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| African Telecommunication Union Administrations | | | |
| PROPOSED MODIFICATIONS TO RESOLUTION 55 | | | |
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| **Abstract:** | ATU proposes to modify WTSA Resolution 55, amendments are mainly related to the activities of the Network of Women in ITU-T (NoW in ITU-T). | |
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Introduction

These amendments are mainly related to the activities of the Network of Women in ITU-T (NoW in ITU-T), formerly known as WISE, taking into account its new terms of reference and the new process for the appointment of the regional representatives of this network, which were approved during the TSAG plenary on the 26 January 2024. It was also proposed to deepen the collaboration with the Radiocommunication Bureau and the Telecommunication Development Bureau on NoW and to continue launching a dedicated Network of Women for WTSA (NoW4WTSA) campaigns prior to each WTSA in order to help increase in the number of women participating in ITU-T’s activities and holding ITU-T leadership positions.

Proposal

ATU proposes that Resolution 55 should be updated:

1 to take into account the recent renaming of WISE group to NoW in ITU-T;

2 to align with the new ToRs of NoW in ITU-T and the new process for the appointment of the regional representatives for this network (approved by TSAG meeting, January 2024);

3 to emphasize on the importance of enhancing the collaboration between the three ITU sectors on NoW.

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RESOLUTION 55 (Rev. New Delhi, 2024)

Promoting gender equality in ITU Telecommunication   
Standardization Sector activities

(Florianópolis, 2004; Johannesburg, 2008; Dubai, 2012; Hammamet, 2016; Geneva, 2022; New Delhi, 2024)

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

considering

*a)* that while standardization plays an important role in globalization and the effective development of information and communication technologies (ICTs), statistically very few women participate in international standardization processes;

*b)* that the standardization work of ITU Telecommunication Standardization Sector (ITU‑T) can be advanced most effectively through the active inclusion of women, giving them all necessary support recognizing their efforts and contributions;

*c)* the wide gender divide within the ICT sector in developing countries, not only hampers diversity and inclusivity but also limits the utilization of a wide range of perspectives and experiences, ultimately impacting the development of standards;

*d)* that there is a need to enhance and promote the active participation of women in all ITU‑T activities;

*e)* that the Telecommunication Standardization Bureau (TSB) has established the ITU Women in Standardization Expert Group (WISE), launched at the meeting of the Telecommunication Standardization Advisory Group (TSAG) in February 2016 and later renamed the Network of Women in ITU-T (NoW in ITU-T), dedicated to promoting women in standardization, telecommunications/ICTs and related fields and to recognize both men and women who have made remarkable contributions in advocating for women and supporting their work in these fields,

noting

*a)* that ITU has adopted a Gender Equality and Mainstreaming (GEM) Policy, with the aim of becoming a model organization for gender equality that leverages the power of telecommunications/ICTs to empower both women and men;

*b)* the progress made by ITU in raising awareness on gender issues, specifically over the last decade, in increasing women's participation in and contribution to international forums, in studies, projects and training, and in the establishment of an internal Gender Task Force, as well as the successful establishment by ITU of an international "Girls in ICT" day to be held every year on the fourth Thursday of April;

*c)* Resolution 70 (Rev. Bucharest, 2022) of the Plenipotentiary Conference, on mainstreaming a gender perspective in ITU and promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls through telecommunications/information and communication technologies;

*d)* Resolution 48 (Rev. Bucharest, 2022) of the Plenipotentiary Conference, on human resources management, instructing the ITU Secretary-General to update internal recruitment guidelines and procedures to facilitate the recruitment of women at ITU;

*e)* Resolution 55 (Rev. Kigali, 2022) of the World Telecommunication Development Conference, on mainstreaming a gender perspective in ITU to enhance women’s empowerment through telecommunications/ICTs;

*f)* Resolution ITU-R 72 (Dubai, 2023) of the ITU Radiocommunication Assembly, on promoting gender equality and equity and bridging the contribution and participation gap between women and men in ITU-R activities;

*g)* Resolution 1187, adopted by the ITU Council at its 2001 session, on a gender perspective in ITU human resources management, policy and practice, which requests the Secretary-General to allocate appropriate resources, within existing budgetary limits, to establish a gender unit with full-time dedicated staff;

*h)* Resolution 1327, adopted by the Council at its 2011 session, on ITU's role in ICTs and the empowerment of women and girls;

*i)* that the Secretary-General has issued an updated ITU English Language Style Guide, which addresses the use of non-discriminatory language;

*j)* that ITU, in its strategic plan, includes gender issues with a view to debating and exchanging ideas to define, throughout the organization, a concrete action plan with deadlines and goals;

*k)* the recommendation in the 2016 United Nations Joint Inspection Unit report that the "Secretary-General present to the Council for endorsement at its 2017 session an action plan to complement the Gender Equality and Mainstreaming Policy, with specific targets, indicative timelines and monitoring measures to improve gender balance, especially at senior management levels, within each component of the Union, and report annually to the Council on its implementation";

*l)* the Global Gender Gap Report (2023) from the World Economic Forum which includes the Global Gender Gap Index, helps assess how the country's resources and opportunities are distributed between women and men;

*m)* priority measures to accelerate progress towards the achievement of Sustainable Development Goals 5 (SDG 5) contained in the report “Progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals Focus on Gender Equality 2023” produced jointly by UN Women and the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs;

*n)* the Broadband Commission's recommendations (7 March 2023) draw attention to the importance of gender equality among Internet users, so that the benefits of the Internet reach everyone, this also aligns with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 5: achieving gender equality and empowering all women and girls;

*o)* the conclusions of the 68th session of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women (CSW68) devoted to gender equality and the empowerment of women under the theme “Accelerating the achievement of equality between men and women and the empowerment of all women and girls by tackling poverty and strengthening institutions and financing from a gender equality perspective”,

recalling

*a)* that a fundamental principle of the United Nations Charter adopted by world leaders in 1945 is "equal rights of men and women";

*b)* United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) Resolution E/2012/L.8, on mainstreaming a gender perspective into all policies and programmes in the United Nations system, which welcomed the development of the United Nations System-Wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-SWAP), and the 60th session of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women (March, 2016), which stressed the need to ensure women's full, equal and effective participation in all fields, and leadership at all levels of decision-making in the public and private sectors, and public, social, economic and political life;

*c)* the United Nations HeForShe initiative (2014) to involve men and boys in the promotion of gender equality;

*d)* the EQUALS Global Partnership, of which ITU is a founding member, which is made up of other United Nations agencies, governments, the private sector, academia and civil-society organizations, and which aims to reduce the gender digital divide in the world;

*e)* the United Nations International Gender Champion initiative and the ITU's Secretary-General's commitment to promote the Panel Parity Pledge;

*f)* the ITU-UN Women Gender Equality and Mainstreaming – Technology (GEM-TECH) awards, which celebrate exceptional personal or institutional achievement and innovative strategies that harness ICTs for women's empowerment,

recognizing

*a)* that society as a whole, particularly in the context of the information and knowledge society, will benefit from equal participation of women and men in policy-making and decision-making and from equal access to communication services for both women and men;

*b)* that the outcome document of the overall review of the World Summit on the Information Society acknowledged that a gender digital divide exists, called for immediate measures to achieve gender equality in Internet users by 2020, especially by significantly enhancing women's and girls' education and participation in ICTs, as users, content creators, employees, entrepreneurs, innovators and leaders, and reaffirmed a commitment to ensure women's full participation in decision-making processes related to ICTs;

*c)* that enhancing women's and girls' education and their participation in ICTs also contributes to the achievement of United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 5 (Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls);

*d)* the 2013 report of the Working Group on Broadband and Gender of the Broadband Commission for Sustainable Development: Doubling digital opportunities – Enhancing the inclusion of women and girls in the information society;

*e)* that there is a need to ensure the efficacy of standards for both men and women, as women are currently underserved by standards compared to men,

resolves

1 that ITU‑T continue efforts to ensure that all its policies, work programmes, information dissemination activities, publications, study groups, seminars, courses, assemblies and conferences reflect the commitment to gender equality, and promote gender balance:

i) for posts, including those at the Professional and higher levels in TSB;

ii) in the selection of chairmen, vice-chairmen and rapporteurs of the ITU‑T study groups and of TSAG;

2 that high priority be accorded to gender mainstreaming in the management, staffing and operation of ITU‑T, while taking into account geographical representation;

3 that ITU‑T continue to support NoW in ITU-T,

instructs the Director of the Telecommunication Standardization Bureau

1 to take the necessary steps to continue implementing the ITU GEM Policy, including, supporting the implementation of recommendations from the Joint Inspection Unit relevant to gender mainstreaming, supporting the Gender Focal Points for ITU‑T, and encouraging TSB staff to undertake relevant trainings;

2 to accelerate the integration of a gender perspective in the work of TSB in accordance with the principles already applied in ITU;

3 to accord high priority to gender mainstreaming in ITU-T management, financial assistance, staffing and operation;

4 to conduct an annual review on progress made in the Sector in advancing gender mainstreaming, including by circulating questionnaires and by collecting and reviewing statistics on ITU‑T standardization activities by gender and region, in order to identify challenges to women's participation and subsequent solutions; and to share findings with TSAG and the next world telecommunication standardization assembly;

5 to encourage the participation of women in all aspects of ITU‑T activities, and particularly the opportunity to participate in meetings, and support an increase in the number of women from all regions in ITU‑T leadership positions by:

i) encouraging the membership to include women on their delegations, by, *inter alia*, including in all circulation letters the statement, "The membership is invited to include women on their delegations whenever possible";

ii) making the selection of women for TSB positions at the Professional and higher levels a top priority;

iii) providing training on participation in meetings, writing contributions and chairing meetings;

iv) launching a dedicated Network of Women for WTSA (NoW4WTSA) campaign prior to every WTSA;

v) Establishing mentorship programmes to support women in advancing their careers within the ITU-T environment for professional growth and development;

6 to enhance the ongoing work of Now in ITU-T to ensure that all women have an opportunity to develop as ITU‑T leaders;

7 to continue posting on a public-facing Now in ITU-T webpage current information on the number of women attending Sector events, including administration or Sector Member affiliation and study group distribution, and identify the study groups in which women hold leadership positions;

8 to include gender balance as a factor in the distribution of financial assistance to attend ITU‑T meetings where resources are available;

9 to continue raising awareness on how to incorporate a gender lens in the process of standards development to help ensure that men and women can both effectively use the developed standards and expect equal results;

10 to continue supporting the ITU Secretary-General’s participation the Planet 50/50 initiative sponsored by UN Women to tackle invisible gender bias as a Geneva Gender Champion on behalf of ITU‑T;

11 to deepen collaboration with the Radiocommunication Bureau and the Telecommunication Development Bureau, specifically through the NoW initiative, with a view to share experiences and optimize resources;

12 to encourage the NoW in ITU-T to expand its membership by entreating Member States to appoint representatives at the national level who will champion NoW in ITU-T’s agenda, mentor young girls in their home countries and report to NoW in ITU-T bi-annually,

invites the Secretary-General

1 to comply with the reporting obligations, as required by UNSWAP, on ITU‑T activities aimed at promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women;

2 to continue encouraging ITU staff to take account of the gender-neutral guidelines in the ITU English Language Style Guide and to avoid, as much as possible, the use of gender-specific terms,

invites Member States and Sector Members

1 to submit candidatures for chairman/vice-chairman posts in order to support the active involvement of women as well as men in standardization groups and activities and in their own administrations and delegations;

2 to actively support and participate in the activities of TSB, including the nomination of experts and regional representatives for the NoW in ITU‑T through collaboration with the Regional Telecommunication Organizations, and further promote the use of ICTs for the socioeconomic empowerment of women and girls, and to nominate experts who will champion NoW in ITU-T’s agenda at the national level;

3 to take advantage of NoW in ITU-T initiatives and activities and implement them in their countries to help build the capacity of women in Telecommunications/ICT Standardization, in particular in developing countries;

4 to encourage and actively support ICT education with resources that encourages girls' and women's participation, and support all measures that will help prepare them for a professional career in ICT standardization, advocate for initiatives that will make ICT related career fields easier for girls to access;

5 to encourage greater participation of women delegates and foster their expertise, by assigning them relevant roles and tasks during meetings and events;

6 to encourage the adoption of proven measures to increase globally the number of women pursuing academic degrees and professional certifications at all levels in STEM fields, particularly those related to telecommunication/ICT standardization;

7 to undertake a comprehensive assessment to identify and analyze the barriers that hinder female participation in ITU-T activities, and subsequently implement tailored strategies to address these barriers, thereby fostering greater inclusivity within the organization;

8 to create a global outreach programme specifically targeting women in the telecommunications field, in order to spread awareness of the benefits and opportunities available to them through the ITU-T and the Network of Women initiative in particular;

9 to advocate for more women participation by contributing to capacity building sessions towards equipping more women with necessary knowledge and skills in ITU-T;

10 to take advantage of initiatives like Girls in ICT Day to create awareness on the benefits of women pursuing ICT career paths;

11 to develop policies which advocate for access and inclusion to ICT education and workforce which encourage gender inclusivity;

12 to develop and nurture the mindset of young girls towards ICT/telecommunication through innovative programming and pedagogical initiatives;

13 to actively support professional ICT opportunities for women by funding STEM-related internships for girls, allocating slots for girls in capacity building programmes, funding research fellowships and scholarships to study ICT/telecommunications,

instructs the Telecommunication Standardization Advisory Group

to endorse the appointment of the regional representatives of NoW in ITU-T in its first meeting of each new study period.