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| PLENARY MEETING | | Addendum 8 to Document 36-E | |
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| Arab States Administrations | | | |
| PROPOSED MODIFICATIONS TO RESOLUTION 52 | | | |
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| **Abstract:** | The Arab States propose amendments to WTSA Resolution 52 on countering spam, emphasizing the need for a coordinated global effort to mitigate the growing impact of spam on communication networks. The modifications aim to enhance international collaboration, strengthen regulatory frameworks, and promote the adoption of advanced technologies. | |
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RESOLUTION 52 (Rev. New Delgi, 2024)

Countering and combating spam

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

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

recalling

*a)* relevant provisions of the basic instruments of ITU;

*b)* the Declaration of Principles of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) states in § 37 that "Spam is a significant and growing problem for users, networks and the Internet as a whole. Spam and cybersecurity should be dealt with at appropriate national and international levels";

*c)* that the WSIS Plan of Action states in § 12 that "Confidence and security are among the main pillars of the information society", and calls for "appropriate action on spam at national and international levels",

*d)* the relevant parts of Resolutions 130 (Rev. Bucharest, 2022) and 174 (Rev. Busan, 2014) of the Plenipotentiary Conference;

*e)* the report of the chairman of the two ITU WSIS thematic meetings on countering and combating spam, which advocated a comprehensive approach to combating spam, namely:

i) strong legislation

ii) the development of technical measures

iii) the establishment of industry partnerships to accelerate the studies

iv) education

v) international cooperation;

*f)* the relevant parts of Resolution 45 (Rev. Dubai, 2014) of the World Telecommunication Development Conference,

recognizing

*a)* that spammers are increasingly exploiting the cross-border nature of the Internet and the inefficiencies of cross-border cooperation and communications;

*b)* the absence of a simple remedy to combat spam underscores the need for a multifaceted, collaborative approach; addressing spam-related challenges demands more than just technical or legal measures; it necessitates a blend of both, alongside cooperation among public and private entities;

*c)* that international cooperation is essential for developing a comprehensive and impactful strategy against spam;

*d)* that spam is used for both commercial (e.g., marketing) and non-commercial (e.g., fraudulent and deceptive) purposes;

*e)* the rapid growth of Over-The-Top (OTT) messaging services has revolutionized global communication by providing users with advanced and cost-effective solutions, it is essential to recognize that this growth also introduces various cybersecurity risks,

considering

*a)* that exchanging e-mails and other telecommunications over the Internet has become one of the main means of communication between people around the world;

*b)* that there are currently a variety of definitions for the term "spam";

*c)* that the meaning of the word "spam" depends on each national perception of privacy and what constitutes spam from the national technological, economic, social and practical perspectives; in particular, its meaning evolves and broadens as technologies develop, providing novel opportunities for misuse of electronic communications; although there is no globally agreed definition for spam, "unsolicited" and "bulk" are the two main terms commonly used when describing spam; this may include e-mail spam, instant messaging spam, social media spam, Web search engine spam, mobile phone messaging, phone calls, etc.;

*d)* that spam has become a widespread problem causing potential loss of revenue to Internet service providers, telecommunication operators, mobile telecommunication operators and business users;

*e)* that countering spam by technical means burdens affected entities, including network operators and service providers, as well as users who unwillingly receive such spam, with significant investments in networks, facilities, terminal equipment and applications;

*f)* that spam creates problems of information and telecommunication network security, and is increasingly being used as a vehicle for phishing and spreading viruses, worms, spyware and other forms of malware, etc.; furthermore, the prevalent utilization of voice spam, international-origin SMS, and over-the-top (OTT) messaging services in mobile phone networks, including voice calls and bulk SMS, has become a growing concern; users may inadvertently incur high charges, such as those associated with overseas premium calls or returning communications through OTT platforms, resulting in significant financial implications;

*g)* that spamming is used for criminal, fraudulent or deceptive activities;

*h)* that spam is a global problem, with different characteristics in different regions, which affects many stakeholders and, therefore, requires collaborative work and international cooperation to address it and find solutions;

*i)* that addressing the issue of spam is a matter of urgency;

*j)* that many countries, in particular developing countries[[1]](#footnote-1)1, need help when it comes to countering spam;

*k)* that relevant Recommendations of the ITU Telecommunication Standardization Sector (ITU‑T) and relevant information from other international bodies are available which could provide guidance for future development in this area, particularly with regard to lessons learned;

*l)* that technical measures to counter spam represent one of the elements of the approach mentioned in *recalling e)* above,

noting

*a)* the important technical work carried out to date in ITU‑T Study Group 17, and in particular Recommendation ITU‑T X.1231 and the ITU‑T X.1240 series Recommendations;

*b)* the GSMA's pilot programme, known as the "Spam Reporting Service (SRS)," enables consumers to report spam using a universal short code; participating operators can then exchange information on these attacks and take appropriate actions;

*c)* that emerging technologies, notably Artificial Intelligence (AI), have been leveraged to fuel the proliferation of spam operations, resulting in the development of novel spamming techniques,

resolves to instruct the relevant study groups

1 to continue to support ongoing work, in particular in Study Group 17, related to countering spam (e.g. e-mail) and to accelerate their work on spam in order to address existing and future threats within the remit and expertise of ITU‑T, as appropriate; this includes but is not limited to:

• updating definitions to reflect emerging forms of spam, such as SMS and Voice Call spam, social media spam, and spam facilitated by emerging technologies like artificial intelligence;

• clarifying terminology related to spamming activities and countermeasures to ensure consistency and clarity in interpretation;

2 to continue collaboration with the ITU Telecommunication Development Sector (ITU‑D) and with the relevant organizations, including other relevant standards organizations (e.g. the Internet Engineering Task Force (IETF), and GSMA), in order to continue developing, as a matter of urgency, technical Recommendations with a view to exchanging best practices and disseminating information through joint workshops, training sessions, etc.,

further instructs Study Group 17 of the ITU Telecommunication Standardization Sector

1 to report regularly to the Telecommunication Standardization Advisory Group on progress under this resolution;

2 to support ITU‑D Study Group 2 on countering and combating spam in its work providing technical training sessions and workshop activities in different regions related to spam policy, regulatory and economic issues and their impact for the benefit of regulators and telecommunications operators;

3 to continue its work on developing Recommendations, technical papers and other related publications,

instructs the Director of the Telecommunication Standardization Bureau

1 to provide all necessary assistance with a view to expediting such efforts, working collaboratively with relevant parties that combat spam with a view to identifying opportunities, raising awareness for such activities and identifying possible collaboration, as appropriate;

2 to contribute to the Informational Resource platform that will be developed by the ITU Council based on Decision 630 (2023) to include and maintain a repository of legal frameworks, best practices, and solutions for countering spam, with the aim of sharing these resources among all ITU members;

3 to assess, in the context the Informational Resource platform that will be developed by the ITU Council based on Decision 630 (2023), the viability of creating a platform that reflects real-time spam statistics, with the goal of enhancing the utility of the information provided by the platform for all stakeholders;

4 to continue a study – including sending a questionnaire to the ITU membership –indicating the volume, types (e.g. e-mail spam, SMS spam, spam in IP-based multimedia applications) and features (e.g. different major routes and sources) of spam traffic, in order to help Member States and relevant operating agencies identify such routes, sources and volumes and estimate the amount of investment in facilities and other technical means to counter and combat such spam, taking into account work that has already been carried out;

5 to continue to cooperate with the Secretary-General's initiative on cybersecurity and with the Telecommunication Development Bureau in relation to any item concerning cybersecurity under Resolution 45 (Rev. Dubai, 2014), and to ensure coordination among these different activities;

6 to contribute to the report of the Secretary General to the ITU Council on the implementation of this resolution,

invites Member States, Sector Members, Associates and academia

to contribute to this work and collaboratively implement this resolution,

further invites Member States

1 to take appropriate steps to ensure that appropriate and effective measures are taken within their national and legal frameworks to combat spam and its propagation;

2 to work collaboratively with all relevant stakeholders to counter and combat spam;

3 to advocate the development and implementation of robust regulatory frameworks at both national and international levels to address spamming activities.

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