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| **Contact:** | | | Bruno Ramos Deputy to Director BDT and Chief of Department BDT / DDR, a.i. | Tel: +41 22 730 6099 E-mail: [bruno.ramos@itu.int](mailto:bruno.ramos@itu.int) | |

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| **Keywords:** | Regional Offices; Africa; Americas; Arab states; Asia and the Pacific; Commonwealth of Independent States; Europe; |
| **Abstract:** | This document summarizes contribution of the ITU Regional Offices to the implementation of the ITU-T four-year rolling operational plan as requested by the Resolution 25 (Rev. Bucharest, 2022) of the ITU Plenipotentiary Conference. |

**1 Introduction: ITU Regional Presence**

ITU has offices in the six BDT regions:

* [Africa](https://www.itu.int/itu-d/sites/africa/)
* [Americas](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Regional-Presence/Americas/Pages/default.aspx)
* [Arab states](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Regional-Presence/ArabStates/Pages/default.aspx)
* [Asia and the Pacific](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Regional-Presence/asiapacific/Pages/default.aspx)
* [Commonwealth of Independent States](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Regional-Presence/CIS/Pages/default.aspx)
* [Europe](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Regional-Presence/Europe/Pages/default.aspx)

[ITU Regional presence](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Pages/Regional-Presence.aspx) counts as of today an overall of thirteen field offices, which include five regional offices in Addis Ababa (Africa), Bangkok (Asia and the Pacific), Brasilia (Americas), Cairo (Arab States), Moscow (CIS countries), and the ITU office for Europe at ITU headquarters, as well as eight area offices, located in Africa, Americas and Asia and the Pacific.

The revised Resolution 25 (Rev. Bucharest, 2022) on strengthening the ITU regional presence, mentioned in section 1 below, has enhanced the need for a stronger regional presence.

Regional and area offices play a key role in facilitating discussions on regional matters and in the dissemination of information and results of activities of all three Sectors of the Union and the General Secretariat, while avoiding the duplication of such functions with headquarters, and collaborating with the regional telecommunication organizations to make synergies and avoid duplication of activities and efforts.

2 ITU Plenipotentiary Resolution 25 (Rev. Bucharest, 2022)

ITU Plenipotentiary Resolution 25 (Rev. Bucharest, 2022) “Strengthening the ITU regional presence” confirms the reporting mandates for the Regional and Area offices to the advisory groups of each Sectors:

“further resolves

*3 that regional and area offices shall regularly provide reports to the Sector advisory groups, as appropriate, and to inform the Directors of BR, TSB and BDT on regional activities related to their respective Sectors,*

3 TSB mechanisms of coordination with the Regions

At the initiative of the TSB Director, conference calls and face-to-face meetings were organized whenever possible, on a regular basis between the regional and areas offices and the TSB senior management, covering each time overviews, updates, and briefings of activities organized by each TSB department in the various regions.

These coordination activities, as well as the establishment of a TSB Focal Point for the Regions (reference to the instructs the Directors of the Radiocommunication Bureau and the Telecommunication Standardization Bureau), were conducted keeping in mind the One ITU concept and implementation, with the goal of improving coordination and increasing the efficiency of the overall operations, events and activities in the Standardization Sector in each of the Regions.

The use of this coordination mechanism is a tool that has led to a significant improvement in the overall coordination with regional and areas offices in terms of events and activities.

4 Africa – Regional Office for Africa

To implement World Telecommunication Standardization Assembly (WTSA) [Resolution 100 (Geneva, 2022)](https://www.itu.int/pub/T-RES-T.100-2022), “A common emergency number for Africa”, TSB and the Regional Office for Africa has consulted Member States on the opportunity to use a single primary emergency number or to use the common emergency number as a secondary alternative emergency number. Further to the compilation of a background study, and in preparation for the 2024 ITU-T Study Group 2 regional rapporteur group meeting, Member States have been asked to update information on emergency numbers in use in Africa in the ITU-T maintained database of emergency numbers.

The Regional Office is collaborating with the Standardization Bureau on the DFS Security Lab actively engaging with regulators in 14 African countries, including the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Eswatini, Ethiopia, Gambia, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Nigeria, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia, and Zimbabwe. This collaboration primarily focuses on enhancing digital financial services (DFS) security, with the ITU's DFS security guidelines being adopted by regional entities like EACO and CRASA. EACO integrated these guidelines during their 25th Congress in Burundi, and CRASA formalized their adoption at their 12th AGM in the Democratic Republic of Congo, signifying a move towards localizing the recommendations in respective countries. 8 security clinics have been in Africa and 2 labs for Uganda and Tanzania setup. The regional office continues to support the lab by engaging regulators in other countries to benefit from the lab.

The Regional Office in coordination with the Standardization Bureau organized follow up discussions in October 2023 with UNCDF Ethiopia Country Office to explore possible areas of collaboration to advance digital financial inclusion in Ethiopia. As a next step, it has been proposed that a DFS (Digital Financial Services) Security Clinic and webinar will be delivered to DFS stakeholders in Ethiopia tentatively in the first quarter of 2024 to share knowledge on the recommendations and best practices for regulators and providers to foster a resilient DFS ecosystem and enhanced consumer protection.

Furthermore, the regional office has actively supported the TSB’s meetings and events in the region (increased participation numbered 384 participants from about 20 countries as a whole) as well as coordination with partners like the African Telecommunication Union (ATU); the African ICT Consumers Network (AICN), the African Organization for Standardization (ARSO) and some of the Regional Economic Communities (RECs).

* Joint Coordination Activity on Internet of Things and Smart Cities and Communities (JCA-IoT and SC&C) 12 September 2023, Arusha, Tanzania
* ITU-T Focus Group on metaverse (FG-MV) Special session on FG-MV, 12 September 2023, Arusha, Tanzania
* 3rd ITU Forum on “Cities and the metaverse: shaping a citiverse for all” 13 September 2023, Arusha, Tanzania
* ITU-T SG11 Regional Group for Africa (SG11RG-AFR) 13 - 15 September 2023 (virtual)
* ITU-T SG20: Internet of things (IoT) and smart cities and communities (SC&C) 13 - 22 September 2023, Arusha, Tanzania
* Ninth SG13 Regional Workshop for Africa on “Standardization of Future Networks and Emerging Network Technologies: African perspectives” 19 - 20 September 2023, Abidjan, Cote D’Ivoire
* ITU-T SG2 Regional Group for Africa - ITU-T SG2RG-AFR workshop and meeting, 20 - 22 September 2023, Abidjan, Cote D’Ivoire
* ITU-T SG2 Regional Group for Africa - Regional workshop for Africa on "IoT/M2M numbering", 20 September 2023, Abidjan, Cote D’Ivoire
* ITU-T SG13 Regional Group for Africa (SG13 RG-AFR) 21 - 22 September 2023, Abidjan, Cote D’Ivoire
* Regional Cybersecurity Summit for Africa - 20 - 23 November 2023, Kampala, Uganda
* ITU-T SG17 Regional Group for Africa (SG17RG-AFR) - 23 November 2023 (Held as part of the Regional Cybersecurity Summit for Africa)

5 Americas – Regional Office for the Americas

#### The ITU Regional Office for the Americas coordinates closely with TSB on activities carried out in the Americas region. Consultations are held at the operational level, wherever relevant or needed. The ITU Regional Office for the Americas has also been providing support to the TSB with CITEL and with regional standardization bodies.

#### What follows are some of the specific activities that the Regional Office coordinated/assisted TSB with:

**Accessibility**

* The regional event “Accessible Americas: ICTs for ALL” takes place every year in November and represents a knowledge sharing platform on the development of ICT accessibility in benefit of countries and institutions and provides good practices in digital inclusion. TSB supported the event by providing expertise to the event particularly in the field of Accessibility standards for products and services” including trend topics such as accessibility as a relevant requirement in the metaverse and Artificial Intelligence in service of Assistive Technology.

* In 2023 “Accessible Americas: ICT for ALL” was carried out in Varadero, Cuba, from 8 to 10 November 2023, as a presential event.

**Policy and Regulation & Industry**

* The TSB Director participated in the Open Networks Seminar, held on August 9th, 2023, by the National Telecommunications Agency (Anatel) and the Japanese Embassy in Brazil. The main objective of the event was to exchange experiences and encourage debate about the industry's needs for an open network that meets the expectations of an interoperable and secure environment. The director participated in the session “Open Networks: Disaggregation and network virtualization” and spoke about Open Networks: Perspectives from ITU and Mobile Operator Experience.
* From 28 to 29 September 2023, was organized the ITU-T SG3 Regional Group for Latin America and the Caribbean (SG3RG-LAC) Meeting, in coordination with the Americas Regional Office within the framework of ITU Policy and Economics Colloquium IPEC-23.
* The third SG9 meeting in this study period, was held in Colombia, Bogota from 14 to 23 November 2023 at the kind invitation of the *Comisión de Regulación de Comunicaciones* of Colombia. SG9 was attended by 56 participants (33 remotely connected). TSB Director joined remotely to provide the TSB Director’s opening remarks at the SG9 Plenary. This was the second SG9 meeting held in the regions (previously in Bangalore, India), organized in Colombia to foster the organization of the ITU workshop on the Future of TV for the Americas (17 November 2023).

**Coordination meeting with subregional telecom organizations**

* COMTELCA: ITU Central America Area Office organized a bilateral meeting (Q2) with Telecom authorities of Mexico, Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, Panama, and Dominican Republic to exchange views on the ways to strengthening the relationship between TSB and COMTELCA and bilaterally between TSB and each country of the listed above.
* Collaboration from the ITU field offices in the Americas in the review and comments to the Draft Executive Briefing on CitiVerse that was shared with the management team of FG-MV.
* ITU field offices in the Americas continue to coordinate outreach, promotion, and support activities for the three ITU sectors, including the TSB in alliance with regional and subregional organizations, like CITEL, COMTELCA and CTU.

**Capacity Development Activities**

* ITU Field offices in the Americas, continue to coordinate and support the Capacity Development activities, that includes ITU Academy Offer, and their promotion in Americas Member States.
* The regional office will coordinate the actions necessary to promote membership in the 3 sectors of the ITU including ITU-T.

#### 6 Arab States - Regional Office for the Arab States

The ITU Regional Office for the Arab have continued close coordination with TSB on all activities carried out in the Arab region.

Coordination calls with the TSB Director and TSB Management team have been held as frequent as possible. They were supplemented by consultations at the operational level wherever relevant.

ITU Arab regional office have regular coordination with Arab League of Arab States’s Standardization Team (AST) and TSB for WTSA-24 preparations. In this regard, the following meetings have been coordinated in collaboration with TSB:

* The 19th of Arab Standardization Team (AST) meeting for Preparation of WTSA-24, 4th Jan 2024

ITU Arab regional office is promoting TSB activities in the Arab Region and on regular basis through all the regional communications channels including but not limited to, the official regional twitter account and regional member states what’s-up group. In addition, the following activities have been implemented by the ITU Office for the Arab in collaboration with TSB:

* Africa Smart Cities Investment Summit in Kigali, Rwanda from 7 to 9 of September 2023. As part of ITU's engagement in the summit, a session titled "Building Resilience and Inclusion into Smart City Initiatives: Leaving No One Behind in Times of Crisis" was organized, featuring TSB as the keynote speaker. Additionally, ITU contributed to the session titled "The Future and Dignity of Work: Building an Inclusive 21st-Century Workforce".
* Project on Promote development of Smart Sustainable Cities & Communities Telecom Infrastructure in Egypt. After engaging in consultations with TSB and dialogues with the Government of Egypt, represented by NTRA, the ITU regional office team effectively completed the formulation of the project document and the FCA. The signing of the project is anticipated to take place by the end of December 2023.
* Coordinated with TSB to identify an expert for the assessment study on immersive technologies in Jordan in collaboration with UNESCWA.
* ITU Regional Workshop on Economic & Policy Issues of Digital Transformation, Manama, Bahrain, 29 January 2023
* The ITU-T SG9 Meeting and the ITU Workshop on "The Future of Television for South Asia, Arab, and Africa Regions" took place from May 9 to May 18, 2023. The Programme Committee of this workshop included the ITU Regional Office for Arab states. The ITU Regional Office played a crucial role in the facilitation of speakers from the region for this workshop.
* UNECE-ITU Symposium on the Future Networked Car (FNC), Doha, Qatar, 6 October 2023
* Inter-regional Standardization Forum on Operational Issues on Numbering, Emergency Service and OTTs, Dubai, United Arab Emirates, 22 October 2019
* Joined the efforts with TSB to organize the Green Digital Action during COP28, Dubai, UAE, Nov 2023

Furthermore, ITU Arab regional office has promoted and facilitated the engagement of ITU members in the following ITU-T Regional Study Groups:

* ITU SG17 Regional Group for the Arab Region RGS17 on cybersecurity, Egypt, 18 May 2023.
* ITU-T SG3 Regional Group for the Arab Region (SG3RG-ARB), Virtual, 20 June 2023
* ITU SG20 Regional Group for the Arab Region (SG20RG-ARB), Virtual, 1 August 2023

#### 7 Asia and the Pacific - Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific

#### The ITU Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific coordinates closely with TSB on activities carried out in the Asia-Pacific region. Consultations are held at the operational level, wherever relevant or needed. The ITU Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific has also been providing support to the TSB with APT and with regional standardization bodies.

#### What follows are some of the specific activities that the Regional Office coordinated/assisted TSB with:

**Artificial Intelligence**

* ITU Regional Office joined the Seventh South - East Asia Multi-Stakeholder Forum on "Reinforcing the 2030 Agenda and Eradicating Poverty in Times of Multiple Crises: The Effective Delivery of Sustainable, Resilient, and Innovative Solutions in Asia- Pacific" and Associated Events from 06 to 08 November 2023, in Bangkok, Thailand. At this event, ITU presented in Session 1: SDG 1 Reducing Inequalities: Artificial Intelligence (AI) for Development – Catalyzing Inclusive Development & Sustainable Progress in Southeast Asia. ITU Regional Office highlighted the work of ITU-T in AI, including AI for Good and the ITU-T Y.3000-series – Artificial intelligence standardization roadmap.

**Project on Enhancing the Development of Standards and Frameworks for Critical Technologies in Southeast Asia**

* Following consultations with TSB and discussions with the Government of Australia’s Department for Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), the ITU team successfully signed a grant agreement on 4 June 2021 with DFAT on this project, under its Cyber and Critical Tech Cooperation Program. This project was successfully extended in 2022 for the full four-year duration and is now slated to end in June 2024.
* The project focuses on Artificial Intelligence (AI) and the potential gender and social biases linked with them. The project will enhance the development and implementation of AI standards, frameworks, policies, and initiatives at regional and national levels across Southeast Asia, which considers diverse stakeholders needs. The project’s initial focus will be on the Indonesia, Malaysia. The Philippines, and Thailand, and will also look at the regional context in Southeast Asia.
* The Project is built on four outputs:
  + **Indicative Output 1**: Research outputs on the state of critical technology standards, frameworks, policies, and initiatives, including the capacity gaps among stakeholders, in Southeast Asia.
  + **Indicative Output 2:** Training/Workshops and knowledge sharing activities on Critical Technologies for policymakers in primary beneficiary countries in Southeast Asia.
  + **Indicative Output 3:** Multi-stakeholder Network of Female Policy Makers created at the subregional, regional and global levels.
  + **Indicative Output 4:** Country-specific support provided to assist the policymakers and regulators in the development and implementation of standards, frameworks, policies, and initiatives.

**ITU-T Regional Group Meetings for SG3 and SG5 on 11-12 September in Bangkok, Thailand**

* ITU Regional Office closely coordinated with TSB colleagues to arrange the Regional Groups of ITU-T Study Group 3 (Tariff and accounting principles and international telecommunication/ICT economic and policy issues) and ITU-T Study Group 5 (EMF, environment, climate action, sustainable digitalization, and circular economy) meetings, from 11-12 September 2023, in Bangkok, Thailand. This includes a half-day Bridging the Standardization Gap (BSG) hands-on training session on 11 September (AM), open to all interested parties.
* The regional group meetings were hosted by the Office of the National Broadcasting and Telecommunications Commission (NBTC), Thailand. The meetings were also held back-to-back with the ITU Regional Development Forum for Asia-Pacific, organized by BDT, to facilitate participation to both meetings.

**ITU-T Pre and Post Sessions at the Regional Development Forum for Asia-Pacific**

* ITU Regional Office closely coordinated with TSB colleagues during the organization of the Regional Development Forum (RDF)for Asia-Pacific from 13-15 September in Bangkok, Thailand, back-to-back with the ITU-T Regional Group Meetings for SG3 and SG5.
* During the RDF, the following sessions were organized by TSB:
  + Post-Sessions: Digital Financial Services (DFS) Security Clinic (13 and 14 September)
  + Pre-session: Presentation on “Focus Group - Costing Models for Affordable Data Services” (14 September)
  + Pre-session: The value of FIDO certified product, service and professionals: Present and Future (15 September)

**2023 Interregional CyberDrill for Europe and Asia-Pacific**

* The ITU Regional Offices for Europe and for Asia-Pacific organized the 2023 Interregional CyberDrill for Europe and Asia-Pacific from 28 November to 1 December 2023 in Limassol, Cyprus.
* During the Day 2 trainings, a session was organized on the Opportunities of Engaging with ITU Standards in Cybersecurity, where the discussion focused on the key principles and components of ITU-T standards on cybersecurity.

**Preparations for WTSA 2024**

* ITU Regional Office and the Area Office coordinated with TSB for their World Telecommunication Standardization Assembly (WTSA) 2024 site visit, from 3-5 October 2023 in New Delhi, India. The Area Office assisted with the field visits to the event venue as well as various hotels for WTSA 2024.
* During this site visit, TSB presented on WTSA and ITU-T to the United Nations Country Team in India on 5 October.

**Co-ordination and Participation in External Events to Highlight ITU-T**

* ITU Regional Office joined the 45th Pacific Area Standards Congress meeting in New Caledonia from 31 May - 2 June 2023, on behalf of TSB Director. ITU Regional office presented on 1 June together with ISO and IEC, regarding how to strengthen and increase regional engagement with ISO, IEC, ITU.
* ITU Regional Office joined the G20 Standards Dialogue organized by the Bureau of Indian Standards on 2-3 November 2023 in New Delhi, India, on behalf of TSB. ITU Regional Office served physically as a moderator in the session on Technical Regulations and Good Regulatory Practices.
* ITU Regional Office joined the Building Industry Consulting Service International (BICSI) Conference on ICT held from 14-15 November 2023 in Tokyo, Japan. On behalf of TSB, ITU Regional Office presented on the work of ITU-T and how stakeholders can participate, including through sector and academia membership.

#### 8 Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) - Regional Office for the CIS Region

ITU Regional Office for CIS has continued close coordination with TSB on all activities carried out in the CIS region. Calls with the TSB Director and TSB Management team have been held on a regular basis.

ITU Regional Office for CIS continued to facilitate regular coordination between TSB and the Regional Commonwealth in the Field of Communication (RCC). ITU Regional Office for CIS follows the preparatory process for WTSA and provides any assistance necessary to ensure regional engagement.

**Digital Transformation:**

* TSB Deputy Director delivered a keynote presentation at the ITU-D Regional Forum on Digital Transformation (Issyk-Kul, Kyrgyzstan, 28-30 August 2023). The Forum attracted over 150 participants from 7 countries and focused on national digital transformation strategies, policy and regulation, and ICT statistics.

**Future Networks and C&I:**

* ITU Regional Office for CIS with the support of TSB organized a Roundtable on VoLTE interconnection for telecom operators and policy makers in Tashkent, Uzbekistan on 24 October 2023. The Roundtable aimed to assess current progress on VoLTE interconnection in Uzbekistan and suggest next steps to speed up its deployment, including with the technical support of the ITU

**Smart Sustainable Cities:**

* ITU Regional Office for CIS organized two trainings on smart sustainable cities for local government authorities in Bobruisk (8-9 June 2023) and Lida (5-6 October) in Belarus. These trainings support the implementation of Belarus’ national smart cities program and focus on transferring best practices and knowledge accumulated by the ITU, including through U4SSC and ITU-T SG20 work.

#### 9 Europe - ITU Office for Europe

The ITU Office for Europe has continued close coordination with TSB, ensuring cross-sectoral delivery of all activities implemented at the regional level.

Coordination calls with the TSB Director and TSB Management team have been held on the regular basis.

The Europe Office continued to facilitate regular coordination between TSB and European Commission as well as TSB and Com-ITU CEPT, including TSB participation in the ITU-T Project Team of CEPT. In addition, Europe Office follows the preparatory process for WTSA and provides any assistance necessary to ensure regional engagement.

In addition, the following activities have been implemented by the ITU Office for Europe in collaboration with TSB:

* 2nd Special Session of the ITU Focus Group on Metaverse, 18 October 2023, Latvia;
* Co-creation workshop on metaverse vision for Europe, 18 October 2023, Latvia;
* ITU powered 5G Techritory 2023, 18-19 October 2023, Latvia;
* Spotlight Series on Human-Centric Digital Transformation, 9 October, 30 October, 20 November 2023 leading towards the development of a compendium;
* ITU CyberDrill for Europe, Asia and Pacific, 28 November – 1 December 2023, Cyprus;
* Accessible Europe: ICT4ALL Forum, 13-14 December 2023, Spain;

The ITU Office for Europe has continued promoting TSB activities in the Europe Region through all the regional communications channels.

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