RESOLUTION 123 (REV. BUSAN, 2014)

Bridging the standardization gap between developing[1] and developed countries

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

recalling

Resolution 123 (Rev. Guadalajara, 2010) of the Plenipotentiary Conference,

noting

a) that "the Union shall in particular facilitate the worldwide standardization of telecommunications, with a satisfactory quality of service" (No. 13 in Article 1 of the ITU Constitution);

b) that, in connection with the functions and structure of the ITU Telecommunication Standardization Sector (ITU-T), in Article 17, the Constitution indicates that those functions shall be "..., bearing in mind the particular concerns of the developing countries, to fulfil the purposes of the Union...";

c) that the strategic plan for the Union for 2016-2019, approved by means of Resolution 71 (Rev. Busan 2014) of this conference, and its annexes, includes under the objectives of ITU-T to "*promote the active participation of the membership, in particular developing countries, in the definition and adoption of non-discriminatory international standards (ITU-T recommendations) with a view to bridging the standardization gap";*

d) that one of the strategic goals of the Union for 2016-2019 is "Inclusiveness – Bridge the digital divide and provide broadband for all",

noting further

a) that the World Telecommunication Standardization Assembly (WTSA) adopted Resolution 54 (Rev. Dubai, 2012) to assist in bridging the standardization gap between developing and developed countries;

b) that the World Telecommunication Development Conference (WTDC) adopted Resolution 47 (Rev. Dubai, 2014), which calls for activities to enhance knowledge and effective application of recommendations of ITU-T and of the ITU Radiocommunication Sector (ITU-R) in developing countries, and Resolution 37 (Rev. Dubai, 2014), which recognizes the need to create digital opportunities in developing countries,

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

recalling

that the Geneva Plan of Action and Tunis Agenda for the Information Society of the World Summit on Information Society (WSIS) emphasize efforts to overcome the digital divide and development divides,

considering

the following outcome for ITU-T in the strategic plan for the Union for 2016-2019, adopted in Resolution 71 (Rev. Busan, 2014):

- increased participation in the ITU-T standardization process, including attendance of meetings, submission of contributions, taking leadership positions and hosting of meetings/workshops, especially from developing countries,

considering further

that focus on the following activities is still needed:

- to develop interoperable, non-discriminatory international standards (ITU-T recommendations);
- to assist in bridging the standardization gap between developed and developing countries;
- to extend and facilitate international cooperation among international and regional standardization bodies;
- to provide assistance to developing countries in bridging the digital divide by achieving broader telecommunication/information and communication technology (ICT)-enabled socio-economic development,

recognizing

a) the continued shortage of skilled human resources in the standardization field in developing countries, resulting in a low level of developing-country participation in ITU-T and ITU-R meetings, in spite of the improvement observed in such participation lately, and, consequently, in the standards-making process, leading to difficulties when interpreting ITU-T and ITU-R recommendations;

b) ongoing challenges relating to capacity building, in particular for developing countries, in the light of rapid technological innovation and increased convergence of services;

c) the moderate level of participation by representatives of developing countries in ITU standardization activities, whether through lack of awareness of these activities, difficulties in accessing information, lack of training for human talent in standardization-related matters, or lack of financial resources to travel to meeting sites, which are factors with impact in terms of widening the existing knowledge gap;

d) that technological needs and realities vary from country to country and region to region, and in many cases developing countries do not have opportunities or mechanisms to make them known;

e) that, for developing countries at the initial stage of introducing and/or switching to a new technology, it is important to have guidelines for the new technology in question that can be used to develop a national standard, which would make it possible to introduce or switch to the new technology in a timely manner;

f) that, in implementation of the provisions of the Annex to Resolution 44 (Rev. Dubai, 2012) and of Resolution 54 (Rev. Dubai, 2012) of WTSA, ITU actions have been carried out through ITU-T to assist in reducing the standardization gap between developing and developed countries;

g) the importance for developing countries of developing guidelines regarding the implementation of ITU recommendations pursuant to Resolution 44 (Rev. Dubai, 2012) of WTSA and Resolution 47 (Rev. Dubai, 2014) of WTDC;

h) the need for high-quality, demand-driven international standards, which should be developed rapidly in line with the principles of global connectivity, openness, affordability, reliability, interoperability and security;

i) the emergence of key technologies, enabling new services and applications and promoting the building of the information society, which must be taken into account in the work of ITU-T;

j) cooperation and collaboration with other standardization bodies and relevant consortia and forums are key to avoiding duplication of work and achieving efficient use of resources,

taking into account

a) that developing countries could benefit from improved capability in the application and development of standards;

b) that ITU-T and ITU-R activities and the telecommunication/ICT market could also benefit from better involvement of developing countries in standards-making and standards application;

c) that initiatives to assist in bridging the standardization gap are intrinsic to, and are a high priority task of, the Union;

d) that although ITU is making efforts to reduce the standardization gap, major disparities in knowledge and management of standards remain between developing and developed countries;

e) Resolution ITU-R 7 (Rev. Geneva, 2012) of the Radiocommunication Assembly (RA), on telecommunication development, including liaison and collaboration with ITU-D, which resolves that the Radiocommunication Advisory Group (RAG) and the Director of the Radiocommunication Bureau shall continue to cooperate actively with the Telecommunication Development Advisory Group (TDAG) and the Director of the Telecommunication Development Bureau (BDT) in identifying and implementing means of facilitating the participation of developing countries in study group activities;

f) that WTSA adopted Resolutions 32, 33, 44 and 54 (Rev. Dubai, 2012), all of which share the clear objective of contributing to bridging the standardization gap between developing and developed countries by means of:

i) providing installations, facilities and capacities in electronic working methods (EWM) in ITU-T meetings, workshops and training courses, especially for developing countries in order to promote their participation;

ii) intensifying the participation of the ITU regional offices in the activities of the Telecommunication Standardization Bureau (TSB), in order to promote and coordinate standardization activities in their regions, to apply the relevant parts of this resolution, and to initiate campaigns aimed at encouraging the affiliation to ITU of new Sector Members, Associates and Academia from developing countries;

iii) inviting the new regions and Member States to create regional groups within the sphere of the ITU-T study groups, and to create corresponding regional standardization bodies in order to work closely with the ITU-D study groups and TDAG;

g) Resolution 37 (Rev. Dubai, 2014) of WTDC, on bridging the digital divide, which aims at the establishment of international methods and mechanisms that strengthen international cooperation to bridge the digital divide by means of studies, projects and joint activities with ITU-R which seek to build capacities in efficient use of the satellite orbit/spectrum resource for the provision of satellite services, with a view to achieving affordable access to satellite broadband and facilitating network connectivity between different areas, countries and regions, especially in the developing countries, in accordance with the WSIS Geneva Action Plan and Tunis Agenda;

h) Resolution 47 (Rev. Dubai, 2014) of WTDC, on enhancement of knowledge and effective application of ITU recommendations in developing countries, including conformance and interoperability testing of systems manufactured on the basis of ITU recommendations, which invited Member States and Sector Members to continue to engage in activities to enhance the application of ITU-R and ITU-T recommendations in developing countries, and instructs the Directors of TSB and BDT, in close collaboration, to encourage the participation of developing countries in training courses, workshops and seminars by means of fellowships,

resolves to instruct the Secretary-General and the Directors of the three Bureaux

1 to work closely with each other on the follow-up and implementation of this resolution, as well as Resolutions 32, 33, 44 and 54 (Rev. Dubai, 2012) of WTSA, Resolutions 37 and 47 (Rev. Dubai, 2014) of WTDC and Resolution ITU-R 7 (Rev. Geneva, 2012) of RA, in order to step up actions intended and to reduce the standardization gap between developing and developed countries;

2 to maintain a close coordination mechanism among the three Sectors at the regional level for bridging the digital divide, through activities carried out by the ITU regional offices to that end;

3 to provide developing countries with assistance to enhance capacity building in the standardization field, including through collaboration with the relevant academia;

4 to identify ways and means to support the participation of representatives of developing countries in the meetings of the three Sectors of ITU and the dissemination of information on standardization;

5 to further collaborate with the relevant regional organizations and support their work in this area;

6 to strengthen the mechanisms for preparing and submitting reports on the implementation of the action plan associated with Resolution 44 (Rev. Dubai, 2012) of WTSA, taking into account the four-year rolling operational plans of each Bureau;

7 to promote the timely development of guidelines for developing countries on the basis of ITU-R and ITU-T recommendations, particularly those related to priority standardization issues, including the introduction of and switchover to new technologies, as well as the preparation and application of ITU recommendations,

invites Member States and Sector Members

to make voluntary contributions (financial and in-kind) to the fund for bridging the standardization gap, as well as to undertake concrete actions to support ITU's actions and the initiatives of its three Sectors and its regional offices in this matter.