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| PLENARY MEETING | Addendum 4 toDocument 35-E |
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| African Telecommunication Union Administrations |
| Proposed modifications to Resolution 32 |
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| **Abstract:** | ATU proposes to enhance and strengthen the use of the EWM, set appropriate indicators and statistics to measure their efficiency and raise awareness on the available guidelines on EWM. |
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RESOLUTION 32 (Rev. Geneva, 2022)

Strengthening electronic working methods for the work of the ITU Telecommunication Standardization Sector

(Montreal, 2000; Florianópolis, 2004; Johannesburg, 2008; Dubai, 2012; Hammamet, 2016; Geneva, 2022)

The World Telecommunication Standardization Assembly (Geneva, 2022),

considering

*a)* the rapid pace of technology change and the consequent need for improved and more rapid standards development;

*b)* that electronic working methods (EWM) enable open, rapid and easy collaboration between participants in the activities of the ITU Telecommunication Standardization Sector (ITU‑T);

*c)* that the implementation of EWM capabilities and associated arrangements will have significant benefits for the ITU‑T membership, including resource-limited individuals, organizations and states, by allowing them timely and effective access to standards information and the standards-making and approval process;

*d)* that EWM will be advantageous in improving communication among members of ITU‑T and between other relevant standardization organizations and ITU, towards globally harmonized standards;

*e)* the key role of the Telecommunication Standardization Bureau (TSB) in providing support to EWM capabilities;

*f)* the decisions contained in Resolution 66 (Rev. Dubai, 2018) of the Plenipotentiary Conference;

*g)* the budgetary difficulty developing countries[[1]](#footnote-1)1 have in participating actively in face-to-face ITU‑T meetings;

*h)* Resolution 167 (Rev. Dubai, 2018) of the Plenipotentiary Conference, which resolves that ITU should further develop its facilities and capabilities for remote participation by electronic means in appropriate meetings of the Union, including working groups created by the Council;

*i)* Resolution 73 (Rev. Hammamet, 2016) of WTSA, on ICTs and climate change and, in particular, recognizing *g)* thereof, concerning energy-efficient working methods;

*j)* that the use of EWM helps the environment and plays a role in the United Nations Environment Programme, and its "Greening the Blue",

noting

*a)* the desire of members to receive documents in electronic format in a timely manner and the need to reduce the increasing amount of hard copy documentation generated during meetings and dispatched by mail;

*b)* that many forms of EWM have already been implemented by ITU‑T, such as electronic document submission and the electronic forum service;

*c)* that there are still some difficulties in conducting e‑meetings, due to persistent or intermittent deterioration in quality of service, in particular in meetings with live interpretation;

*d)* the desire of ITU‑T members to conduct electronic meetings;

*e)* the increasing use of mobile devices by members in meetings and elsewhere;

*f)* the advantage to the membership of facilitating greater electronic participation in the development and approval of Recommendations, in particular by members unable to participate in study group meetings in Geneva and elsewhere;

*g)* the difficulties in terms of bandwidth availability and other constraints, particularly in developing countries;

*h)* the difficulties in searching for documents and/or information relevant to a specific subject, topic or issue, and the need for a smart solution for classification and easy mining of such documents and/or information;

*i)* the economies possible from enhancing ITU‑T EWM capabilities (e.g. reduced costs for distribution of paper documentation, travel costs, ITU‑T logistics costs, etc.);

*j)* the encouragement by other telecommunication standardization organizations of collaboration using EWM;

*k)* that the alternative approval process (AAP) (Recommendation ITU‑T A.8) is conducted primarily by electronic means,

recognizing

*a)* that the current status of interactive remote participation (IRP) allows "remote intervention" rather than "remote participation", insofar as a remote participant cannot take part in decision-making;

*b)* that due to the outbreak of the novel coronavirus COVID-19 several ITU meetings were convened completely virtually while conferences had to be postponed;

*c)* that managing electronic meetings from the regional offices can facilitate regional coordination, in order to promote greater participation by Member States in the work of ITU-T study groups,

resolves

1 that the principal EWM objectives of ITU‑T are:

• that collaboration between members on development of Recommendations should be by electronic means;

• that TSB, in close collaboration with the ITU Telecommunication Development Bureau (BDT), should provide facilities and capabilities for EWM at ITU‑T meetings, workshops and training courses, particularly to assist developing countries that have bandwidth limitations and other constraints, including remote participation and electronic access, such as via LINUX-based platforms;

• to encourage electronic participation of developing countries in ITU‑T meetings, by providing simplified facilities and guidelines, and by waiving any expenses for those participants, other than the local call or Internet connectivity charges;

• to promote equal access to ITU-T EWM;

• that TSB, in close collaboration with BDT, should provide facilities and capabilities for EWM at ITU‑T meetings, workshops and training courses, and encourage participation of developing countries, by waiving, within the credits that the Council is empowered to authorize, any expenses for those participants, other than the local call or Internet connectivity charges;

• that TSB should provide all members of ITU‑T with appropriate and ready access to electronic documentation for their work, including a global, unified and consolidated view of document traceability;

• that TSB should provide appropriate systems and facilities to support the conduct of ITU‑T's work by electronic means;

• that all activities, procedures, studies and reports of ITU‑T study groups be posted on the ITU‑T website so as to facilitate navigation to find all relevant information;

• to consider developing a mobile‑friendly version of the ITU‑T website to facilitate easy access by smart mobile devices to information;

• to simplify and facilitate enhanced searching for documents and/or information;

• to reinforce the use of videoconferencing and virtual conferencing;

• to guarantee a seamless continuity of the work of ITU-T in force majeure situations;

• to provide necessary assistance to developing countries in offering remote participation facilities in case they host meetings and/or workshops of ITU-T study groups and/or regional groups; and

• to further promote the standardization activities and publications of ITU-T using electronic means;

2 that these objectives should be systematically addressed in an EWM Action Plan, including individual action items identified by the ITU‑T membership or TSB, and prioritized and managed by TSB with the advice of the Telecommunication Standardization Advisory Group (TSAG);

3 that EWM could, in rare cases, such as force majeure situations, be used to replace physical meetings, after careful consideration with all regions, including TSAG, study group meetings, focus group meetings,

instructs

1 the Director of TSB to:

• maintain the EWM Action Plan to address the practical and physical aspects of increasing the EWM capability of ITU‑T;

• identify and review costs and benefits of the action items on a regular basis;

• report to each meeting of TSAG on the status of the Action Plan, including the results of the cost and benefit reviews described above;

• provide automatically generated statistics related to the participation to ITU-T virtual meetings and remote participation to ITU-T physical meetings and workshops, as well as to the use of all available EWM facilities;

• provide reports related to the quality of remote access to ITU-T meetings and workshops through the provided tools;

• assess the capacity of currently used EWM to guarantee a seamless continuity of the work of ITU-T groups in force majeure situations and identify possible new measures;

• provide the executive authority, budget within TSB, and resources to execute the Action Plan with all possible speed;

• develop and disseminate guidelines for the use of ITU‑T EWM facilities and capabilities and provide related tutorials if deemed necessary in the six (6) ITU official languages;

• raise awareness on the available guidelines and rules related to remote participation to ITU‑T meetings, including those in Supplement 4 to A series Recommendations;

• take action, in order to provide appropriate electronic participation or observation facilities (e.g. webcast, audioconference, webconference/document sharing, videoconference, etc.) in ITU‑T meetings, workshops and training courses for delegates unable to attend events in person, and coordinate with BDT to assist in the provision of such facilities;

• provide an ITU‑T website that is easy to navigate to find all relevant information; and in particular a classification mechanism and an enhanced search engine to extract documents and/or information that are related to a specific subject, topic or issue; and

• provide a mobile‑friendly version of the ITU‑T website;

• specify the benchmark or success criteria by which the mandate to strengthen Electronic Working Methods should be assessed;

2 TSAG to continue to:

• act as the point of contact between the ITU‑T membership and TSB on EWM matters, in particular providing feedback and advice on the contents, prioritization and implementation of the Action Plan;

• identify user needs and plan the introduction of suitable measures through appropriate subgroups and pilot programmes;

• request study group chairmen to identify EWM liaisons;

• encourage participation by all participants in the work of ITU‑T, especially EWM experts from TSAG, the study groups, TSB and appropriate ITU Bureaux and departments;

• continue its work electronically outside TSAG meetings as necessary to carry out its objectives;

• initiate a monitoring and evaluation framework to review EWM action plan implementation.

1. 1 These include the least developed countries, small island developing states, landlocked developing countries and countries with economies in transition. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)