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| Asia-Pacific Telecommunity Member Administrations |
| Proposed modification of WTSA-12 Resolution 70 - Telecommunication/information and communication technology accessibility for persons with disabilities |
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| **Abstract:** | In this document the Asia-Pacific Telecommunity Administrations propose modifications to Resolution 70. |

Introduction

Since WTSA-12, held in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, in November 2012, the ITU has made progress toward improving telecommunication and ICT accessibility for persons with disabilities through the operations of the Union, its partners and related activities. For example:

– The ITU and the Global Initiative for Inclusive ICTs (G3ict) jointly launched the Model ICT accessibility policy report.

– The Council Working Group on International Internet-related Public Policy Issues (CWG-Internet Issues), held open online and physical consultations ahead of the February 2016 CWG meeting regarding “Access to the Internet for Persons with Disabilities and specific needs".

– The ITU Strategic Plan 2016-2019 includes target 2.5.B: Enabling environments ensuring accessible telecommunications/ICTs for persons with disabilities should be established in all countries by 2020.

– Work toward inclusiveness in the benefits of telecommunications and ICT and bridging the digital divide for everyone including people with disabilities is identified throughout the ITU Strategic Plan and operational plans of each sector.

Beyond the ITU actions, UN system-wide actions also seek to progress telecommunication and ICT accessibility for people with disabilities. For example:

– In 2015, the UN General Assembly High-Level Meeting on the overall review of the implementation of WSIS outcomes acknowledged need for particular attention to be paid to addressing the specific information and communications technology challenges facing people including persons with disabilities and older persons, and commitment to bridging the digital and knowledge divides.

Proposal

APT Member Administrations propose amendments to Resolution 70, as provided in Annex, to reflect relevant work and activities that have concluded and new initiatives that have commenced since WTSA-12.

To ensure clarity, paragraphs that have been moved from one part of Resolution 70 to another have been reinserted as new text with revision marks. Note that:

– paragraphs *c)* to *h)* and *j)* to *k)* under the original call “*recognizing*” have been moved under the call “*taking into account*”.

– Paragraph *b)* under the original *call* “*recalling*” has been moved under the *call* “*recognizing*”.

– All paragraphs under the original *call* “*invites Member States and Sector Members*” have been moved at the end of this revised Resolution, under “*invites Member States and Sector Members*”, including a new part 6.

MOD APT/44A7/1

RESOLUTION 70 (REV. HAMMAMET, 2016)

Telecommunication/information and communication technology
accessibility for persons with disabilities

(Johannesburg, 2008; Dubai, 2012, Hammamet, 2016)

The World Telecommunication Standardization Assembly (Hammamet, 2016),

recalling

*a)* Resolution 175 (Rev. Busan, 2014) of the Plenipotentiary Conference, on telecommunication/information and communication technology (ICT) accessibility for persons with disabilities and persons with specific needs;

*b)* Resolution 58 (Rev. Dubai, 2014) of the World Telecommunication Development Conference (WTDC), on telecommunication/ICT accessibility for persons with disabilities, including persons with age-related disabilities,

recognizing

*a)* the United Nations (UN) Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD);

*b)* Resolution 70/125 of the UN General Assembly, adopted on 16 December 2015, on the ‘Outcome document of the high-level meeting of the General Assembly on the overall review of the implementation of the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society” (WSIS);

*c)* the Phuket Declaration on Tsunami Preparedness for Persons with Disabilities (Phuket, 2007), which emphasizes the need for inclusive emergency warning and disaster management systems using telecommunication/ICT facilities based on open, non-proprietary, global standards,

considering

*a)* that Article 9, on accessibility, of the UNCRPD, which entered into force on 3 May 2008, provides as follows: "To enable persons with disabilities to live independently and participate fully in all aspects of life, States Parties shall take appropriate measures to ensure to persons with disabilities access, on an equal basis with others, to the physical environment, to transportation, to information and communications, including information and communications technologies and systems, and to other facilities and services open or provided to the public, both in urban and in rural areas. These measures, which shall include the identification and elimination of obstacles and barriers to accessibility";

*b)* that §§ (2)(g) and (2)(h) of the same article of that Convention requires that States Parties take appropriate measures:

i) 9(2)(g) "to promote access for persons with disabilities to new information and communications technologies and systems, including the Internet";

ii) 9(2)(h) "to promote the design, development, production and distribution of accessible information and communications technologies and systems at an early stage, so that these technologies and systems become accessible at minimum cost";

*c)* the work of the UN Broadband Commission for Sustainable Development, in promoting inclusive societies and institutions, in particular its publication on “The ICT Opportunity for a Disability Inclusive Development Framework”, published in September 2013;

*d)* the work of the Council Working Group on International Internet-related Public Policy Issues, in particular the open online and physical consultations, on the topic of “Access to the Internet for Persons with Disabilities and specific needs” ahead of its February 2016 meeting,

considering further

*a)* that the World Health Organization estimates that more than one billion of the world's population live with some form of disability, of whom almost 200 million experience considerable difficulty in their daily lives, and it is to be expected that, in the future, disabilities will rise because of the increasing population of older persons and the risk that disability is greater among older persons;

*b)* that the UN has moved from a health and welfare perspective to an approach based on human rights, which recognizes that people with disabilities are people first, and that society places barriers upon them as opposed to their disabilities, and which includes the goal of full participation in society by persons with disabilities (Resolution 175 (Rev. Busan, 2014));

*c)* that maximizing the accessibility and usability of telecommunication/ICT services, products and terminals through universal design will increase their uptake by all persons, including persons with disabilities and older persons, and thereby increase revenues;

*d)* that United Nations General Assembly Resolution A/RES/61/106 adopting the Convention on the rights of persons with disabilities requests the Secretary-General (§ 5) "… to implement progressively standards and guidelines for the accessibility of facilities and services of the United Nations system, taking into account relevant provisions of the Convention, in particular when undertaking renovations";

*e)* the importance of cooperation between governments, the private sector and relevant organizations to promote affordable access possibilities,

taking into account

*a)* the mandate of and work carried out by the Joint Coordination Activity on Accessibility and Human Factors (JCA-AHF), established in December 2007;

*b)* the work of ITU-T Study Group 2, in particular studies under ITU-T Question 4/2, on human factors‑related issues for improvement of the quality of life through international telecommunications;

*c)* the work of ITU-T Study Group 16, in particular studies under ITU‑T Question 26/16, on accessibility to multimedia systems and services, including the recent Recommendation ITU‑T F.790 on telecommunication accessibility guidelines for older persons and persons with disabilities;

*d)* studies under Question 7/1 of the ITU Telecommunication Development Sector (ITU‑D), on access to telecommunication services for people with disabilities and specific needs;

*e)* ongoing work in the ITU Radiocommunication Sector (ITU‑R) to bridge the digital disability divide;

*f)* the publication by the Telecommunication Standardization Advisory Group (TSAG) of the guide for ITU study groups – "Considering End-User Needs in developing Recommendations";

*g)* the successful completion of work carried out by the Focus Group on Audio-visual Media Accessibility (FG-AVA), carried out under ITU-T Study Group 16, addressing the need to make audiovisual media accessible to persons with disabilities;

*h)* the Accessibility Guidelines produced by the Internet Governance Forum Dynamic Coalition on Accessibility and Disability (DCAD) sponsored by the Director of the Telecommunication Standardization Bureau (TSB), and update at the 10th Internet Governance Forum, hosted by Brazil in 2015,

noting

*a)* Resolution GSC-17/27 (revised), on telecommunication/ICT accessibility for persons with disabilities, agreed upon at the 17th Global Standards Collaboration meeting (Geneva, 2009; Halifax, 2011; Jeju, 2013);

*b)* Resolution GSC-17/26 (revised), on user needs, considerations and involvement, agreed upon at the 17th Global Standards Collaboration meeting (Boston, 2008; Halifax, 2011; Jeju, 2013);

*c)* publications of the Special Working Group on Accessibility (ISO/IEC JTC 1 SWG – Accessibility) of the Joint Technical Committee on Information Technology (JTC 1) of the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) and the International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC), as well as the Mandate 376 project teams, in identifying user needs and in developing a comprehensive inventory of existing standards as part of the ongoing effort to identify areas where research or new standards work is needed;

*d)* activities relating to the development of new standards (e.g. ISO TC 159, JTC 1 SC35, IEC TC100, ETSI TC HF, and W3C WAI), and the implementation and maintenance of existing standards (e.g. ISO 9241-171);

*e)* the joint efforts of the ITU and the Global Initiative for Inclusive ICTs (G3ICT), including the launch of the Model ICT accessibility policy report (November 2014), the release of the Report "Making TV accessible", on the occasion of the International Day of Persons with Disabilities (3 December 2011), the report on “Making Mobile Phones and Services Accessible to Persons with Disabilities (August 2012), and the e-Accessibility Policy Toolkit for Persons with Disabilities (February 2010);

*f)* various regional and national efforts to develop or revise guidelines and standards for telecommunication/ICT accessibility, compatibility and usability by persons with disabilities,

resolves

1 that ITU-T Study Group 2, Study Group 16 and JCA-AHF shall continue giving high priority to work on the relevant Questions, in accordance with Recommendation ITU-T F.790 and the guide for ITU‑T study groups: "Telecommunications Accessibility Guidelines for older persons and persons with disabilities";

2 that ITU-T study groups should consider aspects of universal design in their work, including drafting non-discriminatory standards, service regulations and measures for all persons, including persons with disabilitiesand older persons, with cross-cutting user-protection actions;

3 that all ITU-T study groups utilize the Telecommunications Accessibility Checklist, which makes it possible to incorporate the principles of universal design and accessibility,

instructs the Director of the Telecommunication Standardization Bureau

1. to report to the ITU Council on the implementation of this resolution;
2. to consider the need for an ITU workshop to be held on progress in the work and the results achieved by the study groups in charge of ICT accessibility before the next WTSA,

invites the Director of the Telecommunication Standardization Bureau

1 to identify and document examples of best practice for accessibility in the field of telecommunication/ICT for dissemination among ITU Member States and Sector Members;

2 to review the accessibility of ITU‑T services and facilities and consider making changes, where appropriate, pursuant to UN General Assembly Resolution 61/106, and to report to the Council on these matters;

3 to continue to work collaboratively on accessibility-related activities with the Directors of the Radiocommunication Bureau (BR) and the Telecommunication Development Bureau (BDT), in particular concerning awareness and mainstreaming of telecommunication/ICT accessibility standards, reporting findings to the Council as appropriate;

4 to continue to work collaboratively on accessibility-related activities with ITU‑D, in particular developing programmes that enable developing countries to introduce services that allow persons with disabilities to utilize telecommunication services effectively;

5 to work collaboratively and cooperatively with other standardization organizations and entities, in particular, in the interest of ensuring that ongoing work in the field of accessibility is taken into account, in order to avoid duplication;

6 to work collaboratively and cooperatively with disability organizations in all regions to ensure that the needs of persons with disabilities are taken into account in all standardization matters;

7 to continue the accessibility coordination and advisory function within ITU‑T in order to assist the Director of TSB in reporting the findings of the review of ITU‑T services and facilities;

8 to consider using accessibility resources in the meetings organized by ITU-T in order to encourage the participation of persons with disabilities in the standardization process,

instructs the Telecommunication Standardization Advisory Group

1 to revise the guide for ITU-T study groups – "Considering End-User Needs in developing Recommendations" and the technical paper containing the "Telecommunications Accessibility Checklist";

2 to request study groups to facilitate, in their respective work, the implementation of new software, services and proposals enabling all persons with disabilities, including persons with age-related disabilities, to effectively use telecommunication/ICT services, and relevant guidelines for end‑user needs, in order specifically to include the needs of persons with disabilities, and to update this guide on a regular basis, based on contributions from Member States and Sector Members as well as the ITU‑T study groups, as appropriate,

invites Member States and Sector Members

1 to consider developing, within their national legal frameworks, guidelines or other mechanisms to enhance the accessibility, compatibility and usability of telecommunication/ICT services, products and terminals;

2 to consider introducing services or programmes, including telecommunication relay services[[1]](#footnote-3) to enable persons with hearing and speech disabilities to utilize telecommunication services that are functionally equivalent to telecommunication services effectively;

3 to participate actively in accessibility-related studies in ITU‑T, ITU‑R and ITU‑D, and to encourage and promote self‑representation by persons with disabilities in the standardization process so as to ensure their experiences, views and opinions are taken into account in all the work of study groups;

4 to encourage the provision of differentiated and affordable service plans for persons with disabilities in order to increase the accessibility and usability of telecommunications/ICT for these persons;

5 to encourage the development of applications for telecommunication products and terminals to increase the accessibility and usability of telecommunications/ICT for persons with visual, auditory, verbal and other physical and mental disabilities;

6 to encourage industry to consider accessible features when designing telecommunications devices and services;

7 to encourage regional telecommunication organizations to contribute to the work and consider implementing the results achieved in the study groups and the workshop on this topic.

1. *Telecommunication relay services enable users of different modes of communication (e.g. text, sign, speech) to interact by providing convergence between the modes of communication, usually through human operators.* [↑](#footnote-ref-3)