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| **Agenda item: PL 3** | **Document C25/30-E** |
| **16 May 2025** |
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| Report by the Secretary-General | |
| REPORT ON THE PREPARATIONS FOR THE WORLD TELECOMMUNICATION DEVELOPMENT CONFERENCE 2025 | |
| **Purpose**  This document provides an update on preparations for the World Telecommunication Development Conference 2025 (WTDC-25), scheduled to be held in Baku, Azerbaijan, from 17 to 28 November 2025.  **Action required by the Council**  The Council is invited to **note** this document.  **Relevant link(s) with the Strategic Plan**  Convening platform; membership driven.  **Financial implications**  Within the allocated budget 2024-2025.  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  **References**  [*No. 141 of the ITU Constitution*](https://www.itu.int/en/council/Documents/basic-texts/Constitution-E.pdf)*;* [*No. 42 of the ITU Convention*](https://www.itu.int/en/council/Documents/basic-texts/Convention-E.pdf)*;* [*Chapter I of the General Rules of Conferences, Assemblies and Meetings of the Union*](https://www.itu.int/en/council/Documents/basic-texts/General-Rules-E.pdf)*;* [*Resolution 77*](https://www.itu.int/en/council/Documents/basic-texts-2023/RES-077-E.pdf) *(Rev. Bucharest, 2022) of the Plenipotentiary Conference;* [*Resolution 31*](https://www.itu.int/pub/D-RES-D.31-2022) *(Rev. Kigali, 2022) of the World Telecommunication Development Conference; Circular letter* [*CL-24/61*](https://www.itu.int/md/S24-SG-CIR-0061/en) | |

**1. Background**

* 1. No. 141 of the ITU Constitution stipulates that there shall be a World Telecommunication Development Conference (WTDC) between two Plenipotentiary Conferences.

1.2 Resolution 77 (Rev. Bucharest, 2022) of the Plenipotentiary Conference resolves that WTDC-25 shall be held in the last quarter of 2025 in Bangkok, Thailand.

1.3 No. 42 of the ITU Convention and Chapter I of the General Rules of Conferences, Assemblies and Meetings of the Union require, respectively, that, in the absence of a decision by the Plenipotentiary Conference, the precise place and the exact dates of a WTDC be approved by the Council with the concurrence of a majority of the Member States.

1.4 WTDC Resolution 31 (Rev. Kigali, 2022) reaffirms the convictionthat the coordination of preparations at regional level for the six regions of the ITU Telecommunication Development Sector (ITU-D) is of great benefit to Member States.

**2. Place, duration, dates, and venue for WTDC**

2.1 On 7 December 2023, the Secretary-General was officially informed by the Office of the National Broadcasting and Telecommunications Commission that due to unforeseen circumstance, Thailand will unfortunately not be in a position to host the Conference. Through [CL 23/51](https://www.itu.int/md/S23-SG-CIR-0051/en) the Secretary-General therefore invited Member States that would be interested to host the WTDC-25 to inform her accordingly.

2.2 On 15 March 2024, the Secretary-General received an invitation from the Government of the Republic of Azerbaijan. Following exchanges with the Director of the ITU Telecommunication Development Bureau (BDT), the Minister of Digital Development and Transport confirmed in a letter dated 3 April 2024 their intention to host the conference in Baku, at the end of November 2025. In a follow-up letter dated 26 April 2024, the period from 17 to 28 November 2025 was proposed (see Annex 1 of Document [C24/30(Rev.1)](https://www.itu.int/md/S24-CL-C-0030/en)).

2.3 The precise place and exact dates of WTDC-25, and the draft agenda for the forthcoming WTDC-25 were presented in Document [C24/30(Rev.1)](https://www.itu.int/md/S24-CL-C-0030/en) for approval by the Council subject to the concurrence of the majority of the Member States of the Union.

2.4 The draft agenda had also been submitted for discussion and approval by the Telecommunication Development Advisory Group (TDAG) (20-23 May 2024) (see Document [TDAG-24/24](https://www.itu.int/md/D22-TDAG31-C-0024/en)).

2.5 The Council adopted [Decision 637 (C24)](https://www.itu.int/md/S24-CL-C-0124/en) on “Convening of the 2025 World Telecommunication Development Conference (WTDC-25)”and approved the draft agenda contained in Annex 3 to Document [C24/30(Rev.1)](https://www.itu.int/md/S24-CL-C-0030/en).

2.6 By circular letter [CL-24/38](https://www.itu.int/md/S24-SG-CIR-0038/en) of 24 June 2024, ITU Member States were invited to confirm, in writing, their agreement with the precise place and exact dates of WTDC by 31 August 2024.

2.7 By circular letter [CL-24/61](https://www.itu.int/md/S24-SG-CIR-0061/en) of 31 October 2024, ITU Member States were informed that the consultation carried out as outlined above had received the agreement of the required majority of ITU Member States, in accordance with Nos. 42 and 213 of the ITU Convention.

2.8 On 31 October 2024, the BDT Director sent formal [invitation letters](https://www.itu.int/itu-d/meetings/wtdc25/documents/invitation-letters/) to ITU-D membership and observers to attend WTDC-25.

2.9 ITU and the Host Country teams are diligently working on all aspects related to the planning, coordination and successful organization of the Conference, including logistics, venue arrangements, transportation, delegate travel, security, accommodation, and guest services. The Host Country Agreement is currently in the final stages of signing and planned to be signed at Council 2025.

2.10 A first site visit took place from 10-14 February 2025 by an ITU team, during which the ITU team assessed potential venues for the Conference and identified suitable hotels for delegate accommodation. The practical information note for participants will be made available in due course.

2.11 Participation to the World Telecommunication Development Conference is restricted to ITU membership. Advance registration is now [open online](https://www.itu.int/itu-d/meetings/wtdc25/participation/registration/).

**3. Preparations for the Conference**

3.1 Discussions on the Conference preparatory process and the development of impact-oriented outcomes began during [TDAG-23](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Conferences/TDAG/Pages/2023/default.aspx). The meeting agreed to create two working groups to prepare for WTDC-25 and adopted their Terms of Reference (ToRs):

* [TDAG Working Group on the Future of Study Group Questions](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Conferences/TDAG/Pages/2024/TDAG_WG_futureSGQ.aspx) (TDAG-WG-futureSGQ), and
* [TDAG Working Group on Streamlining Resolutions](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Conferences/TDAG/Pages/2024/TDAG_WG_SR.aspx) (TDAG-WG-SR).

3.2 Furthermore, [TDAG-24](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Conferences/TDAG/Pages/2024/default.aspx) created three additional groups to support the preparations for WTDC-25 and adopted their ToRs:

* [TDAG Working Group on ITU-D Priorities](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Conferences/TDAG/Pages/2024/TDAG_WG_ITUDP.aspx) (TDAG-WG-ITUDP),
* [TDAG Working Group on the WTDC Declaration](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Conferences/TDAG/Pages/2024/TDAG_WG_DEC.aspx) (TDAG-WG-DEC), and
* [TDAG Informal Coordination Group on the Youth Summit and the Global Celebration](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Conferences/TDAG/Pages/2024/TDAG_ICG_GYS.aspx) (TDAG-ICG-GYS).

3.3 All TDAG groups were open to all ITU-D membership.

3.4 The following outcome reports of TDAG-WGs were submitted to TDAG-25 for further consideration and will form part of the TDAG report which will be submitted to the upcoming WTDC:

* Report on the TDAG Working Group on Future of Study Group Questions (Document [TDAG-25/19](https://www.itu.int/md/meetingdoc.asp?lang=en&parent=D22-TDAG32-C-0019)),
* Report on the TDAG Working Group on Streamlining Resolutions (Document [TDAG-25/20](https://www.itu.int/md/meetingdoc.asp?lang=en&parent=D22-TDAG32-C-0020)),
* Report on progress of the TDAG Working Group on the ITU-D Priorities (Document [TDAG-25/21](https://www.itu.int/md/meetingdoc.asp?lang=en&parent=D22-TDAG32-C-0021)),
* Report on the work and outcome of the TDAG Working Group on the Declaration (Document [TDAG-25/18(Rev.1)](https://www.itu.int/md/meetingdoc.asp?lang=en&parent=D22-TDAG32-C-0018)), and
* Report on the organization of the ITU Global Youth Summit 2025 (GYS-25) in the lead to WTDC-25 (Document [TDAG-25/22](https://www.itu.int/md/meetingdoc.asp?lang=en&parent=D22-TDAG32-C-0022)).

3.5 TDAG-WG-DEC put forward a theme for WTDC-25 which corresponds to the title of the draft WTDC-25 Declaration – namely “Universal, meaningful and affordable connectivity for an inclusive and sustainable digital future”.

**4. Regional preparatory process**

4.1 In line with WTDC Resolution 31 (Rev. Kigali, 2022), BDT organized one Regional Preparatory Meeting (RPM) per region, as follows:

| **Region** | **Dates (2025)** | **City and Host country** | **RPM Report** | **Videos on the Kigali Action Plan implementation** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| RPM-ARB | 4-5 February | Amman, Jordan | [Report](https://www.itu.int/md/D22-RPMARB-C-0020/en) | [Video](https://youtu.be/_TmRrANEy9Y?feature=shared) |
| RPM-EUR | 25-26 February | Budapest, Hungary | [Report](https://www.itu.int/md/D22-RPMEUR-C-0030/en) | [Video](https://youtu.be/KbGUKDoOwoU?feature=shared) |
| RPM-ASP | 20-21 March | Bangkok, Thailand | [Report](https://www.itu.int/md/D22-RPMASP-C-0018/en) | [Video](https://youtu.be/n-9xwzs0i9I?feature=shared) |
| RPM-AMS | 1-2 April | Asuncion, Paraguay | [Report](https://www.itu.int/md/D22-RPMAMS-C-0021/en) | [Video](https://youtu.be/0Q1A-_uFb2U?feature=shared) |
| RPM-AFR | 8-9 April | Nairobi, Kenya | [Report](https://www.itu.int/md/D22-RPMAFR-C-0019/en) | [Video](https://youtu.be/TQMlkFoVHQ4?feature=shared) |
| RPM-CIS | 24-25 April | Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan | [Report](https://www.itu.int/md/meetingdoc.asp?lang=en&parent=D22-RPMCIS-C-0018) | [Video](https://youtu.be/lWymn4RNG0I?feature=shared) |

4.2 The RPMs engaged membership in each region in the WTDC process to encourage regional coordination before the conference. RPMs also sought to identify priorities at the regional level for the development of telecommunications and information and communication technologies (ICTs).

4.3 All RPMs carefully considered the results of the implementation of the Kigali Action Plan since 2023. The discussions focused mainly on the priority issues, topics and questions and regional initiatives to be considered for inclusion in the Baku Action Plan (BAP).

4.4 To further inform the discussions in RPMs, BDT prepared a special series of the ITU flagship publication “Facts and Figures: Measuring digital development” on the [state of digital development and trends, challenges and opportunities in ITU regions](https://www.itu.int/itu-d/reports/statistics/sddt/).

4.5 Six [Regional Development Forums](https://www.itu.int/itu-d/meetings/rdf/) were held back-to-back with RPMs. RDFs provide an opportunity for high-level dialogue between BDT, Member States and ITU-D Sector Members, primarily on the implementation of the Regional Initiatives and the Kigali Action Plan.

4.6 Thanks to the preparatory work carried out in TDAG-WGs in 2024 and 2025, the following key documents were submitted to all six RPMs for further input:

* Preliminary draft ITU-D contribution to the ITU Strategic Plan for 2028-2031 and draft ITU-D Action Plan,
* Preliminary draft WTDC-25 Declaration,
* Proposed Future Study Group questions,
* Rules of Procedure of ITU-D (WTDC Resolution 1), and
* Report on streamlining WTDC Resolutions.

4.7 All RPMs arrived at a set of proposals on regional priorities and topics for their respective regions that will serve as a basis for the formulation of contributions to WTDC-25, which will consider the ITU‑D activities to be carried out over the implementation cycle (2026-2028).

4.8 The **RPM for Arab States (RPM-ARB)** was organized by BDT from 4 to 5 February 2025 in Amman, Jordan, and hosted by the Telecommunication Regulatory Commission of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan.

4.9 One of the main outcomes of RPM-ARB was its agreement on six regional priorities that will further be discussed and refined in the lead up to WTDC-25 so that they can be submitted as Regional Initiatives to WTDC for consideration and adoption. These are:

1. Sector Specific Transformation: Sustainable Digital Futures

2. Infrastructure and connectivity

3. Fostering Economic Development and Digital Inclusion

4. Skills Development & Job Creation

5. Advancing Cyber Resilience in the Arab World

6. Innovation Ecosystems and Emerging Tech

4.10 The **RPM for Europe Region (RPM-EUR)** was organized by BDT from 25 to 26 February 2025 in Budapest, Hungary, and hosted by the National Media and Infocommunications Authority of Hungary.

4.11 The meeting adopted the following Regional Initiatives (Ris):

* **EUR1: Digital infrastructure development**: The objective of this initiative is to facilitate the attainment of universal and meaningful connectivity through resilient and synergistic infrastructure development and an enabling environment, ensuring ubiquitous coverage.
* **EUR2: Digital transformation for resilience:** The objective of this initiative is to facilitate the digitalization processes of services in different sectors (e.g. agriculture, health, government, education), including those of public administrations, in order to ensure greater resilience in responding to critical situations, including the challenges of pandemics, natural hazards or human-introduced crises.
* **EUR3: Digital inclusion and skills development:** The objective of this initiative is to facilitate equitable access to information and communication technologies (ICTs) and necessary digital skills for all groups of society, including persons with disabilities and persons with specific needs, as well as women and youth, in order to take advantage of telecommunications/ICTs.
* **EUR4: Trust and confidence in the use of telecommunications/ information and communication technologies**: The objective of this initiative is to support the deployment of resilient infrastructure and secure telecommunications/ICTs allowing all citizens, especially children, to use telecommunications/information and communication technologies (ICTs) in their daily lives with confidence.
* **EUR5: Digital innovation ecosystems:** The objective of this initiative is to foster environments that are conducive to innovation and entrepreneurship through systemic approaches based on digital telecommunications/information and communication technologies (ICTs), aimed at closing the growing digital innovation divide in the region.

4.12 The **RPM for Asia and the Pacific Region (RPM-ASP)** was organized by BDT from 20 to 21 March 2025 in Bangkok, Thailand, and hosted by the National Broadcasting and Telecommunications Commission (NBTC) of Thailand.

4.13 A Drafting Group was established on the RIs for the Asia and the Pacific Region for the implementation cycle 2026-2029 based on contributions received from Member States. The following RIs were adopted:

* **ASP1:** Addressing special needs of Least Developed Countries, Small Island Developing States, including Pacific Island countries, and Landlocked Developing Countries,
* **ASP2:** Harnessing telecommunications/ICTs to support inclusive and sustainable digital transformation,
* **ASP3:** Fostering development of infrastructure to enhance digital connectivity and connecting the unconnected,
* **ASP4:** Enabling an innovative and sustainable telecommunication/ICT sector, and
* **ASP5:** Supporting a safe, secure, and resilient telecommunication/ICT environment.

4.14 The **RPM for the Americas Region (RPM-AMS)** was organized by BDT from 1 to 2 April 2025 in Asunción, Paraguay, and hosted by the National Telecommunications Commission (CONATEL) of Paraguay.

4.15 A Drafting Group was established on the RIs for the Americas Region for the implementation cycle 2026-2029 based on contributions received from Member States. The following RIs were adopted:

* **AMS1:** Facilitating resilient infrastructure to enable deployment of universal and meaningful connectivity,
* **AMS2:** Digital inclusion, digital skills/competencies,
* **AMS3:** Support for innovative digital ecosystems and the adoption and use of emerging technologies,
* **AMS4:** Promoting cyber resilience and capacity building in cybersecurity and cyber resilience, and
* **AMS5:** Governance and enabling regulatory frameworks for sustainable digital transformation.

4.16 The **RPM for WTDC-25 for Africa (RPM-AFR)** was organized by BDT from 8 to 9 April 2025 in Nairobi, Kenya, and hosted by the Communications Authority (CA) of Kenya.

4.17 A Drafting Group was established on the RIs for Africa for the implementation cycle 2026-2029 based on contributions received from Member States. The following RIs were adopted:

* **AFR1:** Meaningful connectivity and resilient infrastructure- for sustainable development including emergency telecommunications and multi-hazard early warning systems in the Africa region,
* **AFR2:** Developing an inclusive trustworthy AI ecosystem in Africa for socio-economic development,
* **AFR3:** Building trust, safety and security in the use of telecommunications/ information and communication technology and Data protection and privacy,
* **AFR4:** Digital infrastructure applications, SMEs development and emerging technologies and innovation ecosystems, and
* **AFR5:** Sustainable funding mechanisms for Africa’s digital transformation.

4.18 The **RPM for the CIS Region (RPM-CIS)** was organized by BDT from 24 to 25 April 2025 in Bishkek, Kyrgyz Republic, hosted by the Ministry of Digital Development and Innovative Technologies of the Kyrgyz Republic.

4.19 A Drafting Group was established on the RIs for CIS for the implementation cycle 2026-2029 based on contributions received from Member States. The following RIs were adopted:

* **CIS 1:** Introduction of new and emerging telecommunication/ICTs systems and networks,
* **CIS 2:** Telecommunication/ICTs education and skills, including for persons with disabilities and specific needs,
* **CIS 3:** Security in the use of telecommunications/ICTs, including combating fraud
* **CIS 4:** Enabling environment and telecommunication/ICTs regulation,
* **CIS 5:** Development and implementation of Artificial Intelligence technologies for development.

4.20 All documents relating to each RPM, including invitations, meeting agendas, contributions received, and meeting reports are available on the website for each event at [www.itu.int/itu-d/meetings/wtdc25/rpm/home/](http://www.itu.int/itu-d/meetings/wtdc25/rpm/home/).

4.21 An RPM Coordination Meeting was held physically on 12 May 2025 to examine the reports of the six RPMs, and to submit a consolidated report for TDAG approval, in accordance with WTDC Resolution 31 (Rev. Kigali, 2022).

4.22 Based on established practice, TDAG-25 is expected to endorse the holding of two Inter-Regional Meetings (IRMs) which are scheduled to prepare for WTDC, as follows:

* **IRM-1:** 14-15 July 2025 (virtual)
* **IRM-2:** 29-30 September 2025 (virtual)

4.23 IRMs are open to all ITU-D membership. Member States are encouraged to include in their delegations, representatives from regulators, policymakers, civil society, academia, Internet technical community, youth, gender equality organizations, and others.

4.24 IRM agendas are built around key discussions that took place during RPMs, and may include proposals from Member States, Sector Members, Regional Telecommunication Organizations (RTOs), BDT and other stakeholders. Discussions focus on key topics that require coordination and consensus between the different regions.

4.25 Following TDAG’s recommendations, the Chair-designate of WTDC will be appointed to chair the two IRMs, and six vice-chairs are to be appointed, one nominated by each of the respective RTOs. Each RTO will also be invited to identify the representative(s) of their choice to speak on behalf of their region.

4.26 The draft structure of WTDC-25 has been submitted to TDAG-25 for endorsement in Document [TDAG-25/17](https://www.itu.int/md/D22-TDAG32-C-0017/en).

**5. Policy Statements Segment**

The Policy Statements Segment at WTDC provides a unique platform for high-ranking officials from Member States to express their views on emerging trends and on matters of strategic importance to the development of the telecommunications and ICT sector. It is suggested that policy statements at WTDC-25 be limited to ministers, vice, deputy or assistant ministers or cabinet secretaries and speaking time be limited to three minutes maximum with the understanding that the full statements will be posted on the website of the conference.

**6. Side events**

No side events are planned at WTDC-25 to avoid disadvantaging small delegations who may not be able to cover conference proceedings and side events happening at the same time.

**7. Youth Celebration at WTDC-25**

7.1 A Youth Celebration will be held on 16 November 2025 prior to WTDC-25 in Baku. The celebration will feature intergenerational dialogues, inspiring talks, and activities designed to highlight youth roles in digital development. Youth participants will interact directly with policymakers and stakeholders at that event, fostering collaboration and emphasizing youth as partners in digital transformation. The Host Country will organize visits for the youth.

This celebration event will not produce a formal outcome document but instead seeks to build on the success of the Global Youth Summit that was held in Varadero, Cuba in 2025.This event is designed to demonstrate ITU’s ongoing commitment to empowering the next generation of digital leaders and solidify youth voices within the global telecommunications and digital development agenda.

**8. Conclusion**

Work continues at the secretariat level to ensure an efficient and effective preparatory process that will produce a successful conference. The Council is invited to take note of the WTDC-25 preparations.

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