

WORLD TELECOMMUNICATION STANDARDIZATION
ASSEMBLY
New Delhi, 15-24 October 2024

Resolution 100 – A common emergency number for Africa

FOREWORD

The International Telecommunication Union (ITU) is the United Nations specialized agency in the field of telecommunications, and information and communication technologies (ICTs). The ITU Telecommunication Standardization Sector (ITU-T) is a permanent organ of ITU. ITU-T is responsible for studying technical, operating and tariff questions and issuing Recommendations on them with a view to standardizing telecommunications on a worldwide basis.

The World Telecommunication Standardization Assembly (WTSA), which meets every four years, establishes the topics for study by the ITU-T study groups which, in turn, produce Recommendations on these topics.

The approval of ITU-T Recommendations is covered by the procedure laid down in WTSA Resolution 1.

In some areas of information technology which fall within ITU-T's purview, the necessary standards are prepared on a collaborative basis with ISO and IEC.

RESOLUTION 100 (Rev. New Delhi, 2024)

A common emergency number for Africa

(Geneva, 2022; New Delhi, 2024)

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

recalling

- a) that Resolution 136 (Rev. Bucharest, 2022) of the Plenipotentiary Conference encourages Member States to explore the possibility of introducing a globally harmonized emergency number to supplement existing domestic emergency numbers, taking into account the relevant Recommendations of the ITU Telecommunication Standardization Sector (ITU-T);
- b) that Recommendation ITU-T E.161.1 provides that a Member State that is planning to introduce an emergency number could use either 112 or 911; and that a Member State that is planning to introduce a second alternative emergency number could use either 112 or 911, or both, which should be routed to the existing emergency number;
- c) that Resolution 34 (Rev. Kigali, 2022) of the World Telecommunication Development Conference invites Member States to consider introducing, in addition to their existing emergency numbers, a harmonized national/regional number for access to emergency services, taking into account the relevant ITU-T Recommendations,

considering

the progress made in the implementation of this resolution during the period 2022-2024, and the report of the Director of the Telecommunication Standardization Bureau (TSB) to this assembly, which show:

- i) that not all Member States in Africa are using 112 as the single emergency number selected for the first time;
- ii) that not all Member States in Africa are using 911 as a secondary alternative emergency number;
- iii) that some Member States in Africa have not implemented Recommendation ITU-T E.161.1;
- iv) that there appears to be a trend to use numbers other than 112 and/or 911 for emergency communication by Member States in Africa;
- v) that such practices have an unfavourable effect on ease of access to emergency services for citizens of the African continent who move from one country to another;
- vi) that such practices have an unfavourable effect on ease of access to emergency services for citizens from other parts of the world, since the numbers being used to access emergency services are not similar to what they are used to, i.e. 112 or 911,

noting

- a) relevant ITU-T Recommendations, in particular:
 - i) Recommendation ITU-T E.161.1: Guidelines to select Emergency Number for public telecommunication networks;
 - ii) Recommendation ITU-T E.161.1 Amendment 1 (2009): Guidelines to select Emergency Number for public telecommunication networks;
 - iii) Recommendation ITU-T E.101: Definitions of terms used for identifiers (names, numbers, addresses and other identifiers) for public telecommunication services and networks in the ITU-T E-series Recommendations;

- iv) ITU-T Q-series Recommendations – Supplement 47: Emergency services for IMT-2000 networks – Requirements for harmonization and convergence;
- v) Recommendation ITU-T E.164 – Supplement 6: Guidelines for identifying and selecting globally harmonized numbers;
- b) relevant resolutions:
 - i) Resolution 136 (Rev. Bucharest, 2022) of the Plenipotentiary Conference, on use of telecommunications/information and communication technologies for humanitarian assistance and for monitoring and management in emergency and disaster situations, including health-related emergencies, for early warning, prevention, mitigation and relief, in particular *encourages Member States* 9;
 - ii) Resolution 2 (Dubai, 2012) of the World Conference on International Telecommunications, on globally harmonized national number for access to emergency services,

noting further

- a) that some countries and regions have adopted national laws, directives and recommendations regarding the use of emergency numbers;
- b) that some mobile devices have been hard-coded with either 112 and/or 911;
- c) that there is no provision for TSB to provide assistance to countries trying to implement Recommendation ITU-T E.161.1;
- d) that there is no provision for TSB to provide technical assistance to countries trying to set up emergency numbers,

reaffirming

that it is the sovereign right of each country to regulate its telecommunications and, as such, regulate the provision of emergency services,

resolves to instruct the Director of the Telecommunication Standardization Bureau in cooperation with the Director of the Telecommunication Development Bureau

1 to continue to provide technical assistance to Member States in Africa, within available resources and existing budgetary limits, in the implementation of a common emergency number in line with Recommendation ITU-T E.161.1;

2 to report to the World Telecommunication Standardization Assembly on the progress achieved in implementing this resolution, which is intended to improve access to emergency services,

invites Member States in particular in the Africa region

1 to implement the provisions of Recommendation ITU-T E.161.1 and, in particular, to consider 112 for use as a primary emergency number and 911 for use as a secondary, alternative emergency number;

2 that have not implemented a common emergency number in line with Recommendation ITU-T E.161.1 to seek technical assistance from TSB;

3 to consider having mechanisms or guidelines that would assist in the implementation of this resolution;

4 to share their updated numbering plan information, including emergency numbers, in accordance with Recommendation ITU-T E.129.