts shall remain unchanged.

2 In order to identify a solution with respect to the holding of discussions and taking of a decision on the need for the introduction of non-constitutional terminology in ITU documents, involving in particular the replacement of the constitutional terms "Chairman/Chairmen" and "Vice-Chairmen/Vice-Chairmen" with non-constitutional terms, the Council is invited to instruct the Working Group on the use of the six official languages of the Union to study the matter on the basis of contributions from ITU Member States, with a view to preparing a report and possible recommendations to the 2026 plenipotentiary conference.

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