**INTERNATIONAL INTERACTIVE
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Title: Requiring all GTO meetings to be electronic

ABSTRACT
The proposal that all GTO meetings must be electronic does not recognize the need for some meetings, such as those dealing with fundamental policy issues, to include face-to-face negotiations among the concerned parties. Mandating only e-meetings is not supported.

Introduction
The United Nations High Commission on Structure (UNHCS) has proposed a new structure and working methods for a Global Telecommunications Organization which would replace the International Telecommunications Union. Part of its proposal, based on improving access to the work of GTO and reducing costs to the organization and its membership, is to require that all future meetings of GTO be held electronically.

Discussion
While there are potential benefits, as pointed out by the UNHCS, of holding e-meetings in terms of ease of access to the ongoing work of the GTO study groups and other groups and in reduction of greenhouse gas emissions by reduced travel, there are serious shortcomings in the proposal which do not take account of the nature of all meetings. For routine work, the exchange of information can be accomplished electronically, with the interested parties working in their normal work hours across the world's time zones. Additionally, certain procedures, such as final review of documents for approval, can be supported by an electronic process where documents are made available for review and a response can be returned some days or weeks later.

However, for some meetings at which very detailed technical matters are debated, and meetings of the Member States addressing fundamental policy issues, the personal interactions that must take place inside and outside the formal meeting times require extended timeframes and the ability to discuss such matters off-line. This cannot be accommodated is only e-meetings have been mandated.

Proposal
While there are benefits to be derived from holding e-meetings, especially when the flow of information is one-way, such as tutorial meetings, for some meetings the issues require personal interaction in real-time of the involved parties. Therefore, the proposal that all meetings must be e-meetings cannot be supported.

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