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| **Contact:** | | TSB | | Email: [tsbdir@itu.int](mailto:tsbdir@itu.int) |

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| **Abstract:** | This is the report of the 16th meeting of the IEC/ISO/ITU World Standards Cooperation (WSC), held at ITU on 16 February 2017. |

**REPORT OF THE 16th MEETING OF THE   
IEC/ISO/ITU WORLD STANDARDS COOPERATION (WSC)**

**Meeting held at the ITU (Geneva) on 16 February 2017**

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**List of participants**

**ITU**

ITU Secretary-General Mr Houlin Zhao (opening only)

Director of the Telecommunication Mr Chaesub Lee (WSC Chairman)

Standardization Bureau

Director of the Radiocommunication Mr François Rancy

Bureau

Chairman Telecommunication Standardization Mr Bruce Gracie

Advisory Group (TSAG)

Deputy to the Director of the Mr Reinhard Scholl

Standardization Bureau

Study group counsellor of the Radiocommunication Mr Sergio Buonomo

Bureau

**ISO**

President Mr Zhang Xiaogang[[1]](#footnote-1)

Vice-President (policy) Mr Scott Steedman

Acting Secretary-General Mr Kevin McKinley

President-elect Mr John Walter

Secretariat Mr José Baltar

**IEC**

President Mr James M. Shannon

IEC Immediate Past-President Mr Junji Nomura

Vice-President and SMB Chairman Mr Ralph Sporer

General Secretary Mr Frans Vreeswijk

Secretariat Ms Katharine Fraga

**Excused**

ISO Vice-President (technical management) Mr Piet-Hein Daverveldt

**Agenda item 1 Opening of the meeting**

The Director of ITU’s Telecommunication Standardization Bureau, Mr Chaesub Lee, opened the 16th WSC meeting and welcomed the participants.

ITU Secretary-General, Mr Houlin Zhao, welcomed the WSC participants. Mr Zhao said that IEC, ISO and ITU drew great strength from their mutual commitment to cooperation in both the development and promotion of international standards. ITU was also very glad to have joined IEC and ISO in the organization of the World Smart City Forum in Singapore last July. Cooperation in standardization would be essential to smart cities. There was no voice in standardization with as much authority as the combined voice of IEC, ISO and ITU. Mr Zhao pointed out that it was also important to involved SMEs in the standardization process.

**Agenda item 2 Approval of draft agenda**

WSC approved the draft agenda (WSC document 159).

**Agenda item 3 WSC workshops**

**WSC Academic Day 2017**

Mr Kevin McKinley presented WSC document 160. The aim of the WSC Academic Day was to promote dialogue between universities and the international standards community, to raise awareness, to foster cooperation and joint initiatives on specific themes regarding education in standardization. Since 2010, the WSC Academic Day had been run in conjunction with the annual workshop of ICES (the International Cooperation for Education about Standardization).

The WSC Academic Day 2017 was planned on 11 August 2017 in Chicago, USA, following the ICES workshop on 9 and 10 August 2017. It will be hosted by Northwestern University, on behalf of ANSI’s committee on education (WSC document 160).

The intention of WSC Academic Day 2017 was to focus on the benefits of standards and on how education about standardization can benefit from methods and case studies highlighting the use of standards and their contribution to public welfare and organizations’ performances.

WSC noted the update.

**Academia Roundtable (end 2017 or 2018) in Asia**

Mr Kevin McKinley presented WSC document 161. The WSC Academia roundtable was designed to promote the dialogue between leading academic institutions, standards organizations and industry leaders.

The overall objective was to capture the attention of a number of world leading universities that have not yet fully embraced the opportunities presented by interaction with global standards organizations, involving deans, professors, researchers, and lecturers in a dialogue covering the increasingly synergistic fields of standardization and management in the 21st century, a subject matter that should be both of high interest and deep relevance for forward thinking institutions across sectors.

The next edition, under ISO lead, would be designed similarly to the first edition organized at the Library of Congress, Washington DC (USA).

Options for dates and venues were currently being considered. A serious option was China, around the end of 2017 or first half of 2018.

WSC noted the update.

**IEC, ISO, ITU high-level roundtable on the use of international standards in trade agreements**

Mr Frans Vreeswijk presented WSC Document 162. The idea was to organize a roundtable to promote the international standardization system of IEC, ISO and ITU. The audience would be trade agreement negotiators (senior level) and representatives of IEC, ISO and ITU. Examples of topics to be covered at the roundtable could include:

* the benefits of International Standards developed by IEC, ISO and ITU and how they support trade; “International standards” meeting the WTO-TBT “six principles” vs. the so called “Private standards”: clarity on the different roles that they play in relation to trade facilitation and public policy;
* Trade agreement negotiation challenges and how International Standards can help address them;
* The international Conformity Assessment framework supporting trade;
* International Standards supporting innovation;
* International Standards supporting the Sustainable Development Goals and their implementation in trade agreements;
* How IEC, ISO and ITU support international cooperation and understanding.

There was discussion on the best timing for such an event. While there was agreement that the given political evolution and the general move of some large economies to reduce multi-lateral trade agreements was not the most conducive climate for such a roundtable, it was also pointed out that one should not wait too long and that especially in these challenging times it was necessary to inform about the advantages of trade and the value of standards. It was emphasized that the roundtable would need to piggyback with another important event.

**Agenda item 4 World Standards Day**

**World Standards Day 2017**

Mr Frans Vreeswijk presented WSC document 163, containing the action plan for a video and poster competition for the theme of World Standards Day 2017 (14 October), “Standards make cities smarter”.

WSC noted the update.

**Theme for World Standards Day 2018**

Mr Kevin McKinley presented WSC document 164. WSC confirmed the theme for World Standards Day 2018, “The fourth industrial revolution.”

**Agenda item 5 Three-year rolling plan for WSC activities**

Mr Reinhard Scholl presented WSC document 165 and pointed out that a new item had been added, the participation in UNCTAD’s Ministerial Conference in 2020 (ISO to lead). WSC noted the three-year rolling plan for WSC activities.

**Agenda item 6 Review of lessons learnt from past activities**

WSC noted the update on lessons learned in 2016 (WSC document 166): the brainstorming session on the UN Sustainable Development Goals, the WSC roundtable on “The role of academia in the standards-making process”, the WSC Academic Day, the WSC website, and World Standards Day 2016.

**Agenda item 7 Brainstorming: For which topics can IEC, ISO and ITU best add value to international standardization?**

Mr Chaesub Lee presented WSC document 168.

For topics related to the standardization of ICT (information and communication technologies), a plethora of groups are vying with each other. Mr Lee showed examples of very fragmented standardization landscapes for cloud computing, IoT, Big Data and machine intelligence. Mr Lee raised the following questions: which value can IEC, ISO and ITU bring to such a competitive ecosystem of SDOs, forums and consortia; for which topics can IEC, ISO and ITU best add value to international standardization; and which role could WSC play.

Standardization deals with taxonomy, use cases, requirements, capabilities, functions, architectures, mechanisms, protocols, and sometimes also with code. However, standardization does not work in isolation but is part of a complex ecosystem where market trends change quickly and where regulation is usually a step behind the technologies.

Mr Lee proposed that for a given topic, IEC, ISO and ITU issue a whitepaper, e.g. on market trends, the ecosystem, or the taxonomy. Such a whitepaper would not have any normative status. It could be issued e.g. at World Standards Day and have significant impact, raising the profile of IEC, ISO and ITU.

Mr Bruce Gracie commented that the common patent policy of ITU, ISO and IEC is a great success and that IoT would be a good example to examine the scope for cooperation.

Mr Frans Vreeswijk recalled that WSC is about promoting international standardization and that each organization already had established structures for dealing with technical coordination. He advised that IEC has a Market Strategy Board which develops one or two whitepapers per year on technological and market needs in IEC’s field of activity and that this was a substantial effort, involving the IEC membership. He suggested that the WSC member organizations develop papers or brochures to demonstrate how together the three organizations’ international standardization system addresses important societal issues, such as the Sustainable Development Goals.

Mr Scott Steedman supported Mr Vreeswijk’s proposal, stating that it was important to focus on the target audience and that the scope of such a paper should be high-level.

Mr Kevin McKinley pointed out that the ISO Council wanted to see new forms of cooperation among IEC, ISO and ITU. Mr McKinley said that he would share the paper of the ISO Council with all participants. Mr McKinley said that the strategic messaging of the three organizations needs to be strengthened.

Mr Chaesub Lee said that it was important for a message to also contain content and that the audience should be pointed to where more detailed information could be found.

WSC reaffirmed that it should focuse on aspects of promotion and agreed that the CEOs of IEC, ISO and ITU would discuss the development of a high level whitepaper to be issued by the three organizations. It was proposed that the topic for a first whitepaper should be the role of International Standards in the modern economy.

WSC agreed that a joint communication be issued by the Presidents of IEC, ISO and ITU to national members, encouraging collaboration between the respective members at the national level. (Subsequent note: ITU suggests that, for ITU, the joint communication be issued by the Director of the Telecommunication Standardization Bureau.)

**Agenda item 8 Date of next meeting**

WSC agreed that the next WSC meetings would take place on Thursday 15 February 2018 (Secretariat IEC) and Thursday 21 February 2019 (Secretariat ISO) (WSC document 167, ITU).

**Agenda item 9 Any other business**

ISO President-elect Mr John Walter announced that Mr Kevin McKinley, acting Secretary-General of ISO, would leave ISO at the end of April 2017. He thanked Mr McKinley for his 13 years of service for ISO. Mr McKinley said that he enjoyed the collaboration with IEC and ITU over the past years. The WSC delegates applauded Mr McKinley and wished him all the best in his future career.

**Agenda item 10 Close of meeting**

Mr Lee thanked all the WSC members for their participation and closed the meeting.

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1. Accompanied by his assistant, Mr Zhu Jianwei. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)