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| Contribution by South Africa (Republic of), Saudi Arabia (Kingdom of), Egypt (Arab Republic of), and Kenya (Republic of) | |
| REPORT ON THE OUTCOMES OF THE 3rd AND 4th MEETINGS OF THE EXPERT GROUP ON INTERNATIONAL TELECOMMUNICATIONS REGULATIONS | |
| **Purpose**  The purpose of this contribution is to emphasise to the Council the significance of International Telecommunication Regulations (ITRs) in ensuring that all individuals can benefit from the use and advancement of information and communication technologies (ICTs). ITRs play a vital role in fostering a connected and inclusive world. Therefore, they should be reviewed to reflect new trends and emerging issues in the telecommunications and ICT sectors.  **Action required by the Council**  Council is requested to **consider** and **note** this contribution.  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  **References**  *Council Document* [*C25/26*](https://www.itu.int/md/S25-CL-C-0026/en)*; Council* [*Resolution 1379 (C16, last amended C23)*](https://www.itu.int/md/S23-CL-C-0121/en)*;* [*Resolution 146 (Rev. Bucharest, 2022)*](https://www.itu.int/en/council/Documents/basic-texts-2023/RES-146-E.pdf) *of the Plenipotentiary Conference* | |

Background

Resolution 146 (Rev. Bucharest, 2022) of the Plenipotentiary Conference instructed the ITU Council to review and revise, at its 2023 session, the Terms of Reference for EG-ITRs. Therefore, at its 2023 session (11-21 July 2023), the ITU Council approved, amongst others, the following Terms of Reference:

*2 Taking into consideration the work of the previous two Expert Groups, the review may consider, among others –*

*a) new trends in telecommunications/ICT and emerging issues in international telecommunications/ICT environment which may impact the ITRs;*

*b) empirical data on the current use of the ITRs by operating agencies and/or administrations and the proportion of global telecommunication services which now rely on the ITRs; and*

*c) the relevance of the ITRs which “consist of high-level guiding principles" in the current telecommunication/ICT environment.*

Work of the Expert Group on ITRs

Member States have actively participated in the expert group to demonstrate the relevance of the ITRs. To this end, several multi-country contributions were submitted to demonstrate:

a) the existence of new trends in telecommunications/ICT and emerging issues in international telecommunications/ICT environment which impact the ITRs;

b) the existence of empirical data on the current use of the ITRs by operating agencies and/or administrations and the proportion of global telecommunication services which rely on the ITRs.

To ensure that all people can benefit from the use and development of ICTs, and to promote a connected, inclusive world, ITRs still play an important role in facilitating this mission of the ITU. As matters currently stand, there is no other instrument that has been identified as a substitute for ITRs to assist in attaining global connectivity, bearing in mind the economic challenges and needs of the developing countries.

Despite that, there is still no agreement within the group on the way forward. We believe that the ITRs are a tool, and with the cooperation of all Member States, we will be able to find common ground from which to start.

Several articles in the current ITRs (both the 1988 and 2012 versions) address operating agencies rather than Member States. This might have been appropriate 20 years ago. However, in today’s world, the ITRs should address only Member States and not operating agencies. Member States, through their national regulations and policies, would then be responsible for ensuring that operators apply the provisions and directions of the ITRs.

Proposal

The authors of this contribution believe that it is essential to intensify efforts toward finding common grounds to be able to have one version of the treaty that is acceptable to all Member States and that will benefit all.

We look forward to continuing to participate in the work of the Expert Group-ITRs to ensure that the expert group discharges its mandate effectively.

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