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| DRAft New Resolution [ATU-MV] - Metaverse | | | |
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| **Abstract:** | This Contribution contains a proposed new resolution to establish a comprehensive technical/governance framework for the Metaverse that ensures its responsible development, prioritizes user rights and security, and fosters international collaboration to prevent fragmentation and maximize benefits for all developed or developing nations. | |
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Introduction

The Metaverse offers a unique opportunity for ITU-T to cement its global leadership in standardization. Leveraging the accomplishments of the Focus Group on Metaverse (FG-MV), which yielded 52 deliverables, ITU-T must continue to spearhead the development of technical and governance frameworks for this emerging digital landscape. By prioritizing user rights, security, and ethical AI development, ITU-T can cultivate a Metaverse ecosystem that benefits all stakeholders. To achieve this, ongoing collaboration with other standards development organizations (SDOs) and UN bodies is crucial. This document proposes a new WTSA-24 resolution to reinforce ITU-T's role in Metaverse standardization and foster broader collaboration.

Proposal

The new resolution is to establish a comprehensive technical/governance framework for the Metaverse that ensures its responsible development, prioritizes user rights and security, and fosters international collaboration to prevent fragmentation and maximize benefits for all developed or developing nations.

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DRAFT NEW RESOLUTION [ATU-MV] (New Delhi, 2024)

Metaverse

(New Delhi, 2024)

The World Telecommunication Standardization Assembly (New Delhi, 2024),

recognizing

a) that IRTF and IETF and other industry forums, standards-development organizations (SDOs) and partnership projects are developing technical specifications for the Internet, based on specific scopes;

*b)* the role of the ITU Radiocommunication Sector (ITU-R) in conducting studies on the technical and operational aspects of radio networks and systems for digital technologies;

*c)* the role of the ITU Telecommunication Development Sector (ITU-D) in encouraging telecommunication/information and communication technology (ICT) development at the global level, and in particular the relevant work carried out by ITU-D study groups;

*d)* the tasks executed by the International Telecommunication Union Focus Group on Metaverse based on 52 deliverables enumerated as the output of the pre-standardization activities;

*e)* the research studies conducted by relevant study groups of the International Telecommunications Union on topics related to Metaverse;

*f)* that the ITU Forum on Metaverse provides a dynamic space for exploring and discussing the groundbreaking work of the ITU FG-MV, which was held five times during the FG‑MV lifetime, from December 2022 to June 2024;

*g)* the first ‘UN Think-a-thon’ event that has been officially launched at the opening plenary of the fourth ITU Forum on Metaverse held in March 2024 by the Director of the Telecommunication Standardization Bureau (TSB), and it involves the participation of youth and universities on the topic of “Virtual Worlds Revolutionizing Smart Sustainable Cities & Communities”, coordinated by the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), United Nations International Computing Centre (UNICC), Food and Agricultural Organization of United Nations (FAO) and International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA),

considering

*a)* that the importance of the Internet in contributing to achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, in particular recalling Sustainable Development Goal 11 (SDG 11) (Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable);

*b)* that Metaverse, together with new trends in other technologies vis-à-vis emerging technologies, is creating a paradigm shift in the way people live and this shift is having a tremendous impact on our community bringing new borderless and improved experiences;

*c)* that the Metaverse is rapidly eroding the boundaries between the physical and digital realms, delivering immersive experiences that blend the virtual and real worlds. This convergence is changing our daily lives, professional landscapes, and is poised to be the mainstay of future telecommunications and ICT, applications revolutionizing our societies and industries economically, socially, and culturally;

*d)* that the challenges of inconsistent understanding, non-standardized applications, and prominent ethical issues hinder the development of Metaverse and Metaverse standardization are essential to foster the healthy development of Metaverse industry;

*e)* that various industrial sectors, including energy, transportation, healthcare, and agriculture, are collaborating to develop IoT and SC&C applications and services for the Metaverse, creating immersive and interconnected digital experiences across verticals;

*f)* that the Internet can be the key enabler for the information society and can offer the opportunity to transform the urban infrastructure, taking advantage, among other things, of the efficiencies of smart buildings and transport systems, and smart water management, working together with services for the benefit of users based on the Internet infrastructure and future development of the next generation of the Internet;

*g)* that the existing cybersecurity threats are expected to evolve in the Metaverse and that there is a need to address these threats effectively;

*h)* that the Metaverse technology is bringing significant benefits to society and the need to develop a Metaverse that is equitable and inclusive;

*i)* that Metaverse technology enables an immersive digital universe where people can interact, work and play, and consequently, vast quantities of personal data are generated and exchanged among the Metaverse platforms posing significant privacy related challenges on data protection issues,

noting

*a)* that the ITU Member States have identified significant policy responsibilities in Chapter VI of the ITU Constitution (Articles 33‑43) and in Chapter V of the Convention (Articles 36‑40), and in relevant resolutions of Plenipotentiary Conferences, which also made provision for the proposal of a new resolution;

*b)* that the International Telecommunication Regulations further describe policy and regulatory obligations incumbent upon Member States;

*c)* that No. 191C of the Convention empowers the World Telecommunication Standardization Assembly (WTSA) to assign matters within its competence to the Telecommunication Standardization Advisory Group (TSAG), indicating the action required on those matters,

resolves

*a)* to promote and strengthen the ITU-T SG’s standardization work related to enabling technologies, systems, applications, services, protocols, security features, accessibility and sustainability for Metaverse, considering recent market requirements to provide enhanced value of ITU-T deliverables such as Recommendations, technical reports, and guidelines;

*b)* to establish a Joint Coordination Activity - Metaverse (JCA-MV) to lead global initiative on Metaverse and identify gaps for the purpose of having standardization activities under relevant study groups or Telecommunication Standardization Advisory Group (TSAG) to coordinate the relevant standardization work of each ITU-T SG and collaborate with related SDOs and relevant parties outside ITU-T;

*c)* to organize ITU workshops and disseminate progress and achievements of ITU-T study groups involved in Metaverse standardization prior to the next World Telecommunications Standardization Assembly (WTSA), and to foster collaboration with industry associations, consortia, and forums involved in Metaverse systems, applications, and services;

*d)* to foster continued collaboration with international SDOs, industry forums, and relevant organizations in global projects and initiatives, this collaboration aims to accelerate the development of international telecommunication standards and reports that ensure seamless interoperability of Metaverse technologies as well as prevent duplication on works on Metaverse;

*e)* to take necessary steps to achieve a comprehensive understanding of threats and foster cooperation between governments and industry to develop a safe and secure Metaverse environment that focuses on the well-being of users;

*f)* to embrace the Metaverse, recognising its potential for economic growth, technological advancement, and societal transformation;

*g)* to ensure data privacy in Metaverse platforms by means of privacy-enhancing technologies that will empower users to maintain control over their personal data, even within virtual realms,

invites Member States

*a)* to submit contributions and continue participating actively in the work of all ITU-T study groups especially the study groups that are promoting Metaverse: Study Group 20; Study Group 17; Study Group 16; Study Group 11; Study Group 13; Study Group 3 and a new Study Group on METAVERSE;

*b)* to develop master plans and exchange use cases and best practices in order to promote the Metaverse and to promote social development and economic growth in order to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs);

*c)* to cooperate and exchange experiences and knowledge related to this topic;

*d)* to actively contribute to Metaverse-related standardization efforts and participate in relevant activities within ITU-T, ITU-R, and ITU-D as the case may be.