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|  | **Document C25/109-E** |
| **1 September 2025** |
| **Original: English** |
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| **SUMMARY RECORD****OF THE****THIRD PLENARY MEETING** |
| Thursday, 19 June 2025, from 1430 to 1740 hours**Chair**: Ms C. Flutur (Romania) |

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|  | **Subjects discussed** | **Documents** |
| 1 | Intervention by the United Nations Under-Secretary-General for Policy, Mr Guy Ryder | – |
| 2 | Report by the Chair of the Expert Group on the International Telecommunications Regulations | [C25/26](https://www.itu.int/md/S25-CL-C-0026/en), [C25/92](https://www.itu.int/md/S25-CL-C-0092/en) |
| 3 | Report on the proposed venues for RA-27, WRC-27 and CPM31‑1 | [C25/58+Add.1](https://www.itu.int/md/S25-CL-C-0058/en), [C25/101](https://www.itu.int/md/S25-CL-C-0101/en) |
| 4 | Collaboration with the United Nations system and other international intergovernmental processes, including on standards development | [C25/70](http://www.itu.int/md/S25-CL-C-0070/en)[C25/97(Rev.1)](http://www.itu.int/md/S25-CL-C-0097/en) |
| 5 | Letter from the Administration of India concerning the 2030 plenipotentiary conference | [C25/19](https://www.itu.int/md/S25-CL-C-0019/en), [C25/73](https://www.itu.int/md/S25-CL-C-0073/en) |
| 6 | Statements by councillors and observers |  |

# 1 Intervention by the United Nations Under-Secretary-General for Policy, Mr Guy Ryder

1.1 The ITU Secretary-General introduced the United Nations Under-Secretary-General for Policy in the Executive Office of the United Nations Secretary-General, Mr Guy Ryder, Chair of the UN80 Task Force, which would guide the UN80 Initiative, aimed at reimagining how the United Nations served the world and transforming the organization into a more agile, responsive and resilient organization, while ensuring its sustainability.

1.2 The United Nations Under-Secretary-General for Policy said that the UN80 Initiative had been developed in response to violations of the basic tenets of the United Nations Charter, intensifying divisions in the political community, very severe system-wide financial constraints and rising questioning of the value of multilateralism itself. The Initiative comprised three workstreams: the first centred on seeking efficiencies and improvements within existing systems by eliminating duplicative processes, merging platforms and relocating posts away from higher-cost locations such as Geneva and New York; revised budgetary proposals for 2026, informed by the process, anticipated a 20 per cent reduction in posts in the United Nations Secretariat. The second workstream was dedicated to analysing the mandates handed down to the United Nations Secretariat across more than 4 000 resolutions from, *inter alia*, the United Nations General Assembly, Security Council and Human Rights Council in order to identify and eliminate duplication, redundancy and undue concentration of effort. The intention was to extend that work across the whole system and identify how the United Nations Secretariat could interact with the other parts of the system, including the specialized agencies, more effectively, efficiently and coherently. A report on that workstream would be presented by the United Nations Secretary-General at the end of July 2025. The third workstream involved subjecting the current structural arrangements of the United Nations architecture to rigorous scrutiny to assess the need for structural change or programme realignment.

1.3 The UN80 Task Force comprised 15 principals from across the United Nations system, including the ITU Secretary-General to ensure that the interests of the specialized agencies were duly covered. Reporting to the task force were seven work clusters focused on different areas: peace and security; sustainable development; humanitarian activities; human rights; research and training; and specialized agencies. ITU was a key contributor to the specialized agencies cluster. Acknowledging the budgeting and appointment autonomy of the specialized agencies, he welcomed the commitment that they had shown so far in the process. With the entire system under pressure, it was imperative to respond collectively. Ultimately, however, the value of the process would depend on Member States' reaction to it as decision-making lay in their hands. The yardstick of success would be the ability to deliver on the United Nations Charter more effectively and efficiently, while ensuring balance across the pillars of peace and security, human rights and development.

1.4 The councillor from Switzerland said that his country, as host to many international organizations, intended to further strengthen Geneva as a centre of excellence for multilateralism. Delocalization risked taking organizations and their work away from Member States. Built on over a century of multilateral action, Geneva was the world's most complete ecosystem for global governance, combining almost universal Member State representation, unique access to all other stakeholders and daily interaction between institutions. Tapping further into the potential of Geneva could increase efficiency across the organization; precisely what was needed in times of such financial constraint for all concerned. Switzerland stood ready to work with the United Nations system towards that goal and more efficient multilateralism.

1.5 Councillors expressed broad support for the reform process as an appropriate response to unprecedented financial challenges and attacks against multilateralism, such that the broad and tangible benefits of the multilateral system could be preserved. Concern was expressed that the logic of changes must be strategic and not motivated by cost-cutting alone, as overly precipitous decision-making risked exacerbating the situation and undermining the credibility of the organization and would not be easy to reverse. Clarification was requested of the plan or process for engaging with Member States, as the reform process must be inclusive and transparent; one councillor said that intergovernmental ownership of the process was vital. Another said that ITU's transformation processes must be aligned with the UN80 Initiative and requested that the ITU Secretary-General provide further information on a revision of mandates relating to the work of ITU. A third mentioned the crosscutting potential of technologies to contribute to the transformation process.

1.6 One councillor emphasized the need for information on the cost of reforms and on potential savings arising therefrom, in order to enable informed decision-making, while another asked how the costs of implementation were to be covered, given the liquidity crisis. Concern was expressed about the impact on staff.

1.7 The United Nations Under-Secretary-General for Policy emphasized the strong commitment to transparency and inclusiveness in the UN80 Initiative, not only keeping Member States informed but also soliciting feedback and guidance. No decisions would be taken except by Member States themselves: proposals would be channelled through existing budget processes where Member States continued to be ultimate decision-makers. The possible establishment of an intergovernmental process to take the reforms forward would also be for Member States to decide.

1.8 He thanked Switzerland for its commitment as host country and welcomed ongoing dialogue. He acknowledged the value of the near universal presence of the international community in Geneva, of the cluster effect of multiple entities sharing a duty station, and stressed that any relocation would not be precipitous or driven by cost considerations alone.

1.9 He recognized that moving too quickly in the process, without due consideration of the issues at stake, risked causing damage, but so did approaching the process without a sense of urgency. The task of wider mandate review across the system would be co-designed with the goal of working in complementary, and not competing, ways; the multiple United Nations reform processes already under way were to be mutually beneficial and convergent with the UN80 Initiative. In his view, the UN80 Initiative would have failed in its objectives if the outcome was the same United Nations but 20 per cent smaller; rather, it must rebuild the organization and system to be less resource intensive but more responsive, resilient and efficient, guided always by its impact on the people it served. The United Nations Pact for the Future and the Global Digital Compact (GDC) provided excellent guidance.

1.10 Acknowledging the strain on staff, he stressed that there was a commitment to mitigate the impact on colleagues and supportive measures that could be put in place. It was important to harness technology as an instrument of efficiency. Responding to a question by a councillor, he said that the best way for specialized agencies to avoid politicization was faithful adherence to the goals and values enshrined in their mandates.

1.11 The ITU Secretary-General expressed her commitment to building a fit-for-future ITU, understanding that efficiency meant impact and not just savings. Aspects being explored by the specialized agencies cluster included standardization of a costing methodology, joint procurement for shared items, shared information and communication technology systems, artificial intelligence (AI) for translation, enhanced coordination of facility use, and creating a platform for sharing best practices and efficiencies across the system. She noted the shared commitment to preserving the inherent autonomy of specialized agencies and to undertaking a review of ITU's mandates to identify missed opportunities for synergies, in particular as digital technology cut across so many areas. The UN80 Initiative provided good impetus for that exercise and the specialized agencies stood ready to enhance collaboration and system-wide efficiency that would make each organization, including ITU, stronger and the broader system more robust.

# 2 Report by the Chair of the Expert Group on the International Telecommunication Regulations (Documents [C25/26](https://www.itu.int/md/S25-CL-C-0026/en), [C25/92](https://www.itu.int/md/S25-CL-C-0092/en))

2.1 The Chair of the Expert Group on the International Telecommunication Regulations (EG‑ITRs), introduced Document C25/26, which contained a progress report summarizing the results of the third and fourth meetings of EG-ITRs, in line with Resolution 146 (Rev. Bucharest, 2022) of the Plenipotentiary Conference and Council Resolution 1379 (C16, last amended C23).

2.2 The councillor from South Africa introduced the multicountry contribution contained in Document C25/92 on behalf of four countries. It called for an intensification of efforts towards consensus on a single version of the International Telecommunication Regulations (ITRs) for the benefit of all and continued active participation in EG-ITRs to ensure that the group discharged its mandate fully and effectively.

2.3 Multiple councillors stressed the importance of continuing the work of EG-ITRs, emphasizing the importance of a single consensual updated version of the ITRs that reflected recent developments in telecommunications and the needs of Member States. The updated ITRs would be vital in guiding the telecommunication sector and in achieving universal connectivity and digital inclusion, in particular for developing countries.

2.4 However, multiple other councillors stressed that the persistent divergent views on the ITRs and the trends that might affect them reflected a lack of consensus on their value and relevance. Moreover, as the 1988 and 2012 versions of the ITRs had co-existed peacefully, there was no demonstrable need for a consolidated version.

2.5 One councillor expressed the hope that the ITRs would be abrogated at the next plenipotentiary conference, another arguing that the purposes of universal connectivity and digital inclusion were best served through collaborative, flexible multistakeholder mechanisms, including through ITU resolutions and WTDC outputs, rather than through rigid legal instruments.

2.6 Several councillors welcomed that EG-ITRs had reached agreement on the structure of its final report to the 2026 session of the Council, with some councillors stressing that the report should be balanced and reflect the myriad views discussed.

2.7 The Chair invited the Council to note the report contained in Document C25/26 and the contribution in Document C25/92.

2.8 It was so **agreed**.

# 3 Report on the proposed venues for RA-27, WRC-27 and CPM31-1 (Documents [C25/58 and Addendum 1](https://www.itu.int/md/S25-CL-C-0058/en), [C25/101](https://www.itu.int/md/S25-CL-C-0101/en))

3.1 The Director of the Radiocommunication Bureau introduced Document C25/58, recalling that ITU had received letters of invitation from Rwanda and China to host the 2027 world radiocommunication conference (WRC-27), the 2027 radiocommunication assembly (RA-27) and the first session of the conference preparatory meeting for WRC-31 (CPM31-1) in Kigali and Shanghai, respectively. Having formally visited the venues, he could confirm that both countries met the basic requirements and were eager to meet or exceed ITU's needs. As was customary, a booking had also been made to host the events at the CICG in Geneva. That booking had to be confirmed by 6 April 2026; cancellation beyond that date incurred rising financial penalties. As noted in Addendum 1 to Document C25/58, on 13 June 2025 the Secretary-General had received a letter from the Government of Rwanda indicating its decision to withdraw its interest in hosting WRC-27.

3.2 The councillor from Rwanda confirmed that her government had communicated its decision to withdraw its invitation to host WRC-27 and expressed appreciation to ITU and other Member States' for their support. She hoped that Council Members would reach a consensus-based decision on the venue of WRC-27.

3.3 The councillor from China said that her country, prior to submitting an expression of interest to the 2024 session of the Council (Council-24), had been informed on the margins of WRC-23 that no other formal offer to host RA-27, WRC-27 and CPM31-1 had been made to the Secretary-General. Considering that the Asia and the Pacific region had never hosted a WRC and in order to better support the work of the Union and alleviate its financial burden, China had indicated to the Radiocommunication Bureau its willingness to host WRC-27 and subsequently submitted to ITU its formal bid to host WRC-27 in May 2024. At the Council session in June 2024, for the first time, the secretariat had simultaneously announced two invitations from Member States to host WRC-27, one from China and the other from Rwanda. Following consultations between China and Rwanda, China became the sole inviting country and, as noted in Document C25/58, met all the basic requirements to host the events. In addition, Shanghai had successfully hosted a 24-day ITU-R working party meeting from April to May 2025, with a total of 365 in-person participants from more than 80 countries and regions. The venue facilities, Internet connections, accommodation and catering, and visa support for the meeting had been highly appreciated by the chairs of the working groups and the participants. No. 11 of Chapter I, Section 2 of the General Rules of conferences, assemblies and meetings of the Union stipulated that when there was an inviting government, the precise place and exact dates of a WRC were to be fixed in accordance with the provisions of Article 3 of the ITU Convention, following consultations with the inviting government. Considering that China was currently the only inviting country to host WRC-27, she proposed that the Council take a decision to host WRC-27 in China in accordance with the relevant provisions of the General Rules. Throughout its long history, ITU had never turned down an offer to host a major event. Asia and the Pacific was the most populous region and the most dynamic in terms of digital transformation and innovation, yet it had never hosted a WRC. China's bid to host WRC-27 would contribute to the broader global participation in ITU and address the fact that ITU had never organized a WRC in the Asia and the Pacific region. China had already made sufficient budgetary preparations for WRC-27. China would provide financial assistance to delegates from least developed countries to facilitate their participation. Free lunches and discounts on air tickets and accommodation would be provided to all participants during WRC-27 to expand the participation of Member States. More information on the venue could be found in Document [C25/INF/16](https://www.itu.int/md/S25-CL-INF-0016/en). She emphasized that ITU was the United Nations specialized agency for information and communication technologies and that political factors should not be allowed to influence and interfere with ITU affairs. She expressed the sincere hope that councillors and delegates would give China, as a country of the Asia and the Pacific region, an opportunity to host WRC-27. With a friendly and open attitude, China would listen carefully to the concerns and suggestions of all parties and do its utmost to take the most pragmatic measures to address the concerns of all parties and strive to reach consensus.

3.4 The councillor from the United States presented his country's contribution contained in Document C25/101, which supported Geneva as the existing default alternative location for WRC-27. ITU had faced an unprecedented situation in having received two competing bids. Even though Rwanda had withdrawn its bid, the situation remained unresolved. The United States could not support China's hosting of a treaty-level conference, where not all stakeholders would be able to fully and effectively participate and where some Member States might feel disadvantaged. The Council needed to reach a consensus decision on the venue of WRC‑27 that could be supported by all Member States. Geneva was an accessible, neutral venue and had hosted many WRCs, and arrangements were already in place to that end, as reported in Document C25/58. To allay any concerns with respect to cost, the United States would commit funding to defray any additional, unbudgeted costs associated with holding the conference in Geneva. The unprecedented situation had also highlighted the lack of formal processes and procedures for hosting ITU conferences, in particular when selecting among multiple bids. In the absence of a formal, transparent process, deciding to hold WRC‑27 in Geneva as a neutral venue offered the best way forward.

3.5 One councillor said that Document C25/101 should not be considered; it had been submitted beyond the established deadline and included on the agenda against the wishes of some councillors.

3.6 Several councillors and observers said that, since China met the basic requirements set out by ITU and was the only inviting country, Shanghai should be approved as the venue of WRC-27 and associated events. There was no reason to depart from the established practice of accepting any qualified bid to host a major conference; doing so would set a dangerous precedent, in particular at a time of major financial constraint. China would not only alleviate a financial burden on the Union but it would also provide financial support to developing countries. It was essential that decisions concerning the venue should be grounded in the principles of inclusivity, fairness and equal opportunity. Geographical representation was likewise important; it would be the first WRC to be held in Asia and the Pacific, while Geneva had already hosted many. Moreover, China had a long track record of successfully hosting major international events. An observer noted that the reason given in Document C25/101 for holding the conference in Geneva now differed from the reason given orally by the councillor from the United States. The decision should not be politicized.

3.7 Several other councillors noted the unprecedented situation of having received two competing bids and the need for a formal, collaborative and transparent bidding process for hosting future ITU conferences. Pending development of such a procedure, it was hoped that a consensus decision could be taken to hold WRC-27 in Geneva, which was the default option if agreement could not be reached on a host and would provide institutional continuity and proximity to ITU headquarters.

3.8 The councillor from China recalled that WRCs had been held away from Geneva in 2019 and 2023 and there was no reason to believe that a treaty-level meeting could not be held elsewhere. As noted in Document C25/58, ITU had booked the CICG in Geneva in case there were no invitations from Member States to host WRC-27 and its associated events but, since China had extended an invitation, the CICG booking could be cancelled. She also recalled that Document C24/64, published on 3 May 2024 regarding WRC-27 preparations, had not mentioned any invitation from a Member State. On 31 May 2024, following the letter from China to the ITU secretariat to bid to host WRC-27, an updated version of the document (C24/64(Rev.1)) had published for the first time the invitation letters from both Rwanda and China. Such a situation could have been avoided if the secretariat had disclosed to Member States the invitation letters in a timely manner. She expressed the hope that other Member States would fully understand the difficulties faced by China and the tremendous efforts it had already made, and called on Member States to follow the existing rules and support the hosting of WRC-27 in China.

3.9 The Legal Counsel, responding to procedural questions raised by councillors, said that the basic instruments of ITU did not contain any codified procedure for handling a scenario where two or more Member States had submitted competing invitations to host a conference. The decision to host a conference in an inviting country was a multistage process that was legally anchored in Article 3 of the ITU Convention and guided by Resolution 5 (Kyoto, 1994) of the Plenipotentiary Conference, on invitations to hold conferences or meetings away from Geneva. The pivotal steps in the process were the Council's determination of the venue and the dates, a decision which must then be confirmed by a majority of Member States. Once the procedure had been completed, it was formalized by the secretariat through a host country agreement.

3.10 The Chair proposed that informal consultations be held and the outcome reported to a subsequent plenary meeting.

3.11 It was so **agreed**.

# 4 Collaboration with the United Nations system and other international intergovernmental processes, including on standards development (Documents [C25/70](http://www.itu.int/md/S25-CL-C-0070/en), [C25/97(Rev.1)](http://www.itu.int/md/S25-CL-C-0097/en))

4.1 The Chief of the Strategic Planning and Membership Department introduced Document C25/70, presenting highlights of ITU's contributions to major United Nations conferences, processes and workstreams on digital themes, including follow-up on the Pact for the Future, which had been the outcome of the Summit of the Future, held in September 2024. The document set out ITU's actions and plans to implement the GDC and its role as co-chair of the Working Group on Digital Technologies (WGDT), as well as its contribution to the UN80 Initiative. The report further described the launch of ITU's Digital Infrastructure Investment Initiative (DIII) and its contribution as a Knowledge Partner within the G20 Digital Economy Working Group (DEWG).

4.2 The councillor from South Africa introduced Document C25/97(Rev.1), which provided an update on South Africa's G20 presidency, focusing on the work of DEWG. The first priority of DEWG was advancing connectivity for inclusive digital development, aligned with outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society; a framework to assist countries in identifying and eliminating impediments to meaningful connectivity would be developed. The second priority was to establish a framework to measure more effectively the public value of digital public infrastructure. Other initiatives included helping small, medium and micro enterprises adapt to technological trends and participate in the digital economy. A task force on the development impact of AI had been formed and a workshop on the use of deepfake material on social media was under consideration. ITU had provided valuable support to DEWG and to the Working Group on Disaster Risk Reduction.

4.3 Councillors expressed appreciation for the report contained in Document C25/70 and for ITU's contribution under the GDC, to DEWG and to the fourth International Conference on Financing for Development; however, one councillor called for future reports to include links to more detailed information on the outcomes of ITU's collaboration within the United Nations system.

4.4 One councillor emphasized the need for tangible results on connectivity, encryption and innovation, while ensuring that developing countries participated equitably in all GDC mechanisms so that global digital norms and frameworks reflected the needs of all regions. He also called for expansion of initiatives to empower women and youth, which would be critical to achieving inclusive digital transformation.

4.5 One observer noted that the Pact for the Future had not been supported by all Member States of the United Nations and requested that the views of all ITU Member States be reflected in the report. Any decisions taken on the UN80 Initiative, in particular on review of mandates and structures, should be based on the views of Member States. He also requested details of the financial implications of the initiatives referred to in Document C25/70 and information on how those initiatives aligned with the Union's goals.

4.6 The Council **noted** the reports in Documents C25/70 and C25/97(Rev.1).

# 5 Letter from the Administration of India concerning the 2030 plenipotentiary conference (Documents [C25/19](https://www.itu.int/md/S25-CL-C-0019/en), [C25/73](https://www.itu.int/md/S25-CL-C-0073/en))

5.1 The Chair drew attention to Document C25/19, which contained a letter from the Government of India expressing interest in hosting the 2030 plenipotentiary conference (PP‑30).

5.2 The councillor from India presented Document C25/73, which contained India's proposal to host PP‑30. The proposal reflected India's deep commitment to inclusive progress and shared digital prosperity. India had successfully hosted key ITU events, including the 2024 World Telecommunication Standardization Assembly. The proposed venue for PP‑30 would feature world-class infrastructure, seamless connectivity and exceptional hospitality to ensure a productive and rich experience for all participants. India respectfully sought the support of Member States for its proposal.

5.3 The Chair proposed that the Council continue discussion of the item at a subsequent plenary meeting.

5.4 It was so **agreed**.

# 6 Statements by councillors and observers

6.1 The councillors from Malaysia, France and Thailand announced their countries' candidacy for re-election to the Council.

6.2 The observer for Uzbekistan announced his country's candidacy for election to the Council and the candidacy of Mr Usmanov for election as member of the Radio Regulations Board.

The Secretary-General: The Chair:

D. BOGDAN-MARTIN C. FLUTUR

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