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| Asia-Pacific Telecommunity Member Administrations | | | |
| PROPOSED MODIFICATION TO RESOLUTION 88 | | | |
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| **Abstract:** | This document contains the proposal for modification of WTSA Resolution 88, “International Mobile Roaming”. | |
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Introduction

International mobile roaming (IMR) is a service (voice, SMS/multimedia messaging service (MMS), data) that subscribers buy from a mobile operator in their home country, that is, from the 'home operator'. It allows subscribers the convenience to continue to use their national mobile phone numbers to access voice, short message service (SMS), and data services while visiting another country, by accessing a mobile operator's network in the visited country, that is, the network of the 'visited operator' – with all arrangements made by their home operator. IMR wholesale and retail rates are the prices charged for IMR service where:

a) IMR wholesale rates are the prices that the visited operator charges the home operator for allowing the home operator's subscriber to roam on the visited operator's network; and

b) IMR retail rates are the prices that the home operator charges its subscribers for usage of IMR services.

ITU-T Approved Recommendation ITU-T D.98 in September 2012 regarding charging in international mobile roaming service, wherein suggested measures to empower consumers to benefit from efficient competition and regulation. Similarly, Recommendation ITU-T D.97 contains possible approaches to the reduction of excessive roaming rates, highlighting the need to encourage competition in the roaming market, educate consumers and consider appropriate regulatory actions such as the introduction of caps on roaming rate.

The International Telecommunication Union (ITU) recognized the critical importance of addressing this issue during the World Telecommunication Standardization Assembly in Hammamet, 2016. Recognizing the importance of the international mobile roaming (IMR), WTSA-16 adopted Resolution 88, wherein it is proposed for cooperative approaches to foster the implementation of Recommendations ITU-T D.98 and ITU-T D.97.

Considering that a competitive international telecommunications market may not exist if significant differences persist between national prices and international mobile roaming prices, the goal should be to reduce differences between national tariffs and international mobile roaming tariffs. However, it is worth acknowledging at the same time that differences are likely to exist due to differences in costs between countries and regions.

The affordability and accessibility of mobile communication are crucial for economic and social development globally. However, high and inconsistent IMR charges can hinder international connectivity and trade.

WTSA-16 emphasized the growing reliance on global mobile communications and the need for cost-effective and competitive solutions and adopted Resolution 88 to further study the issue and suggesting concrete steps to implement effective solutions.

Proposal

This contribution proposes modifications to WTSA Resolution 88, as outlined in annex, to support continuation of studies on the economic effects of IMR rates to ensure a comprehensive understanding of the challenges and potential solutions. Further, it proposes to organize initiatives aimed at raising awareness among Member States about the consumer benefits of lowering IMR rates and to take proactive measures for the implementation of Recommendations ITU-T D.98 and ITU-T D.97, and to collaborate in efforts to lower IMR rates.

Based on the background above, APT Member Administrations propose to modify Resolution 88 on “International Mobile Roaming”.

MOD APT/37A28/1

RESOLUTION 88 (Rev. New Delhi, 2024)

International mobile roaming

(Hammamet, 2016; New Delhi, 2024)

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

considering

*a)* the results of the ITU High-Level Workshop on international mobile roaming (IMR), held in Geneva on 23‑24 September 2013;

*b)* the results of the ITU Global Dialogue on IMR, held in Geneva on 18 September 2015;

*c)* that the tasks undertaken in the ITU Telecommunication Standardization Sector (ITU‑T) cover Recommendations, conformity assessment and matters having policy or regulatory implications;

*d)* that the economy is increasingly dependent on reliable, cost-effective, competitive and affordable mobile communications technology on a global scale;

*e)* that wholesale IMR tariffs are decoupled from underlying costs, which may have an effect on retail rates, including inconsistent and arbitrary charges;

*f)* that a competitive international telecommunication market may not exist if significant differences persist between national prices and IMR prices;

*g)* that there are differences in costs between countries and regions;

*h)* that the adoption and usage of IMT has grown multi fold and has expanded beyond traditional voice services into newer applications and use cases;

*i)* that high international roaming charges limits the ability of users to take advantage of the enhancement of technology and applications,

noting

*a)* that Recommendation ITU‑T D.98 is an agreement concluded between Member States and Sector Members in 2012;

*b)* that Recommendation ITU‑T D.97 contains possible approaches to the reduction of excessive roaming rates, highlighting the need to encourage competition in the roaming market, educate consumers and consider appropriate regulatory actions such as the introduction of caps on roaming rates,

resolves

that ITU‑T Study Group 3 must continue to study the economic effects of IMR rates and recommend methods for setting affordable IMR rates keeping in view the widespread adoption and usage of IMT technologies,

instructs the Director of the Telecommunication Standardization Bureau

1 to organize initiatives, in collaboration with the Director of the Telecommunication Development Bureau (BDT), to raise awareness of the benefits to the consumer of lowering IMR rates;

2 to propose cooperative approaches to foster the implementation of Recommendations ITU‑T D.98 and ITU‑T D.97, and to lower IMR rates among the Member States, by promoting capacity-building programmes, workshops and guidelines for international cooperation agreements;

3 to follow up with the administrations, in close collaboration with Study Group 2, and any other relevant study groups, on the implementation of this resolution,

invites Member States

1 to take measures towards the implementation of Recommendations ITU‑T D.98 and ITU‑T D.97;

2 to collaborate in the efforts towards affordable IMR rates by taking regulatory measures when applicable;

3 to take appropriate actions and share their experiences regarding the implementation of this resolution.