RESOLUTION 70 (REV. BUSAN, 2014)

Mainstreaming a gender perspective in ITU and promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women through information and communication technologies

The Plenipotentiary Conference of the International Telecommunication Union (Busan, 2014),

recalling

a)   the initiative taken by the ITU Telecommunication Development Sector (ITU-D) at the World Telecommunication Development Conference (WTDC) in adopting Resolution 7 (Valletta, 1998), transmitted to the Plenipotentiary Conference (Minneapolis, 1998), which resolved that an ITU Gender Task Force be established;

b)   the endorsement of that resolution by the Plenipotentiary Conference in its Resolution 70 (Minneapolis, 1998), in which the conference resolved, *inter alia*, to incorporate a gender perspective[1] in the implementation of all programmes and plans of ITU;

c)   Resolution 44 (Istanbul, 2002) of WTDC, converting the task force on gender issues into a working group on gender issues;

d)   Resolution 55 (Rev. Dubai, 2012) of the World Telecommunication Standardization Assembly, which encourages mainstreaming a gender perspective in the activities of the ITU Telecommunication Standardization Sector (ITU-T);

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[1] "Gender perspective": Mainstreaming a gender perspective is the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programmes in all areas and at all levels. It is a strategy for making women's as well as men's concerns and experiences an integral dimension of design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation so that women and men benefit equally and inequality is not perpetuated. The ultimate goal is to achieve gender equality. (Source: Report of the Inter-Agency Committee on Women and Gender Equality, third session, New York, 25-27 February 1998)

e)   Resolution 55 (Rev. Dubai, 2014) of WTDC, resolving that the Telecommunication Development Bureau (BDT) should maintain close links and collaborate, as appropriate, with the ITU Gender Task Force established in the framework of the ITU General Secretariat by the ITU Council in 2013 and with the Working Group on Broadband and Gender of the Broadband Commission for Digital Development, reciprocally supporting gender mainstreaming in the Union and joining forces to eliminate inequalities in access to and use of telecommunications/ICTs, in the interests of building a non-discriminatory and egalitarian information society;

f)   Resolution 1327 adopted by the Council at its 2011 session, on ITU's role in ICTs and the empowerment of women and girls;

g)   ECOSOC Resolution 2012/24, on mainstreaming a gender perspective into all policies and programmes in the United Nations system, which welcomed the development of the UN System-Wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-SWAP)[2];

h)   the Preamble to the WSIS+10 Statement on implementation of the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS), which reaffirmed the importance of promoting and maintaining gender equality and women's empowerment, guaranteeing the inclusion of women in the emerging global ICT society, taking into account the mandate of the newly established agency UN-Women, the recommendations of the High-Level Panel in the post-2015 and the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action adopted at the fourth World Conference on Women in 1995,

    noting

a)   United Nations General Assembly Resolution 64/289, on system-wide coherence, adopted on 21 July 2010, establishing the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, which would be known as "UN Women", with the mandate to promote gender equality and the empowerment of women;

b)   that the United Nations Chief Executives Board, in April 2013, advocated the UN system-wide "Action Plan to measure gender equality and the empowerment of women", under which ITU will participate in the dissemination, coordination and communication and networking activities that are part of the strategy;

c)   the conclusions agreed at the 55th session of the Commission on the Status of Women of the United Nations, held in March 2011, regarding the access and participation of women and girls in education, training and science and technology;

    noting also

a)   the decision of the Council at its 2013 session endorsing the Union's Gender Equality and Mainstreaming Policy (GEM), with the aim of becoming a model organization for gender equality and to leverage the power of telecommunications/ICTs to empower both women and men;

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[2]   http://www.unwomen.org/~/media/Headquarters/Media/Stories/en/unswap-brochure.pdf

b)   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,

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 equal access to communication services for both women and men;

b)   that information and communication technologies (ICTs) are tools through which gender equality and women's empowerment can be advanced, and are integral to the creation of societies in which both women and men can substantively contribute and participate;

c)   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;

d)   the WSIS+10 Statement on implementation of the WSIS outcomes states the need to ensure that the information society enables women's empowerment and their full participation on the basis of equality in all spheres of society and in all decision-making processes;

e)   that there are a growing number of women in the telecommunication/ICT field with decision-making power, including in relevant ministries, national regulatory authorities and industry, who could promote the work of ITU so as to encourage girls to choose a career in the field of telecommunications/ICT and foster the use of ICTs for the social and economic empowerment of women and girls;

f)   that there is a growing need to bridge the digital divide in order to empower women, with special attention to women in rural and marginalized urban areas that are subject to traditional constraints which reinforce discrimination,

recognizing further

a)   the progress achieved in raising awareness, both within ITU and among Member States, of the importance of mainstreaming gender perspective in all ITU work programmes and of increasing the number of women professionals in ITU, especially at the senior management level, while at the same time working towards the equal access of women and men to posts in the General Service category;

b)   the success of the international "Girls in ICT Day" organized by ITU, which is held every year on the fourth Thursday of April;

c)   the recent launch of the Gender Equality Mainstreaming - Technology (GEM-TECH) Award, as a special award of ITU and UN-Women for outstanding performers and role models in gender equality and mainstreaming in the area of ICTs;

d)   the considerable recognition given to the work of ITU in gender and telecommunications/ICT within the United Nations family of organizations, including the GEM-TECH Award, awarded jointly by the United Nations and the Union to role models in the area of gender equality,

considering

a)   the progress made by ITU, and in particular the Telecommunication Development Bureau (BDT), in the development and implementation of actions and projects that use ICTs for the economic and social empowerment of women and girls, as well as in increasing awareness of the links between gender issues and ICTs within the Union and among Member States and Sector Members;

b)   the results achieved by the Working Group on Gender Issues in promoting gender equality;

c)   the study conducted by ITU-T on women in telecommunication standardization, exploring perspectives and activities related to mainstreaming a gender perspective in ITU-T and determining the degree to which women are active participants in all ITU-T activities,

noting further

a)   that there is a need for ITU to study, gather data, analyse, build statistics, assess and evaluate effects and promote a better understanding of the impact of telecommunications/ICTs on gender equality;

b)   that ITU should have a role in establishing gender-relevant indicators for the telecommunication/ICT sector that would contribute to reducing disparities in terms of access to and appropriation of ICTs and to national, regional and international mainstreaming of a gender perspective;

c)   that more work needs to be done to ensure that the gender and equity perspective is mainstreamed in all ITU policies, work programmes, information dissemination activities, publications, study groups, seminars, workshops and conferences;

d)   that there is a need to foster participation of women and girls in the telecommunication/ICT domain at an early age and to provide input for further policy developments in the required areas, so as to ensure that the information and knowledge society contributes to their empowerment;

e)   the need for ICT tools and applications to empower women and facilitate their access to the job market in non-traditional fields,

taking into account

the amendments made in Resolution 48 (Rev. Busan, 2014) of this conference on human resources management and development, outlining procedures to facilitate the recruitment of women at ITU,

encourages Member States and Sector Members

1   to undertake further or new actions, promoting the commitment to mainstreaming the gender perspective in government, the public and private and sectors, academia and industry, for the purpose of promoting innovation in telecommunication/ICT learning on an equal footing for men and women so as to foster the empowerment of women and girls, with special emphasis on rural and remote areas;

2   to review and revise, as appropriate, their respective policies and practices to ensure that recruitment, employment, training and advancement of women and men alike are undertaken on a fair and equitable basis;

3   to facilitate the capacity building and employment of women and men equally in the telecommunication/ICT field including at senior levels of responsibility in telecommunication/ICT administrations, government and regulatory bodies and intergovernmental organizations and in the private sector;

4   to review their policies and strategies related to the information society to ensure the inclusion of a gender perspective in all activities and the fostering of gender balance to secure equal opportunities through the use and appropriation of telecommunications/ICTs;

5   to promote and increase the interest of, and opportunities for, women and girls in telecommunication/ICT careers, with special focus on women and girls in rural areas, during elementary, secondary and higher education and lifelong education;

6   to attract more women and girls to study computer science, and acknowledge the achievements of leading women in relevant areas, particularly in innovation;

7   to encourage more women to take advantage of the opportunities offered by ICTs to establish and develop a business and to foster potential contributions to economic growth,

resolves

1   to continue the work being done at ITU, and particularly in BDT, to promote gender equality in telecommunications/ICTs by recommending measures at the international, regional and national level on policies and programmes that improve socio-economic conditions for women, particularly in developing countries[3];

2   to accord high priority to the incorporation of gender policies in the management, staffing and operation of ITU, so that ITU can become a leading organization in the implementation of gender-equality values and principles to take advantage of the possibilities offered by ICTs to empower both men and women;

3   to incorporate a gender perspective in the implementation of the ITU strategic plan and financial plan for 2016-2019 as well as in the operational plans of the Bureaux and the General Secretariat;

4   to have ITU compile and process statistical data from countries and draw up indicators that take into account gender issues and highlight trends in the sector, as well as the effects and impact of the use and appropriation of telecommunications/ICTs, broken down by gender,

instructs the Council

1   to accord high priority to monitoring the implementation of the ITU Gender Equality and Mainstreaming Policy (GEM), so that ITU can become a model organization in terms of gender and leverage the power of telecommunications/ICTs to empower women and men;

2   to continue and expand on the initiatives carried out over the past eight years and to accelerate the gender and equity mainstreaming process in ITU as a whole, within existing budgetary resources, so as to ensure capacity building and the appointment of women to senior-level positions, including ITU elected positions;

3   to examine the possibility for ITU, in close collaboration with relevant regional organizations, to take appropriate measures to establish a regional platform for women, devoted to using ICT in order to promote gender equality and empowerment of women and girls,

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[3]   These include the least developed countries, small island developing states, landlocked developing countries and countries with economies in transition.

instructs the Secretary-General

1   to continue to ensure that the gender perspective is incorporated in the work programmes, management approaches and human resource development activities of ITU, and to submit an annual written report to the Council on progress made in the implementation of the GEM policy reflecting, with statistics broken down by gender, the distribution of women and men by category within ITU, as well as the participation of women and men in ITU conferences and meetings;

2   to ensure the inclusion of a gender perspective in all ITU contributions with respect to the priority areas that must be tackled for the implementation of WSIS beyond 2015;

3   to give particular attention to gender balance for posts at the professional and higher levels in ITU, particularly in senior positions;

4   to give appropriate priority to gender balance when choosing between candidates who have equal qualifications for a post, taking into account geographical distribution (No. 154 of the ITU Constitution) and the balance between women and men;

5   to amend ITU recruitment procedures to ensure that, if the number of qualified and competent candidates so allows, at each recruitment stage, as a target at least one third of the candidates who move up to the next stage are women;

6   to report to the next plenipotentiary conference on the results and progress made on the inclusion of a gender perspective in the work of ITU, and on the implementation of this resolution;

7   to make sure, unless there are no women among the qualified candidates, that each short-list submitted to the Secretary-General for appointment includes a woman;

8   to ensure gender balance in the composition of ITU statutory committees;

9   to establish an annual GEM prize for ITU members to recognize and commend individual contributions and examples of leadership to promote gender equality;

10   to organize training in mainstreaming the gender perspective for all staff;

11   to continue to support gender mainstreaming in cooperation with other relevant organizations, through special initiatives like the GEM-TECH Award, co-organized by ITU and UN-Women;

12   to make efforts to mobilize voluntary contributions from Member States, Sector Members and others for this purpose;

13   to encourage administrations to give equal opportunities to women and men candidates for elected official posts and for membership of the Radio Regulations Board;

14   to encourage the launch of the "Global Network of women ICT decision-makers";

15   to announce a year-long call to action, with a focus on the theme "Women and girls in ICT";

16   to bring this resolution to the attention of the United Nations Secretary-General in an effort to promote greater cooperation and coordination in the policies, programmes and projects being implemented by ITU and interlinking access, use and appropriation of telecommunications/ICT and broadband among women and girls, and to promote gender equality, empowerment and the socio-economic development of women and girls;

17   to fulfil the obligations of submitting reports as required by UN-SWAP,

instructs the Director of the Telecommunication Development Bureau

1   to continue promoting among the other United Nations agencies, ITU Member States and Sector Members, the international Girls in ICT Day, which takes place every fourth Thursday of April since 2011, and during which telecommunication/ICT companies, other enterprises with telecommunication/ICT departments, telecommunication/ICT training institutions, universities, research centres and all telecommunication/ICT-related institutions are invited to organize activities for girls and young women, as well as online training and/or workshops, day camps and summer camps, in order to promote and increase the interest of, and opportunities for, women and girls in telecommunication/ICT careers during elementary, secondary and higher education;

2   to call upon women's organizations and non-governmental and civil-society organizations throughout the world to join in the celebration of the international Girls in ICT Day, as well as to provide online training and/or workshops and day camps, among others;

3   to continue the work of BDT in promoting the use of telecommunications/ICTs for the economic and social empowerment of women and girls, helping them to tackle disparities and facilitating the acquisition of skills for life,

invites Member States and Sector Members

1   to make voluntary contributions to ITU to facilitate the implementation of this resolution to the fullest extent possible;

2   to observe annually the international "Girls in ICT Day", held on the fourth Thursday of April, to share with BDT lessons learned from the "Girls in ICT Day" activities whenever necessary, and to invite ICT companies, other companies with ICT departments, ICT training institutions, universities, research centres and all ICT-related institutions to organize an open day for girls;

3   to actively support and participate in the work of BDT in promoting the use of telecommunications/ICTs for the economic and social empowerment of women and girls;

4   to actively participate in the launch of a "Global Network of women ICT decision-makers" aimed at promoting the work of ITU in using ICTs for the social and economic empowerment of women and girls, including by building partnerships and building synergies between existing networks at national, regional and international levels, as well as fostering successful strategies to improve gender balance at senior-level positions in telecommunication/ICT administrations, government, regulatory bodies and intergovernmental organizations, including ITU, and in the private sector;

5   to highlight the gender perspective in the Questions under study in the ITU-D study groups and the programmes of the Dubai Action Plan;

6   to further develop internal tools and programming guidelines in the area of promotion of gender equality in the use of ICTs;

7   to collaborate with relevant stakeholders that have significant experience in mainstreaming gender equality in projects and programmes, in order to provide specialized training for women on ICT use;

8   to provide support so that women and girls can have access to studies and careers in telecommunications/ICTs, by creating opportunities, fostering their incorporation into teaching and learning processes, and/or encouraging their professional training;

9   to support and/or promote the funding of studies, projects and proposals that contribute to overcoming gender inequalities, fostering and promoting telecommunications/ICTs to empower women and girls.

10   to nominate on an annual basis deserving organizations and individuals for the GEM-TECH Award.