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|  | **Document IEG-WTPF-26-2/4** |
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| **English only** |
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| Contribution by Saudi Arabia (Kingdom of) and Egypt (Arab Republic of) | |
| COMMENTS ON THE SECOND DRAFT REPORT BY THE ITU SECRETARY‑GENERAL FOR WTPF-26 | |
| **Purpose**  This contribution to the ITU Secretary-General’s report for WTPF-26 highlights the importance of addressing environmental risks, such as space debris, within the "Space Connectivity" sub‑theme. Space debris presents significant challenges to the sustainability and reliability of space operations, including collision risks, increased costs, and reduced operational efficiency. The proposal suggests including a policy question to explore the impact of these risks and innovative solutions for mitigation, emphasizing WTPF as a key platform for discussing related policies and regulations.  **Action required**  The Informal Expert Group on WTPF-26 is invited to **consider** this document.  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  **References**  [*Second draft Report by the ITU Secretary-General for WTPF-26*](https://www.itu.int/md/S24-WTPF26PREP-R-0002/en) | |

Introduction

We extend our appreciation to the Secretary-General for the report. The proposed addition is designed to encourage comprehensive discussions among policymakers and stakeholders, addressing both emerging opportunities and pressing challenges. This contribution, submitted in response to the second draft of the ITU Secretary-General's report for WTPF-26, seeks to refine the policy questions under the sub-theme of 'Space Connectivity,' ensuring they align with current global priorities and challenges.

Discussion

The questions presented in the second draft effectively cover critical aspects of space connectivity but would benefit from the addition of a question that addresses the challenge of environmental risks, in particular space debris, that affect the improvement of space connectivity around the world.

Space debris significantly impacts space connectivity in several critical ways:

– Space debris poses a significant collision threat to operational satellites, which are the backbone of space-based connectivity.

– Satellites often need to perform avoidance manoeuvres to evade debris, consuming fuel and shortening their operational lifespans.

– The growing density of debris in low Earth orbit (LEO) makes it harder and riskier to launch new satellites.

– Operators face higher costs for satellite design monitoring systems, and collision-avoidance technologies.

– With the rise of mega-constellations, the risk of debris increases exponentially.

– Debris can interfere with or block the line-of-sight communication between satellites and ground stations, leading to intermittent signal disruptions.

– Space debris reduces the reliability and resilience of satellite networks, which are crucial during emergencies or natural disasters when terrestrial networks fail.

WTPF-26 is a great forum for discussing Regulations and Policies of mitigating space debris.

Proposal

The following addition are proposed to enhance the policy questions under the theme Space Connectivity:

Q/ How can environmental risks, like space debris, impact the sustainability of space operations? and what innovative approaches are being considered to mitigate these challenges?

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