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|  | **Document CWG-SFP-1/6** |
| **25 September 2024** |
| **English only** |
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| Contribution by China (People’s Republic of) | |
| SUGGESTIONS FOR OPTIMIZING STRATEGIC AND FINANCIAL PLANS 2028-2031 | |
| **Purpose**  This contribution provides suggestions for optimizing strategic and financial plans 2028-2031.  **Action required**  The Council Working Group for strategic and financial plans 2028-2031 is invited to **consider** this contribution and **take appropriate action**.  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  **References**  [*PP Resolution 71 (Rev. Bucharest 2022)*](https://www.itu.int/en/council/Documents/basic-texts-2023/RES-071-E.pdf)*,* [*Council Resolution 1428 (C24)*](https://www.itu.int/md/S24-CL-C-0139/en)[*CWG-SFP-1/2*](https://www.itu.int/md/S24-CWGSFP1-C-0002/en)*,* [*CWG-SFP-1/4*](https://www.itu.int/md/S24-CWGSFP1-C-0004/en) | |

**Background**

In accordance with No. 62A of the Convention, the Council is required to receive and review the specific data for strategic planning that is provided by the Secretary-General as noted in No. 74A of the Constitution, drawing upon input from Member States, Sector Members and the Sector advisory groups, and produce a coordinated draft new strategic plan.

Resolution 1428 adopted by Council 2024 resolves to establish a Council Working Group to develop the draft Strategic and Financial Plans 2028-2031. The Working Group (CWG-SFP), open to Member States and Sector Members, has the following terms of reference: to identify sources of information to be used in the development of the draft Plans; to develop draft Strategic and Financial Plans; to closely coordinate with other Council working groups and Sector advisory groups which may work on items related to the draft Strategic and Financial Plans.

Contribution by the SG (CWG-SFP-1/2) proposes an online consultation on the Strategic and Financial Plans, inviting membership, Sectors’ advisory groups, youth and ITU staff members to share their views and suggestions.

Contribution by the SG (CWG-SFP-1/4) proposes a workshop on strategic planning moderated by an external expert during the Council Working Group meetings, informed by guidance from membership, advisory groups, youth, and staff contribution to the consultation and the outcomes of the Summit of the Future and the Global Digital Compact.

**Discussion**

1. In accordance with the ITU Convention and Council resolution, the CWG-SFP serves as the primary venue for discussions on the drafting of strategic and financial plans. Comprised of experts representing all six regions, CWG-SFP should continue to play a primary role in follow-up work, including gathering feedback, conducting gap analyses, facilitating discussions, and drafting documentation.
2. The CWG-SFP should align its work with [Resolution 1428 (C24)](https://www.itu.int/md/S24-CL-C-0139/en). ITU has successfully convened numerous high-level meetings around the Summit of the Future and other digital agendas to gather extensive input from external experts, providing valuable recommendations for the future direction of ITU's work. We believe that these outcomes are sufficient for Member States to fully understand the opportunities and challenges brought by emerging technologies to ITU. As no such workshops were mandated by the 2024 Council and due to limited resources, we need to discuss the necessity and effectiveness to hold the online consultation and workshop. As to the online consultation, it was conducted in the previous session in 2021, but participation was limited to 31 Member States and 18 Sector Members and Associates Academia. Compared to the 194 Member States and 1000+ Sector Members, this limited engagement makes it challenging to accurately represent the views of all members. As to the workshop, it is important to assess the necessity of engaging external consultants, which could substantially increase ITU's financial burden while potentially introducing uncertainty into ITU's future strategic path due to their limited understanding of ITU's operations.
3. Strategic and financial plans serve as ITU’s foundational documents and guide ITU’s future direction. These plans should strictly adhere to the duty and mission assigned by ITU Constitution and Convention, focusing on Union’s development rather than expanding into all digital issues. We understand that ITU needs to strike a proper balance between expanding its mandate with its existing capabilities. A comprehensive assessment conducted by the Secretariat regarding ITU's role in global digital initiatives can facilitate this process, and will provide valuable reference for Member States in discussing ITU's strategic plans. It is not CWG-SFP’s mandate to discuss the detail about how to implement the outcomes of the Summit of the Future and the Global Digital Compact.
4. Advisory groups play an important role in guiding the three sectors' implementation of strategic plans. Their assessments of previous plan implementations will be crucial in ensuring that the needs of members are effectively reflected and that the implementation of strategic and financial plans in the next cycle is enhanced.
5. [Resolution 1428 (C24)](https://www.itu.int/md/S24-CL-C-0139/en) require CWG-SFP to produce a coordinated draft new strategic plan at least four months before the 2026 Plenipotentiary Conference. Therefore, it is essential for Secretariat to promptly clarify specific plans and time schedule regarding formulation process, so that all Member States and Sector Members can participate effectively in working group discussions.
6. CWG-SFP-1/2 and CWG-SFP-1/4 mentioned to follow the guidance from “youth” contribution, which need further clarification. It is necessary for ITU to encourage better involvement of youth, as well as to maintain and expand a youth perspective in the implementation of the ITU strategic and financial plan. However, CWG-SFP only opens to Member States and Sector Members. "Youth" is a broad term and brings ambiguity which may reduce negotiation efficiency.

**Proposal**

To facilitate more efficient discussions and strengthen the participation of Member States and Sector Members, it is proposed that：

1. Secretary-General should provide a report outlining the necessity of engaging external consultants, clarify their roles, selection criteria and financial implications. This report will be submitted to the Council for review during its 2025 session.
2. CWG-SFP should fully review the necessity and effectiveness for additional workshops and the online consultation, based on the relevant provisions in Council Resolution 1428.
3. Secretary-General should evaluate the ITU's involvement in global digital initiatives and prepare a report for the CWG-SFP to discuss and incorporate into the drafting of strategic and financial plans.
4. According to the liaison letter, RAG, TSAG, and TDAG are expected to deliver their opinions about the Strategic and Financial Plans, by actively participating in the development of ITU's Strategic and Financial Plans, focusing on evaluating the implementation of the 2024-2027 plans, analyzing the alignment between strategic and operational plans. Relevant outcomes should be submitted to the CWG-SFP for review during its second meeting in February 2025.
5. The General Secretariat and CWG-SFP should promptly outline a clear work plan with a timeline to facilitate in-depth participation from Member States and Sector Members in subsequent discussions.
6. The Secretary-General should further clarify “the guidance from youth contribution” in its contribution (CWG-SFP-1/4).

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