

I n t e r n a t i o n a l T e l e c o m m u n i c a t i o n U n i o n

ITU-T

TELECOMMUNICATION
STANDARDIZATION SECTOR
OF ITU

WORLD TELECOMMUNICATION STANDARDIZATION ASSEMBLY

Johannesburg, 21-30 October 2008

Resolution 44 – Bridging the standardization gap between developing and developed countries

FOREWORD

The International Telecommunication Union (ITU) is the United Nations specialized agency in the field of telecommunications, 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.

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RESOLUTION 44

Bridging the standardization gap between developing and developed countries¹

(Florianópolis, 2004; Johannesburg, 2008)

The World Telecommunication Standardization Assembly (Johannesburg, 2008),

considering

- a) that Resolution 123 (Rev. Antalya, 2006) of the Plenipotentiary Conference on bridging the standardization gap between developing and developed countries instructs the Secretary-General and the Directors of the three Bureaux to work closely with each other in pursuing initiatives that assist in bridging the standardization gap between developing and developed countries on follow-up and implementation of the operative paragraphs of this resolution supporting coordination in this respect at the regional level through regional offices and organizations;
- b) that Resolution 139 (Antalya, 2006) of the Plenipotentiary Conference invites Member States to rapidly implement Resolution 37 (Rev. Doha, 2006) of the World Telecommunication Development Conference on bridging the digital divide,

recognizing

- a) that, in accordance with Article 13 of the ITU Convention, the World Telecommunication Standardization Assembly (WTSA) is convened to consider specific matters related to telecommunication standardization;
- b) that the tasks undertaken in the ITU Telecommunication Standardization Sector (ITU-T) cover Recommendations, conformity assessment and matters having policy or regulatory implications;
- c) that Article 17 of the ITU Constitution, while providing that the functions of ITU-T shall fulfil the purposes of the Union relating to telecommunication standardization, stipulates that such functions are to be performed "bearing in mind the particular concerns of the developing countries";
- d) that the disparity between developing and developed countries in standardization has three components: the disparity of voluntary standardization, the disparity of mandatory technical regulations and the disparity of conformity assessment,

noting

- a) that the standardization gap between developed and developing countries should be bridged by collective efforts from both developed and developing countries;
- b) that ITU has been playing a key role in bridging the digital divide, which is related to bridging the standardization gap between developed and developing countries;
- c) that ITU has made significant advances in defining the standardization gap, the role and importance of bridging it and ways to measure the progress towards this goal;
- d) that ITU's programmes for fostering partnerships, under the patronage of ITU-T, continue to strengthen and expand the assistance ITU provides its members, particularly developing countries,

¹ These include the least developed countries, small island developing states and countries with economies in transition.

taking into account

- a) that developing countries could benefit from an improved capability in the application and development of standards;
- b) that the telecommunication industry, particularly manufacturers and operators, could also benefit from the greater involvement of developing countries in the development and application of standards;
- c) the relevant conclusions of the Global Standardization Symposium,

resolves

- 1 that the objectives of the action plan annexed to this resolution, aimed at bridging the standardization gap between developed and developing countries, should be implemented to the extent feasible without delay;
- 2 that the ITU regional offices shall be encouraged to work closely with the Telecommunication Standardization Bureau (TSB) in order to carry out the objectives of the action plan;
- 3 to encourage more highly developed countries to establish cooperation programmes with developing countries in the drafting of national technical regulations and conformity assessment procedures as a way of assimilating information technologies and telecommunications and incorporating them into world standardization activities, and to establish regulatory cooperation programmes through the Telecommunication Developing Bureau (BDT);
- 4 that due to the insufficient resources in the regular budget for essential assistance to developing countries, including for bridging the standardization gap, the annual budget structure should be improved in order to identify and include a separate expenditure line item for bridging standardization gap activities, while at the same time voluntary contributions towards a fund for bridging the standardization gap should be encouraged, and a management mechanism for this fund should be implemented by TSB in close coordination with BDT for the purpose of implementing the action plan,

instructs the Director of the Telecommunication Standardization Bureau

- 1 to work closely with the Directors of BDT and the Radiocommunication Bureau (BR) on implementing the objectives of the action plan annexed to this resolution;
- 2 to establish an implementation group within TSB, which organizes, mobilizes resources, coordinates efforts and monitors work related to the action plan;
- 3 to report on the implementation of this plan to future WTSA's with a view to reviewing this resolution and introducing the appropriate amendments in the light of implementation outcome,

invites the Director of the Telecommunication Standardization Bureau

to work closely with the Directors of BDT and BR in order to encourage the formation of partnerships under the patronage of ITU-T as one of the means for financing the action plan,

instructs study groups and the Telecommunication Standardization Advisory Group

to be actively involved in the implementation of the programmes set forth in the action plan annexed to this resolution,

encourages Member States and Sector Members

to take the objectives set out in the action plan into account in their participation in ITU-T.

Annex
(to Resolution 44)

**Action plan for the implementation of Resolution 123 (Rev. Antalya, 2006) of the
Plenipotentiary Conference**

I Programme 1: Strengthening standard-making capabilities

1) Objective

- To improve the standard-making capabilities of developing countries.

2) Activities

- Developing guidelines to assist developing countries in their involvement in ITU-T activities.
- Developing webcasting systems that enable developing country experts to follow study group meetings from their office workstations.
- Conducting a certain number of consultancy projects designed to support developing countries in the development of standardization plans, strategies, policies, etc. The outputs should be further transformed into best practices.
- Developing methods, tools and indicators for accurate measurement of the results and the level of effectiveness of the efforts and activities applied in bridging the standardization gap.
- Creating methods to increase the access of developing countries to essential technical information in order to enhance their knowledge and capacity (i) to implement global standards, (ii) to effectively contribute to the work of ITU-T, (iii) to include their own specificities and necessities in the global standard-making process, and (iv) to influence global standard-making discussions by having active roles in ITU-T study groups.

II Programme 2: Assisting developing countries in enhancing efforts in respect of standards application

1) Objective

To assist developing countries in:

- Ensuring that developing countries have a clear understanding of ITU-T Recommendations.
- Enhancing the application of ITU-T Recommendations in developing countries.

2) Activities

To assist developing countries in:

- Reviewing/assessing the existing national standards and determining whether they are consistent and in accordance with the current ITU-T Recommendations.
- Developing a set of guidelines on how to apply ITU-T Recommendations, in particular on manufactured products and interconnection, with emphasis on Recommendations having regulatory and policy implications.

Actions to be performed by TSB with BDT cooperation

- Compiling and maintaining a database containing information on new technologies that are standardized.
- Organizing training courses on the application of specific Recommendations and on methods of examining compliance of manufactured products with these Recommendations.

- Establishing a forum on the ITU-T website where developing countries can raise questions concerning their understanding and application of Recommendations and seek advice from study group experts.

III Programme 3: Human resource building

- Organizing frequent seminars, workshops and study group meetings in developing countries.
- In close collaboration with BDT and BR, providing training courses on standardization to developing countries.
- Providing more internship, secondment and short-term employment, etc., opportunities for developing countries at ITU.
- Establishing and maintaining a forum, moderated by a group of experts, to support and provide advice to standardization bodies in developing countries.
- Encouraging the election of more candidates from developing countries to ITU-T study groups chairmanship and vice-chairmanship positions.

IV Programme 4: Flagship groups for bridging the standardization gap

- 1) Objective
 - Developed country experts participating in the work of a specific study group voluntarily join a number of developing country representatives in a small group, in order to support these representatives in their standardization activities. The close cooperation and direct support thus provided will enable the developing countries within such groups to carry out their standardization activities more effectively. The groups could be called flagship groups for bridging the standardization gap in a specific domain.
- 2) Activities
 - TSB shall support and encourage the establishment of such flagship groups and encourage developed country experts to join these groups, e.g. by providing recognition awards or symbolic compensation to those experts providing sensible assistance. The activities of which such flagship groups should serve to improve the quality of standardization activities in developing countries.
 - Details of each flagship group should be posted on the ITU-T website. Those details could include structure, experts, *modus operandi* (e.g. e-forum), plans, reports on conducted tasks, best practices, etc.

V Programme 5: Fundraising for bridging the standardization gap

- a) Contributions to the action plan in the following forms of partnerships and others means:
 - Partnership contributions.
 - Voluntary contributions by industry participating in the telecommunication market of developing countries.
 - Voluntary contributions by others.
 - Additional budget allocated by ITU.

- b) Management of funds by TSB:
- The Director of TSB, in close coordination with BDT, shall be responsible for the management of funds raised as above, which shall be used principally for achieving the objectives of these programmes.
- c) Principles for use of funds:
- Funds are to be used for ITU-related activities including, but not limited, to assistance and consultation, training, surveying and participation in ITU-T meetings, as well as studying, compliance examination, interconnection and interoperability programmes for developing countries (but not for the purchase of equipment).