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|  | World Telecommunication Standardization Assembly (WTSA-24)New Delhi, 15–24 October 2024 |  |
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| PLENARY MEETING | Addendum 22 toDocument 38-E |
|  | 16 September 2024 |
|  | Original: English |
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| Member States of European Conference of Postal and Telecommunications Administrations (CEPT) |
| PROPOSED MODIFICATION TO RESOLUTION 55 |
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| **Abstract:** | This proposal aims at modifying Resolution 55 Promoting gender equality in ITU Telecommunication Standardization Sector activities (Rev. Geneva 2022). While Information and Communications Technology remain not well balanced in terms of gender participation, the Standardization Sector of International Telecommunication Union (ITU-T) actively promotes the principles of inclusivity and gender equality in all aspects of its work.The World Telecommunication Standardization Assembly (WTSA-24) by adopting a new resolution on gender equality has a chance to strengthen, accelerate and scale up the active involvement of women in the work and activities of the ITU-T.Their main objectives are:* improve the gender balance among delegates;
* prepare women delegates for key roles in each WTSA;
* grow the capacity and contribution of the ITU women’s community;
* develop an ITU-T gender resolution to guide the achievement of gender equality, equity and parity goals.
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MOD ECP/38A22/1

RESOLUTION 55 (Rev. New Delhi, 2024)

Mainstreaming 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), a complete gender equality in participation in international standardization processes is still not achieved and that the effort of pursuing the goal of mainstreaming gender equality can contribute positively to all aspect of ITU activities and processes, particularly in the international standardization sector;

*b)* that the standardization work of ITU Telecommunication Standardization Sector (ITU‑T) can be advanced most effectively through the active inclusion of women and that there is a need to ensure that women participate actively and meaningfully in all ITU‑T activities;

*c)* 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, dedicated to promoting women in standardization, telecommunications/ICTs and related fields and to recognize the men and women who have made a remarkable contribution in promoting the work of women in these fields;

*d)* that the TSAG in January 2024 has launched successful NOW4WTSA24 campaign aiming to promote gender equality for the World Telecommunication Standardization Assembly (WTSA-24) held in New Delhi, India, from 15 to 24 October 2024, the campaign had four main objectives, calling on Member States to:

i) achieve overall 35% female participation at WTSA-24, to surpass 32% participation at WTSA-20 (2022);

ii) nominate women for key ITU-T leadership positions for the next study period and in leadership roles at the Assembly (e.g., Chair, Vice-Chairs of various Working Groups and Committees);

iii) promote women’s active and meaningful participation in country delegations;

iv) encourage the appointment of women as Heads of Delegations (HoD), or alternatively Deputy HoD within ITU’s standardization sector,

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)* the Gender Declaration approved at the World Radiocommunication Conference (Sharm El-Sheikh, 2019), which declared the commitment of the ITU Radiocommunication Sector to gender equality and balance, and which also declared that ITU Member States and Sector Members should encourage the adoption of proven measures to increase globally the number of women pursuing academic degrees at all levels in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) fields, particularly those related to ICTs;

*d)* 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;

*e)* Resolution 48 (Rev. Bucharest, 2022) of the Plenipotentiary Conference, on human resources management and development and, in particular, its Annex 2, on facilitating the recruitment of women at ITU;

*f)* 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;

*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 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;

*l)* 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";

*m)* the report in 2024 by the Secretary-General on ITU’s programme on Gender Equality including updates on Council-23 Decisions as instructed by Resolution 70 (Rev. Bucharest 2022) with additional directives (Council Decision 631 and Document C23/76) to integrate gender perspective into the organization’s work and activities,

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 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;

*d)* that the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, in its General Recommendation No. 37, on the gender-related dimensions of disaster risk reduction within the context of climate change, recommends that Member States make sure women have access to technologies to prevent and mitigate the adverse effects of natural disasters and climate change, and that they be able to use and take advantage of technologies for climate change adaptation and mitigation, including those related to renewable energy and sustainable agriculture;

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

*f)* Resolution ITU-R 72 on promoting gender equality and equity and bridging the contribution and participation gap between women and men in ITU-R activities;

*g)* that the report of the Chair of Council Working Group on Languages on the use of the six languages of the union on an equal footing approved by the ITU Council 2024 recalls UN Guidelines on gender inclusive language to help UN staff in all communications in the six official languages, reflecting the specificities and unique features of each language with recommendations tailored to each specific linguistic context,

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 outcomes of WSIS, namely the Geneva Declaration of Principles, the Geneva Plan of Action, the Tunis Commitment and the Tunis Agenda for the Information Society, outlined the concept of the information society, and that continued efforts must be undertaken in this context to bridge the gender digital divide;

*c)* the importance of identifying the factors that may prevent women and girls from pursuing a professional career in ICT standardization;

*d)* the importance of collecting relevant high-quality information and developing gender-sensitive indicators to support policies to address this;

*f)* 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);

*g)* 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,

taking into account

the amendments made in Resolution 48 (Rev. Bucharest, 2022) on human resources management and development, outlining procedures to facilitate the recruitment of women at ITU,

resolves

1 that ITU‑T continues 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 chairs, vice-chairs and rapporteurs of the ITU‑T study groups and of TSAG;

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

3 that ITU‑T continues to support Network of Women in ITU-T,

instructs the Telecommunication Standardization Advisory Group

to assist in the identification of subjects and mechanisms to foster the mainstreaming of a gender perspective, as well as matters of mutual interest in that regard,

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 training;

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 on the implementation of this resolution;

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;

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

7 to continue posting on a public-facing ITU‑T NoW group 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 join the ITU Secretary-General in participating in the Planet 50/50 initiative sponsored by UN Women to tackle invisible gender bias as a Geneva Gender Champion on behalf of ITU‑T;

10 to inform the ITU regional offices on, and ensure their participation in, progress and results achieved in implementing this resolution,

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;

3 to encourage relevant entities of the United Nations system to provide support and assistance to developing countries, upon their request, with respect to establishing, developing and strengthening their databases and information systems with gender-sensitive indicators,

invites Member States and Sector Members

1 to establish gender-sensitive policies and guidelines for employment practices in the ICT standardization sector, including for transnational corporations, building, in this regard, on multilateral instruments, including the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and conventions of the International Labour Organization;

2 to fully integrate gender equality strategies into national sustainable development frameworks, including on innovation in telecommunication/ICT development so as to promote accelerated action and greater policy coherence, recognizing that achieving gender equality will require both targeted gender-responsive action and the systemic mainstreaming of a gender perspective into all policies and programmes;

3 to strengthen educational policies and study plans in science and technology and to promote and increase the interest of, and opportunities for, women and girls in STEM and telecommunication/ICT careers, including women and girls in rural and remote areas, during elementary, secondary and higher education and lifelong education;

4 to actively participate in and promote EQUALS, the global partnership to bridge the gender digital divide;

5 to submit candidatures for chairs/vice-chairs posts in order to support the active involvement of women in standardization groups and activities and in their own administrations and delegations;

6 to actively support and participate in the work of TSB, to nominate experts for the ITU‑T NoW group and to promote the use of ICTs for the economic and social empowerment of women and girls;

7 to encourage and actively support ICT education that encourages girls' and women's participation, and support all measures that will help prepare them for a professional career in ICT standardization;

8 to encourage greater participation of women delegates and foster their expertise;

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

**Reasons:** The aim is to continue promoting and mainstreaming women's engagement in ITU activities, the standardization sector, the World Telecommunication Standardization Assembly and beyond. Modifying Resolution 55 may contribute to maintaining and upgrading awareness on the importance of including female perspectives and greater gender equality in ITU-T's work as well as emphasize the importance of inclusivity and diversity in standardization efforts. There is such a need as the share of women in ITU events in the standardization sector is much more modest then in other sectors - 32% in total comparing to 44 % in ITU-D and 38% in SG. Only ITU-R is less advanced in statistics (22%)[[1]](#footnote-1).
The proposal’s goal is to upgrade the discussions on how to best exchange knowledge and networking to fulfil this goal and to encourage both women and men to contribute to the growth and success of women in ITU-T.

1. [Gender Statistics – ITU events](https://app.powerbi.com/view?r=eyJrIjoiOWM3MWE2YjYtYzdmYS00MDU5LTk4YjYtYWFiOTA0YjU2ZDYyIiwidCI6IjIzZTQ2NGQ3LTA0ZTYtNGI4Ny05MTNjLTI0YmQ4OTIxOWZkMyIsImMiOjl9) [↑](#footnote-ref-1)