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| **Agenda item: PL 2** | **Revision 1 to Document C24/85-E** |
| **10 June 2024** |
| **Original: Chinese** |
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| Contribution from China (People's Republic of) and Brazil (Federative Republic of), Cuba, Russian Federation and  Pakistan (Islamic Republic of) | |
| PROPOSAL TO ESTABLISH A COUNCIL WORKING GROUP ON ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE | |
| **Purpose**  This document proposes the creation of a Council working group on artificial intelligence.  **Action required by the Council**  The Council is invited to discuss the need and feasibility of establishing a working group on artificial intelligence and to take appropriate action.  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  **References**  [*Resolution 214 (Rev. Bucharest, 2022)*](https://www.itu.int/en/council/Documents/basic-texts-2023/RES-214-E.pdf) *of the Plenipotentiary Conference;  Council documents* [*C24/67*](https://www.itu.int/md/S24-CL-C-0067/en)*,* [*C24/INF/15*](https://www.itu.int/md/S24-CL-INF-0015/en)*;* [*UN A/78/L.49*](https://undocs.org/Home/Mobile?FinalSymbol=A%2F78%2FL.49&Language=E&DeviceType=Desktop&LangRequested=False) | |

# 1 Background

Artificial intelligence (AI) technologies have significant potential to advance digital transformation and accelerate the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. In 2022, the Plenipotentiary Conference adopted [Resolution 214](https://www.itu.int/en/council/Documents/basic-texts-2023/RES-214-E.pdf) on AI technologies and telecommunications/information and communication technologies, which requests the Union to continue the work on AI, including studies, information-sharing and capacity building on AI technologies. It instructs the Secretary-General, in consultation with the Directors of the three Bureaux, to coordinate the activities of the Union to implement that resolution; to foster information-sharing to build understanding, particularly for developing countries, related to the associated opportunities and challenges; to identify opportunities, as appropriate, for coordination and cooperation with other relevant organizations and collaboration with relevant stakeholders with regard to the resolution.

Currently, ITU has carried out or is carrying out a series of AI-related activities. Documents [C24/67](https://www.itu.int/md/S24-CL-C-0067/en) and [C24/INF/15](https://www.itu.int/md/S24-CL-INF-0015/en) take stock of the progress made in this regard, with particular emphasis on:

– studies on the development of AI standards;

– capacity building on AI (e.g. the ongoing Impact Initiative);

– AI governance, policy and regulatory assistance (e.g. the upcoming AI Governance Day event);

– collaboration with other UN agencies and multi-stakeholders (e.g. jointly leading the UN system-wide coordination on AI, advising the Global Digital Compact and the United Nations Secretary-General’s High-level Advisory Body on Artificial Intelligence, etc.).

By its Resolution [A/78/L.49](https://undocs.org/Home/Mobile?FinalSymbol=A%2F78%2FL.49&Language=E&DeviceType=Desktop&LangRequested=False), the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) called upon UN specialized agencies to continue to assess and enhance their response to leverage the opportunities and address the challenges posed by AI systems in a collaborative, coordinated and inclusive manner, including by conducting research, mapping and analysis on the potential impacts and applications. The UNGA resolution highlighted, inter alia, that there also exist AI and other digital divides and varying levels of technological development between and within countries, that developing countries face unique challenges in keeping pace with this rapid acceleration, and that there is an urgent need for enhanced assistance for capacity building and technical and financial assistance to developing countries. It also promoted cooperation between UN agencies and developing countries in capacity building.

# 2 Discussion

Resolution 214 of the Plenipotentiary Conference charts a course for ITU's work in the area of AI. Despite the fact that the Union has undertaken a number of activities, it is necessary to establish a mechanism for the effective participation of Member States and timely follow-up discussions on AI-related work across the ITU sectors, enabling the Union to implement Resolution 214 in a comprehensive manner.

1 AI is becoming a key subject on the agenda of international cooperation. As indicated in documents C24/67 and C24/INF/15, ITU's work in the area of AI standards and project initiatives has grown rapidly in recent years. It is important to take full stock and review the work already undertaken by ITU. Member States should have in-depth and timely discussions on key issues such as strategic direction, priorities, and potential financial implications of AI to enable the Bureaux and the membership to clearly understand the way forward, effectively mobilize resources, actively submit inputs, and promote more productive AI-related work within ITU to increase the visibility of the Union.

2 International governance of AI is being widely discussed in various international processes, such as the Global Digital Compact facilitated by the Office of the UN Secretary-General’s Envoy on Technology and the High-Level Advisory Body on AI. ITU should leverage its unique expertise in digital technologies and partnerships, strengthen its coordination and cooperation with ongoing international processes, and play an active role in global AI governance.

3 Developing countries face a larger disparity with regard to AI development resources such as infrastructure, technology, data, and computing power. The imbalance in development resources is becoming an important constraint on sustainable development. A number of capacity-building efforts have been undertaken by the ITU Telecommunication Standardization Bureau with positive results. However, in order to achieve full implementation of Resolution 214, the Union should fully mobilize resources from all Sectors, and in particular give full play to the role of the ITU Telecommunication Development Bureau, to strengthen synergies and collaboration so as to increase support.

# 3 Proposals

In order to implement Plenipotentiary Resolution 214, it is proposed that a Council working group on AI open to the Member States of the Union be established with the following main responsibilities:

1) to review the work carried out by the Union on AI, a future work programme and potential financial implications; to discuss strategic directions and priorities for ITU's work on AI, and make appropriate recommendations to the Council;

2) to review the external cooperation conducted and resource commitments made by the Union in the field of AI; and to advise on key issues, including participation in the agenda of the United Nations on international governance of AI, to promote ITU's role in AI;

3) to guide the Union in its AI capacity-building efforts, carry out studies on the capacity-building needs of countries, and make recommendations on capacity building centred on the coordination and mobilization of resources across the Sectors with a view to fully capitalizing on ITU's unique strengths to reduce the digital divide.

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