|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Agenda item: ADM 1** | **Document C25/95-E** |
| **3 June 2025** |
| **Original: English** |
|  |  |
| Contribution by Egypt (Arab Republic of), Kenya (Republic of), Uganda (Republic of), Rwanda (Republic of), South Africa (Republic of), Senegal (Republic of), Tanzania (United Republic of), and Tunisia, |
| REDUCING FINANCIAL BURDENS ON HOST COUNTRIES OF ITU CONFERENCES, MEETINGS AND ACTIVITIES |
| **Purpose**This proposal outlines practical measures to reduce host country costs while maintaining the quality and inclusivity of ITU events.**Action required by the Council**The Council is invited to **consider** and **take** appropriate action.\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**References**[*Decision 5 (Rev. Bucharest, 2022)*](https://www.itu.int/en/council/Documents/basic-texts-2023/DEC-005-E.pdf) *of the Plenipotentiary Conference; Resolutions* [*66 (Rev. Bucharest, 2022)*](https://www.itu.int/en/council/Documents/basic-texts-2023/RES-066-E.pdf)*, on Documents and publications of the Union, and* [*167 (Rev. Bucharest, 2022)*](https://www.itu.int/en/council/Documents/basic-texts-2023/RES-167-E.pdf)*, on virtual and hybrid meetings and use of electronic means, of the Plenipotentiary Conference.* |

Background

The International Telecommunication Union (ITU) plays a key role in global digital development through conferences, meetings, forums, and activities that are hosted not only in Geneva but also by Member States across all regions. These events enhance inclusive participation, foster capacity-building, and strengthen the Union’s field presence, supporting its mandate of global digital inclusion and sectoral development.

Hosting such events, while beneficial for regional engagement, often involves substantial logistical commitments from host countries, particularly in the areas of interpretation services, IT infrastructure provisioning, and production of printed materials. These costs can deter potential hosts—particularly developing countries—from volunteering to organize such events.

**Decision 5 (Rev. Bucharest, 2022)** and its **Annex 2** provide a comprehensive framework for improving ITU efficiency and reducing operational expenses, encouraging measures such as leveraging local resources, digitalizing workflows, and minimizing travel and shipping.

This contribution seeks to support the implementation of Decision 5 and further facilitate the hosting of ITU events worldwide by proposing specific, actionable cost-reduction measures.

Proposal

To facilitate broader participation of countries —especially developing ones— as hosts of ITU activities, the following proposals are submitted for consideration:

# 1 Utilize local/national interpretation resources

Annex 2, article 12 of Decision 5, recommends reducing the cost of interpretation through optimization measures and the use of alternative translation procedures. Therefore, ITU is encouraged to work with host countries to recruit **qualified local interpreters** in official UN/ITU languages. This would reduce the **travel, accommodation, and per diem expenses** otherwise borne by either ITU or the host country. Guidelines and quality assurance processes can be developed jointly with ITU language services to ensure standards are maintained.

# 2 Local provision of IT equipment and devices

Instead of shipping ITU-owned equipment, the host country may be authorized (with ITU technical guidance) to rent or provide locally available IT equipment, such as laptops, printers, access control systems, etc. This will significantly reduce freight costs, customs duties, and potential delays, contributing to both cost and time efficiency. Where applicable, ITU may maintain a recommended list of technical specifications for standard equipment required at its events. Annex 2, Article 5 of Decision 5 encourages the use of local experts and resources to save on travel and logistics costs, especially in the planning and organization of events outside Geneva. Additionally, article 17 promotes criteria to reduce travel-related expenses, indirectly supporting in-country provisioning of needed equipment.

# 3 Transition to digital conference badges

Annex 2 to Decision 5 (Rev. Bucharest, 2022), articles 10 and 11, strongly encourage ITU to conduct “paperless conferences and meetings of all kinds and at all levels,” reduce the printing and distribution of non-revenue-generating materials, and maximize the use of digital platforms and communication methods. Transitioning from printed identification materials (e.g., paper or plastic badges) to digital conference credentials, such as QR-code-enabled mobile badges, supports these goals by eliminating the need for physical production, reducing environmental impact, and simplifying logistics.

This approach is already being implemented across other United Nations agencies, including the United Nations Office at Geneva (UNOG) and United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), both of which have adopted digital badge systems for high-level events. These systems provide secure access, real-time verification, and cost reductions without compromising identity assurance or participant experience. By following this best practice, ITU and host countries can both enhance sustainability and reduce the administrative and material costs of badge production, distribution, and reprinting.

Conclusion

By implementing these practical, cost-efficient measures, ITU and its Member States can jointly support the broader goal of increasing regional participation in ITU activities while aligning with its strategic and financial objectives. These steps will also contribute to the Union’s commitment to sustainability, digital transformation, and inclusive international cooperation.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_