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| DRAFT NEW RESOLUTION [ARB-MV] - METAVERSE |
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| **Abstract:** | AST proposes new WTSA resolution promoting global standardization for the metaverse and virtual worlds, highlighting their transformative potential across industries and society, and calling for international collaboration to address challenges like interoperability and ethical concerns. |
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ADD ARB/36A30/1

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

Promoting and strengthening standardization activities for metaverse and virtual worlds

(New Delhi, 2024)

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

recalling

*a)* the relevant provisions of Article 1 of the ITU Constitution, in particular No. 6 and 13, which stipulates that one of the purposes of the Union is to promote the extension of the benefits of the new telecommunication technologies to all the world’s inhabitants, and it shall facilitate the worldwide standardization of telecommunications, with a satisfactory quality of service;

*b)* Resolution 70/1 of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) on Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;

*c)* Resolution 70/125 of the UNGA on Outcome document of the high-level meeting of the General Assembly on the overall review of the implementation of the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society;

*d)* Resolution 139 (Rev. Bucharest, 2022) of the Plenipotentiary Conference, on the Use of telecommunications/information and communication technologies to bridge the digital divide and build an inclusive information society;

*e)* Resolution 140 (Rev. Bucharest, 2022) of the Plenipotentiary Conference, on ITU’s role in implementing the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society,

considering

*a)* that metaverse, coupled with advances in various technologies, is revolutionizing the way people live and this shift is having a profound impact on society as a whole, enabling new levels of experience beyond the boundaries of the virtual and real worlds;

*b)* that metaverse and virtual worlds are spurring innovation in a wide range of areas, including industry, education, healthcare, real estate, entertainment, and more areas, creating new business models and markets;

*c)* that the spread of metaverse is breaking down barriers between the virtual and real worlds, offering immersive experiences which merge virtuality and reality, and this is causing changes across many areas from daily life to professional work environments;

*d)* that metaverse and virtual worlds are expected to play the most essential role in constructing and realizing the future of telecommunication/ICT that revolutionize peoples' lives, society, and industries economically, socially, and culturally;

*e)* that metaverse and virtual worlds are anticipated to offer substantial opportunities across sectors such as healthcare, manufacturing, education, and entertainment, while also presenting new and complex challenges that need to be addressed;

*f)* that the challenges of inconsistent understanding, non-standardized applications, and prominent ethical issues hinder the development of metaverse and virtual worlds and their standardization are essential to foster the healthy development of metaverse industry;

*g)* that research and development on metaverse and virtual worlds can contribute to advancements in various sectors and accelerate the achievement of the UN Sustainable Development Goals and WSIS outcomes;

*h)* that metaverse and virtual worlds involve various stakeholders and areas, which may require coordination and collaboration,

noting

*a)* that metaverse and virtual worlds are becoming a key driver of social and economic changes beyond just technological advancement;

*b)* that metaverse and virtual worlds themselves are not realized by a new technology but rather a combination of various technologies, and they can be implemented by converging various elemental technologies and standards from many relevant standards development organizations (SDOs);

*c)* that major SDOs around the world have recognized the need and importance of metaverse and virtual worlds standardization and are actively participating in and promoting standard development work;

*d)* that among metaverse and virtual worlds-related standardization activities promoted by many SDOs, the ITU Telecommunication Standardization Sector (ITU-T) has produced the most remarkable achievements on the pre-standardization activities by ITU Focus Group on metaverse (FG-MV);

*e)* that ITU Forums on metaverse have played a significant role as a remarkable platform for advancing the shared vision of an open, interoperable, secure, trusted, inclusive, accessible and sustainable metaverse with many stakeholders around the world;

*f)* ongoing work and studies in ITU-T Study Group 16 on multimedia;

*g)* ongoing work and studies in ITU-T Study Group 20 on emerging digital technologies,

recognizing

*a)* the activities carried out by the ITU FG-MV and its 52 deliverables, outcomes of pre-standardization work;

*b)* studies carried out by ITU-T study group (SG)s on metaverse and virtual worlds-related topics;

*c)* that the ITU Forums 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;

*d)* the first ‘UN Virtual Worlds Day’, a pioneering event held in June 2024, organized by the ITU based on conceptual ideas proposed by FG-MV in July 2023 with 17 other UN entities, including World Bank, United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), International Training Centre of the International Labor Organization (ITCILO), United Nations Futures Lab Network, World Meteorological Organization (WMO), United Nations International Computing Centre (UNICC), World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), UN Tourism, United Nations University (UNU), United Nations Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs (UNDPPA), United Nations Innovation Network (UNIN), United Nations Guatemala, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (UNESCWA), and United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and its interagency initiative Resilience Frontiers, and the United Nations Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD);

*f)* the Global Initiative on Virtual Worlds – Discovering the CitiVerse has been launched by ITU, UNICC and Digital Dubai during the first UN Virtual Worlds Day,

bearing in mind

*a)* that metaverse and virtual worlds are key enablers for enhancing the value of future telecommunications/ICT applications and services;

*b)* that the applications and services based on metaverse and virtual worlds are expected to expand more rapidly across all industry and service domains;

*c)* that it is essential to provide standards at the system and service level, including standardized protocols and interfaces over different technologies and platforms to implement the interoperable metaverse and virtual worlds;

*d)* that it is necessary to standardization work to ensure that the various technical components of metaverse and virtual worlds can effectively integrate and interoperate, including architectures, requirements, protocols, systems, and services;

*f)* that the ITU-T also needs to further promote and strengthen the standardization of future telecommunication/ICT applications and services related to metaverse and virtual worlds;

*g)* that ITU-T's global leadership in metaverse and virtual worlds standardization work achieved through FG-MV’s leading activities needs to be continued and further strengthened;

*h)* that ITU Forums on metaverse, UN Virtual Worlds Day, UN metaverse Think-a-thon event and Global Initiative on Virtual Worlds – Discovering the CitiVerse need to be continued as promotion tools for strengthening metaverse and virtual worlds activities of ITU-T,

resolves

1 to promote and strengthen the ITU-T study groups’ standardization work related to enabling technologies, systems, applications, services, protocols, security features, accessibility and sustainability for metaverse and virtual worlds, considering recent market requirements to provide enhanced value of ITU-T deliverables such as Recommendations, technical reports, and guidelines;

2 to work collaboratively and cooperatively with other SDOs and relevant entities in order to mitigate duplicated work, in the field of metaverse and virtual worlds;

3 to continue the work on metaverse and virtual worlds enabling technologies, including studies, information sharing, and capacity building on those technologies;

4 that ITU forums be held to inform about the progress in the work and the results achieved by the ITU-T SGs in charge of metaverse standardization before the next World Telecommunication Standardization Assembly (WTSA);

5 to encourage cooperation with related organizations, including industry associations, consortia and fora on metaverse systems, applications and services,

instructs the Director of the Telecommunication Standardization Bureau

1 to work collaboratively with the Directors of ITU Radiocommunication Bureau (BR) and ITU Telecommunication Development Bureau (BDT) on metaverse and virtual worlds-related activities to develop deliverables that could be applied to the relevant applications and services of other sectors;

2 to conduct ITU Forums on metaverse and virtual worlds, with other relevant SDOs, for capacity building on metaverse and virtual worlds-related standardization work of ITU-T, including open-source communities working on metaverse and virtual worlds-driven implementations for telecommunications/ICT areas;

3 to continue close collaboration with relevant UN entities to organize an annual ‘UN Virtual Worlds Day’ event to achieve UN sustainable development goals using the metaverse and virtual worlds in cooperation with interested UN entities, and the ‘UN metaverse Think-a-thon’ event to gather creative ideas on metaverse and virtual worlds from all and in particular from youth and encourage their participation;

4 to encourage Member States, Sector Members, Associates and Academia to share and disseminate best practices on metaverse and virtual worlds, including systems, applications and services from various fields of telecommunications/ICT;

5 to support the Global initiative on Virtual Worlds – Discovering the Citiverse which is a global platform that aims at fostering open, interoperable and innovative virtual worlds that can be used safely and with confidence by people, businesses and public services;

6 to report to WTSA on the progress in implementing this resolution,

instructs the relevant study groups, in particular Study Groups 16 and 20, of the ITU Telecommunication Standardization Sector, each according to its mandate

1 to promote rapid follow-up standardization work based on deliverables developed and provided by the pre-standardization work of FG-MV;

2 to study and continue to expand and accelerate metaverse and virtual worlds related standardization work to enhance the value of the deliverables developed by ITU-T Study Group 16 and 20 according to its mandate;

3 to coordinate activities and studies on metaverse-related standardization work among the relevant study groups, focus groups and other relevant groups in ITU-R and ITU-D,

invites Member States, Sector Members, Associates, and Academia

1 to make voluntary contributions and active participations to metaverse and virtual worlds-related standardization work and relevant activities of the ITU-R, ITU-T, and ITU-D;

2 to cooperate and exchange experiences and knowledge related to this topic;

3 to encourage non-ITU members, such as vertical industries and non-telecommunication related organizations, to participate in metaverse and virtual worlds standardization work and relevant activities of the ITU-R ITU-T, and ITU-D

4 to assist ITU-T in implementing this resolution.