|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | **Document C25/110-E** |
| **15 August 2025** |
| **Original: English** |
|  |  |
| **SUMMARY RECORD**  **OF THE**  **FOURTH PLENARY MEETING** | |
| Monday, 23 June 2025, from 0930 to 1235 hours  **Chair**: Ms C. Flutur (Romania) | |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Subjects discussed** | **Documents** |
| 1 | Report by the Chair of the Council Working Group for the strategic and financial plans 2028-2031 | [C25/31](https://www.itu.int/md/S25-CL-C-0031/en) |
| 2 | Guidelines for harmonizing resolutions and decisions of the Plenipotentiary Conference | [C25/29](https://www.itu.int/md/S25-CL-C-0029/en), [C25/79](https://www.itu.int/md/S25-CL-C-0079/en), [C25/91](https://www.itu.int/md/S25-CL-C-0091/en) |
| 3 | Preparation for the 2026 world telecommunication/ICT policy forum | [C25/5(Rev.1) +Add.1](https://www.itu.int/md/S25-CL-C-0005/en) |
| 4 | WSIS+20 Review – ITU's call for inputs: Summary of submissions received | [C25/53](https://www.itu.int/md/S25-CL-C-0053/en) |
| 5 | Updates on the ITU action plan for implementing the Global Digital Compact | [C25/52](https://www.itu.int/md/S25-CL-C-0052/en) |
| 6 | Strengthening ITU's regional presence | [C25/25(Rev.1)](https://www.itu.int/md/S25-CL-C-0025/en) |

# 1 Report by the Chair of the Council Working Group for the strategic and financial plans 2028-2031 (Document [C25/31](https://www.itu.int/md/S25-CL-C-0031/en))

1.1 The Chair of the Council Working Group for the strategic and financial plans 2028‑2031 (CWG‑SFP) introduced Document C25/31, which presented progress achieved by CWG‑SFP since 2024. It had met in October 2024 and February 2025 and had fostered collaboration with Member States, the three Sector advisory groups (regularly informed and invited through Liaison Statements to participate in the process), the secretariat’s intersectoral team, chaired by the Deputy Secretary-General, and system UN agencies also invited to share their own experiences when drafting their strategic plans. CWG‑SFP also had worked closely with the Union's statistics teams, whose expertise had been essential in measuring progress and impact. The strategic and financial plans were not just planning tools but also means of tracking implementation and guiding continuous improvement.

1.2 Councillors expressed appreciation for progress made in preparing the draft strategic and financial plans and welcomed the level of engagement with Member States. One observer noted that facilitating use of spectrum and orbital resources, as set out under Article 44 of the ITU Constitution, was a core activity of the Union and should not be classed as a "thematic" priority and said, moreover, that certain outcome indicators assigned to it were not appropriate.

1.3 The Chair of CWG-SFP, responding to questions and comments from councillors, said that the outcomes of the online consultation had been incorporated in the group's reporting. Input from Sector advisory groups would inform development of Sector priorities and how they were measured. For the September 2025 meeting of CWG-SFP, the secretariat would prepare frameworks for the draft strategic and financial plans, with clear strategic, financial and operational plans linkages. Briefings would be provided to the Sector advisory groups and as part of the world telecommunication development conference and plenipotentiary conference (PP) preparatory processes. An information session was being held after that plenary meeting to provide further information on progress and steps towards finalization of the draft strategic and financial plans before submission to the 2026 session of the Council.

1.4 The Council **noted** the report contained in Document C25/31.

# 2 Guidelines for harmonizing resolutions and decisions of the Plenipotentiary Conference (Documents [C25/29](https://www.itu.int/md/S25-CL-C-0029/en), [C25/79](https://www.itu.int/md/S25-CL-C-0079/en), [C25/91](https://www.itu.int/md/S25-CL-C-0091/en))

2.1 A representative of the General Secretariat introduced Document C25/29 containing proposed, non‑binding guidelines for harmonizing PP resolutions and decisions, as agreed by CWG-SFP.

2.2 The councillor from Saudi Arabia introduced the multicountry contribution contained in Document C25/91 on behalf of six countries. It provided additional input on the guidelines, stressing that any efforts to streamline existing resolutions should be made with care. It was proposed that the guidelines be further considered by CWG‑SFP in the light of the contribution.

2.3 The observer for the Russian Federation introduced Document C25/79, proposing further measures to streamline PP and Sector resolutions and decisions. One approach was to increase Sector-specific content in PP outcomes to obviate the need for analogous Sector outcomes, which could be trialled on a limited number of resolutions. The establishment of a rapporteur group by ISCG could assist in coordinating preparations for PP-26 across the Sectors.

2.4 The councillor from Italy said that ISCG had agreed on the principle and already appointed a rapporteur to study the matter and report back to the group. In addition, he highlighted that the ISCG website contains a mapping of resolutions, and a table that relates resolutions across the various Sectors. The councillor also mentioned that the ISCG endorsed the proposals contained in Document C25/91, which were already presented to the group.

2.5 Councillors and observers welcomed the guidelines, provided that they remained non-binding and did not limit Member States' ability to propose amendments or new resolutions or decisions. Efforts to harmonize and shorten resolutions were positive, but a blanket template would not be appropriate; content and context should be the most important consideration. Several councillors agreed that resolutions should not be suppressed based solely on a lack of recent reporting or revision. One observer suggested presenting the guidelines in regional webinars.

2.6 Councillors also welcomed the contribution contained in Document C25/79 and stressed the importance of inter-Sectoral cooperation to improve coherence in resolutions. Earlier involvement of regional telecommunication organizations in the preparatory process could also help. One councillor requested that the secretariat compile a list of thematically related resolutions to help identify discrepancies and duplications.

2.7 One councillor stressed that, for the guidelines to be effective, Member States should commit to following them as closely as possible. They should also carefully consider the financial implications of proposals to ITU conferences.

2.8 The Chair proposed that the Council note Document C25/29, agree to forward Documents C25/79 and C25/91 to CWG‑SFP for consideration and invite ISCG to provide input to CWG-SFP.

2.9 It was so **agreed**.

# 3 Preparation for the 2026 world telecommunication/ICT policy forum (Document [C25/5(Rev.1) and Addendum 1](https://www.itu.int/md/S25-CL-C-0005/en))

3.1 A representative of the General Secretariat introduced Document C25/5(Rev.1) and Addendum 1, outlining progress and a revised timeline for the preparatory process for the 2026 world telecommunication/information and communication technology (ICT) policy forum (WTPF‑26) and containing in Annex a draft decision on the convening of WTPF-26. Addendum 1 to the report contained an invitation from the Bahamas to host WTPF-26.

3.2 The Chair of the Informal Expert Group (IEG) said that, since March 2025, virtual working groups had met on WTPF‑26's five thematic areas, working towards consensus-based draft baseline texts for WTPF‑26 Opinions, and a third draft of the Secretary-General's report to WTPF‑26 had been produced. Comments on the baseline texts were invited by 7 August 2025, for consideration at the next IEG meeting in September 2025.

3.3 The councillor from the Bahamas said that he had the honour, on behalf of his government, to extend a formal invitation to host WTPF‑26. As a small island developing state, the Bahamas brought a unique perspective to the themes of WTPF‑26, in particular resilient digital infrastructure, space connectivity and inclusive digital transformation. The Bahamas had taken deliberate policy steps in support of universal access, satellite readiness, cybersecurity and green digital transformation, which would enrich and inspire dialogue at the forum. The Bahamas had participated in the preparatory process through its chairing of the IEG and would deliver a successful and inclusive WTPF‑26.

3.4 Councillors praised the excellent guidance provided by the Chair of IEG and the work accomplished during the preparatory process, including identifying the theme and five topics of WTPF‑26. They welcomed the invitation by the Bahamas to host WTPF‑26.

3.5 The Secretary-General expressed her gratitude to the Government of the Bahamas for its offer to host the event.

3.6 The Chair proposed that the Council note the preparatory process for WTPF‑26 and approve the draft decision contained in Document C25/5(Rev.1).

3.7 It was so **agreed**.

# 4 WSIS+20 Review – ITU's call for inputs: Summary of submissions received (Document [C25/53](https://www.itu.int/md/S25-CL-C-0053/en))

4.1 A representative of the General Secretariat introduced Document C25/53, which presented a summary of the submissions received in response to ITU's call to contribute views on the work of ITU in the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS): 20-year review (WSIS+20). The responses highlighted that the WSIS process had significantly advanced over the 20 years, reduced the digital divide and promoted inclusive digital transformation. ITU had been considered instrumental in the WSIS process, across myriad functions. Document C25/53 would be submitted to the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) WSIS+20 review.

4.2 The Chair of the Council Working Group on WSIS and the Sustainable Development Goals (CWG-WSIS&SDG) said that the summary thoughtfully reflected the perspectives of ITU's membership and stakeholders, highlighting the achievements and challenges thus far and identifying potential pathways for WSIS, and ITU's role in it, beyond 2025.

4.3 Councillors, recognizing WSIS as a key platform for supporting connectivity and digital inclusion, in particular in developing countries, and ITU's important, multifaceted role in the WSIS process, expressed strong support for the submission of the summary to the UNGA WSIS+20 review. Several councillors stressed, however, the need to reflect all views in the report, which, given the number of inputs, was difficult to achieve in such a short summary; thus, it was suggested to append thereto all individual submissions.

4.4 One councillor highlighted the need for WSIS to preserve its unique mandate and for it to reaffirm the principles and commitments articulated in the Global Digital Compact (GDC) – both of those processes should be distinct but complementary. In his view, the WSIS action lines remained pertinent and the Internet Governance Forum, having proven its value over 20 years, should have a permanent mandate.

4.5 Several councillors stressed that ITU must continue to have a key, recognized role in the WSIS process in cooperation with other entities of the United Nations system, while avoiding duplication.

4.6 The Chair proposed that the Council note the report contained in Document C25/53 and submit the report to UNGA with, in annex thereto, a compilation of all individual submissions received.

4.7 It was so **agreed**.

# 5 Updates on the ITU action plan for implementing the Global Digital Compact (Document [C25/52](https://www.itu.int/md/S25-CL-C-0052/en))

5.1 The Chief of the Strategic Planning and Membership Department (SPM) introduced Document C25/52, providing updates on ITU's GDC action plan and detailing collaborative efforts with multiple entities across the United Nations system, including as co-chair of the United Nations Working Group on Digital Technologies (WGDT). ITU's work on GDC implementation made sure to leverage existing mechanisms to avoid duplication and enhance efficiency.

5.2 Councillors welcomed ITU's strong leadership in implementing the GDC and alignment of GDC activities and objectives with existing mandates and mechanisms. Efforts in advancing universal and meaningful connectivity, responsible artificial intelligence (AI) governance and digital inclusion were commended, as was the alignment with the Pact for the Future. Councillors called for ITU to continue to lead the way. With its technical expertise, it had an important role to play in capacity building and enhancing inclusion of youth and women with a view to bridging digital divides. One councillor, however, stressed the need for the equitable participation of developing countries in shaping GDC implementation. It was also essential that international standardization processes be transparent and reflect the diverse needs of developing countries.

5.3 Councillors also welcomed the focus on collaboration across the United Nations system and noted that several collaborative ITU-led initiatives, such as the Giga initiative, AI for Good and the EQUALS Global Partnership, played an important role in translating commitment to action. The WSIS process was also key in that regard, with several councillors stressing the need for alignment of the GDC with the WSIS process and action lines but also the need to avoid duplication, in particular in the context of the UN80 Initiative. One observer, however, stressed the need for clear separation between the GDC and the WSIS process, while another observer, recalling that the GDC had not been adopted by consensus and was non-binding, said that too much focus was being placed on GDC implementation, at the expense of WSIS outcomes, which should be prioritized in pursuit of the SDGs.

5.4 One councillor noted the relevance of ITU activities, in particular AI for Good, to GDC Objective 5, but called for studies across the three Sectors' study groups to ensure full realization of that objective. Another councillor underscored the value of standardization work, in particular through the Telecommunication Standardization Advisory Group (TSAG), to attainment of GDC Objective 3.

5.5 The Chief of SPM said that integration of the GDC into the WSIS process would be discussed by WGDT. The United Nations Group on the Information Society had mapped the WSIS action lines and GDC objectives and posted the results on its website. The report demonstrated how initiatives aligned with that mapping. All work on the GDC fell within the mandate of ITU. Existing programmes were being leveraged and efforts made to avoid duplication, including with the WSIS process. While the relevant teams' workload had increased, no additional resources had been allocated. Permission would be sought from the United Nations secretariat to share the terms of reference of WGDT, as it was an internal document.

5.6 The Council **noted** the report contained in Document C25/52.

# 6 Strengthening ITU's regional presence (Document [C25/25(Rev.1)](https://www.itu.int/md/S25-CL-C-0025/en))

6.1 The Deputy to the Director of the Telecommunication Development Bureau (BDT) introduced Document C25/25(Rev.1), which reported on the contribution of ITU's regional presence to the fulfilment of the Union's mandate and on regional work towards the implementation of the ITU strategic plan, the Kigali Action Plan and regional initiatives. It highlighted synergies between ITU regional offices and BDT in planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of activities and projects. Further information was available in Telecommunication Development Advisory Group (TDAG) Documents [TDAG‑25/2](https://www.itu.int/md/D22-TDAG32-C-0002/) and [TDAG‑25/24(Rev.1)](https://www.itu.int/md/D22-TDAG32-C-0024/en). Reporting on the regional initiatives could be found in Document [TDAG‑25/INF/4(Rev.1)](https://www.itu.int/md/D22-TDAG32-INF-0004/en).

6.2 Councillors and observers highlighted the important work carried out by the regional and area offices in support of both the regional initiatives and national projects, as well as in preparation for major ITU conferences and assemblies. The regional presence was key in advancing, *inter alia*, technical cooperation, capacity building, digital skill development, strengthening of ICT infrastructure, disaster risk reduction and response, universal and meaningful connectivity, cybersecurity and broadband mapping. Several councillors and observers called for further strengthening of the capacity of regional and area offices and enhanced coordination with and among the Bureaux, with one councillor stressing that physical proximity brought greater impact, and one observer calling for increased attention to the needs of developing countries. One councillor requested an analysis of, and formulation of proposals on, any gaps and obstacles experienced in implementation of projects. A further councillor called for increased presence for the benefit of Pacific Island states.

6.3 Some councillors questioned, however, what appeared to be unequal geographical distribution of Sector activities and staff. While Telecommunication Standardization Bureau (TSB) staff had been seconded to other offices, the Radiocommunication Bureau (BR) had no regional or area office representation. One councillor wondered whether that was indicative of prioritization or a lack of resources. Several councillors said that distribution of financial resources, staff and activities should be equal across the regions, while one councillor called for strategic allocation based on regional priorities and efficient use of human resources. Another councillor requested full information on regional and area office staffing, in line with PP Resolution 25 (Rev. Bucharest, 2022). Including such information in the report would make it easier to track alignment of regional office staffing with countries' evolving priorities. A further councillor requested fully disaggregated data on the fellowship programme to ensure fair, equitable and inclusive distribution across the three Sectors.

6.4 One councillor said that further measures should be put in place to ensure that all Member States could participate equally in the Sectors' study groups, in particular developing countries for whom travelling to Geneva was difficult. In addition, she encouraged the Regional Office for the Americas to continue its conference preparatory work and called for the organization of interregional events to facilitate alignment in the build-up to major conferences.

6.5 Several councillors highlighted the contributions their countries were making to the ITU regional presence. As well as regional development forums and preparatory meetings hosted in Hungary, Jordan, Kenya, Kyrgyzstan, Paraguay and Thailand, China had hosted thematic workshops, including one on national frequency allocations, and Japan would host a regional workshop on disaster risk reduction and was promoting a green ICT initiative, involving workshops across multiple regions. In addition, the Philippines had hosted the regional celebration of Girls in ICT Day and India was committed to strengthening the presence of the Area Office in Delhi. It was recommended that the report reflect contributions of Member States to the work of the regional offices.

6.6 The Director of BDT thanked the various Member States for their cooperation and collaboration in regional events and activities and also expressed appreciation for the contributions of partners to cooperation and resource mobilization efforts. He attributed the perceived imbalance in Sector activities across the regions to greater incorporation of input from TDAG into the report. Doing the same with reports from TSAG and the Radiocommunication Advisory Group would likely demonstrate greater balance. He said that the secretariat could provide disaggregated information on fellowships. A recent cyberdrill organized in partnership with the United Arab Emirates had involved 136 countries. He recalled that TDAG had produced a table linking activities to regional initiatives.

6.7 He welcomed calls to strengthen the capacity of regional and area offices but noted financial constraints. The regional and area offices supported the work of all three Bureaux. The TSB regional presence in Africa and the Asia and the Pacific regions was part of a pilot programme, involving secondment of TSB staff and recruitment of local staff to support meetings and other events. It was anticipated to extend the programme to other regions. The secondment programme was a low-cost innovation introduced by TSB, which might also be considered by BR, but there was limited budget available. Experts and consultants were also occasionally recruited to support regional offices. Information on staffing could be found in the Human Resources Management Department document ([C25/66](https://www.itu.int/md/S25-CL-C-0066/en)) before the Council.

6.8 He acknowledged the need for risk assessment in the operational plan and would develop mitigation measures with the help of the membership and the advisory groups. Project governance was also important; thus gap analysis and post-implementation assessments were carried out. Information in that regard could be made available. While certain issues were beyond the secretariat's control, it sought to be maximally efficient and effective, including use of hybrid systems.

6.9 The Director of BR said that BR worked closely with all regional offices, through its staff at headquarters, to deliver impact on radiocommunication issues, such as through regional radiocommunication seminars and other events, including subregional ones tailored to specific needs, and thematic workshops, such as ones on frequency allocation tables. Budget permitting, BR was open to increasing its regional presence, if the TSB secondment and local recruitment initiative proved successful.

6.10 The Director of TSB said that the secondment of TSB staff to regional offices had yielded positive results to date. It was planned to continue the initiative.

6.11 The Deputy to the Director of TSB said that the pilot initiative involved general service staff being recruited locally to provide support to regional and area offices, mainly for meetings and events. It had proved particularly useful during the 2024 World Telecommunication Standardization Assembly and continued to generate benefits. When selecting regional offices for additional resources, time zones were taken into account to maximize impact. Professional category staff in Addis Ababa specifically focused on providing support for bridging the standardization gap, with financial inclusion initiatives in high demand in Africa. They were providing support for the Digital Financial Services Security Lab and implementation of Financial Inclusion Global Initiative outcomes and other standards and recommendations.

6.12 The Council **noted** the report contained in Document C25/25(Rev.1).

The Secretary-General: The Chair:

D. BOGDAN-MARTIN C. FLUTUR

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