

RESOLUTION 136 (REV. DUBAI, 2018)

The 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

The Plenipotentiary Conference of the International Telecommunication Union (Dubai, 2018),

recalling

- a) Resolution 182 (Rev. Busan, 2014) of the Plenipotentiary Conference, on the role of telecommunications/information and communications technologies (ICTs) in regard to climate change and the protection of the environment;
- b) Resolution 34 (Rev. Buenos Aires, 2017) of the World Telecommunication Development Conference (WTDC), on the role of telecommunications/ICT in disaster preparedness, early warning, rescue, mitigation, relief and response;
- c) Resolution 66 (Rev. Buenos Aires, 2017) of WTDC, on ICT and climate change;
- d) Resolution 48 (Rev. Buenos Aires, 2017) of WTDC, on strengthening cooperation among telecommunication regulators;
- e) Resolution 646 (Rev.WRC-15) of the World Radiocommunication Conference (WRC), on public protection and disaster relief;
- f) Resolution 647 (Rev.WRC-15) of WRC, on radiocommunication aspects, including spectrum management guidelines, for early warning and disaster prediction, detection, mitigation and relief operations relating to emergencies and disasters;

- g) Resolution 673 (Rev.WRC-12) of WRC, on the importance of Earth observation radiocommunication applications;
- h) Article 5 of the International Telecommunication Regulations, on safety of life and priority of telecommunications;
- i) the emergency telecommunication/ICT coordination mechanisms established by the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA),

recognizing

- a) the recent tragic events in the world that clearly demonstrate the need for resilient communications infrastructure and for the availability and dissemination of information to assist public safety, health and disaster-relief agencies;
- b) that there will be a continuing need to assist developing countries¹ in the use of ICTs to preserve life by ensuring a timely flow of information to government agencies, consumers, humanitarian-oriented organizations and industry involved in disaster-related rescue and recovery operations and in the provision of medical assistance to those affected by health-related emergencies;
- c) that information needs to be accessible and available also in local languages so as to ensure maximum impact;
- d) that policy-makers need to create an enabling environment to leverage the use of ICTs to address infrastructure and information needs in emergency situations, including health-related emergencies,

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

taking into account

Resolution 60/125, on international cooperation on humanitarian assistance in the field of natural disasters, from relief to development, adopted by the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) in March 2006,

noting

a) § 51 of the Geneva Declaration of Principles adopted by the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS), on the use of ICT applications for disaster prevention;

b) § 20(c) of the Geneva Plan of Action adopted by WSIS, on e-environment, which calls for the establishment of monitoring systems, using ICTs, to forecast and monitor the impact of natural and man-made disasters, particularly in developing countries, least developed countries and small economies;

c) § 30 of the Tunis Commitment adopted by WSIS, on disaster mitigation;

d) § 91 of the Tunis Agenda for the Information Society adopted by WSIS, on disaster reduction;

e) the work of the study groups of the ITU Radiocommunication Sector (ITU-R) and the ITU Telecommunication Standardization Sector (ITU-T) in adopting recommendations that provide technical information on satellite and terrestrial radiocommunication systems and wired networks and their role in disaster management, including important recommendations pertaining to the use of satellite networks in times of disasters;

f) the work of the ITU-T study groups in developing and adopting recommendations for priority/preferential emergency telecommunications and emergency telecommunication services, including consideration of use of both terrestrial and wireless telecommunication systems during emergencies and, in addition, the activities that are carried out in ITU Telecommunication Development Sector (ITU-D) Study Group 2 under its Question 5/2, on utilizing telecommunications/ICTs for disaster risk reduction and management;

g) Sustainable Development Goals 9 (Build resilient infrastructures, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation), and 11 (Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable), adopted by UNGA,

considering

a) the devastation suffered from disasters, including, but not limited to, tsunamis, earthquakes and storms, around the world, particularly in developing countries, which may suffer disproportionately due to a lack of infrastructure and, therefore, have the most to gain from information on the subject of disaster early warning, prevention, mitigation and relief efforts;

b) that ICTs are critical for addressing all phases of emergencies, including health-related emergencies, and that aspects of emergency communications associated with emergencies include, *inter alia*, disaster prediction, detection and alert and enabling the flow of information to keep individuals informed as to actions they can take to preserve life;

c) that the ITU-D m-powering initiative is designed to focus on the use of ICTs to empower communities and people;

d) that telecommunications/ICTs play an important role in early warning of disasters and facilitate disaster early warning, prevention, mitigation, relief and recovery efforts;

e) the ongoing cooperation between ITU study groups and other standards development organizations dealing with emergency telecommunications, alert and warning systems;

f) Resolution 59 (Rev. Buenos Aires, 2017) of WTDC, on strengthening coordination and cooperation among the three ITU Sectors on matters of mutual interest;

g) the need to plan for immediate availability of telecommunication services in emergency or disaster situations in affected areas or regions, through primary or back-up telecommunication systems, including those which may be movable or portable, in order to minimize impacts and facilitate relief operations;

h) that satellite services, among other radiocommunication services, may constitute a reliable platform for public safety, especially in natural disasters when existing terrestrial networks are often disrupted, and are highly useful for the coordination of humanitarian assistance by government agencies and other humanitarian entities;

i) that the Intergovernmental Conference on Emergency Telecommunications (Tampere, 1998) adopted the Tampere Convention on the Provision of Telecommunication Resources for Disaster Mitigation and Relief Operations, which entered into force on 8 January 2005;

j) that the United Nations World Conference on Disaster Reduction (Kobe, Hyogo, 2005) encouraged all States, taking into account their domestic legal requirements, to consider, as appropriate, acceding to, approving or ratifying relevant international legal instruments relating to disaster reduction, such as the Tampere Convention,

considering further

a) the activities being undertaken at the international and regional levels within ITU and other relevant organizations to establish internationally agreed means for the operation of systems for public protection and disaster relief on a harmonized and coordinated basis;

b) the ongoing development by ITU, in coordination with the United Nations and other United Nations specialized agencies, of guidelines for applying the international content standard for all-media public warning in all disaster and emergency situations;

c) the contribution of the private sector in the early warning, prevention, preparedness, mitigation and relief of emergency and disaster situations, which is proving to be effective;

d) the need for a common understanding of the network infrastructure components required to provide rapidly installed, interoperable, interworking, robust telecommunication capabilities in humanitarian assistance and disaster relief operations;

e) the importance of working towards the establishment of standards-based monitoring and worldwide early-warning systems, based on telecommunications/ICTs, that are linked to national and regional networks and that facilitate emergency disaster response all over the world, particularly in high-risk regions;

f) the importance of redundancy, infrastructure resilience and the availability of energy supply when planning for disaster situations;

g) the role that ITU-D can play, through such means as the Global Symposium for Regulators and the ITU-D study groups, in collecting and disseminating national regulatory best practices for telecommunication/ICT facilities for disaster early warning, prevention, preparedness, mitigation and relief;

h) that private and public networks include various public safety and group communications features which can play a key role in emergency and disaster preparedness, prevention, mitigation and relief situations,

convinced

a) that an international standard for communication of alert and warning information can assist in the provision of effective and appropriate humanitarian assistance and in mitigating the consequences of disasters, in particular in developing countries;

- b) that there is a need to train rescue and relief agencies, as well as the general public, in the use of telecommunication/ICT networks and services to strengthen both preparedness and response for disasters and health-related emergencies, particularly in developing countries;
- c) that the continuous use of telecommunication/ICT equipment and services is indispensable for the provision of humanitarian and emergency assistance;
- d) that the Tampere Convention provides the necessary framework for such use of telecommunication/ICT resources,

resolves to instruct the Secretary-General

- 1 to collaborate with OCHA, the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction and the World Food Programme, and with other relevant organizations, to enhance the Union's participation in activities related to emergency communications preparedness and early-warning systems;
- 2 to continue to collaborate with all relevant parties, including the United Nations and its agencies, in particular the World Health Organization, in order to define and engage in programmes to respond to and address health-related emergencies in areas within the scope and mandate of the Union;
- 3 to implement measures aimed at mobilizing support from governments, industry and other partners to respond to and address health-related emergencies;
- 4 to coordinate the activities conducted by the ITU Sectors in line with *instructs the Directors of the Bureaux 5*, in order to ensure the most effective action possible by ITU in this matter;
- 5 to assist Member States, if they so request, in their work towards their national accession to the Tampere Convention, as well as with the development of their practical arrangements for the implementation of the Tampere Convention, in close collaboration with the United Nations Emergency Relief Coordinator;

6 to assist Member States in the establishment of early warning systems for emergency situations in developing countries, as requested, and within existing budgetary resources,

instructs the Directors of the Bureaux

1 to continue to support studies through the relevant ITU study groups concerning the technical and operational implementation of solutions and the identification of best practices on public policies on emergency telecommunications at the local, national and regional levels in order to enhance disaster early warning, prevention, preparedness, relief and recovery, including response to health-related emergencies, taking into account technical and technological developments;

2 to conduct training programmes, workshops and capacity building, including consideration of the roles and participation of academia and other stakeholders, for trainers of relevant organizations and entities, especially in developing countries, on technical and operational aspects of networks and their use for monitoring and management in emergency and disaster situations, including health-related emergencies;

3 to support the development of robust, comprehensive, all-hazards emergency and disaster prediction, detection, early-warning, mitigation, response, relief and recovery systems that also take into account the specific needs of persons with disabilities, children, the elderly, displaced persons and the illiterate, at the local, national, regional and international levels, including monitoring and management systems involving the use of telecommunications/ICTs (e.g. remote sensing), in collaboration with other international agencies, in order to support coordination at the regional and global level;

4 to promote implementation by appropriate alerting authorities of the international standard for all-media public warning, in concert with ITU guidelines developed through the relevant ITU study groups for application to all disaster and emergency situations;

5 to continue to collaborate with organizations that are working in the area of standards for emergency telecommunications/ICTs and for communication of alert and warning information, in order to study the appropriate inclusion of such standards in ITU's work and their dissemination, in particular in developing countries;

6 to analyse ongoing work in all Sectors of ITU, regional entities and other expert organizations, and promote joint activities to avoid duplication of efforts and resources in the development, use and interworking of public and private telecommunications/ICTs, including radiocommunication and satellite systems, in times of emergencies and disaster relief operations in response to natural disasters;

7 to assist Member States in enhancing and strengthening the use of all available communication systems, including satellite, amateur radio and broadcasting services, in the event of the disruption of conventional power supply or telecommunication networks;

8 to assist Member States, particularly developing countries, in the use of telecommunications/ICTs to support the exchange of timely information on emergencies, including health-related emergencies, and to develop feasibility studies, project management tools and support to respond to and address emergencies, including health-related emergencies,

encourages Member States

1 in emergency and disaster relief situations, to satisfy temporary needs for spectrum in addition to what may be normally provided for in agreements with the administrations concerned, while seeking international assistance for spectrum coordination and management, in accordance with the legal framework in force in each country;

2 to work in close collaboration with the Secretary-General, the Directors of the Bureaux and other Member States, while collaborating with the emergency telecommunication/ICT coordination/cluster mechanisms of the United Nations, in the development and dissemination of tools, procedures and best practices for the effective coordination and operation of telecommunications/ICTs in disaster situations;

3 to facilitate the use by emergency organizations of both existing and new technologies, systems and applications (satellite and terrestrial), to the extent practicable, in order to satisfy interoperability requirements and to further the goals of public protection and disaster relief;

4 to develop and support national and regional centres of excellence for research, pre-planning, equipment pre-positioning and deployment of telecommunication/ICT resources for humanitarian assistance and disaster relief coordination;

5 to adopt and promote policies that encourage public and private operators to invest in the development and building of telecommunications/ICTs, including radiocommunication and satellite systems, for early warning systems and the management of emergency and disaster situations, including health-related emergencies;

6 to take appropriate measures to ensure that all operators inform local and roaming users, in a timely manner and at no cost, of the numbers in use to contact emergency services;

7 to explore the possibility of introducing a globally harmonized emergency number to supplement existing domestic emergency numbers, taking into account the relevant ITU-T recommendations, and to develop plans for preparedness, disaster recovery and continuity of activities that provide essential government information systems with the necessary redundancy and resilience;

8 to work towards their accession to the Tampere Convention as a matter of priority;

9 to cooperate and offer all possible assistance and support to consumers, humanitarian-oriented organizations and industry involved in ICTs, including for disease tracking and natural and man-made disaster and emergency response, rescue and recovery operations;

10 to promote regional, subregional, multilateral and bilateral projects and programmes to address the need to use ICTs as a tool to support responses to different types of disasters, so that life-saving infrastructure and information can be provided to local communities, especially in local languages;

11 to participate in the ITU Network of Volunteers for Emergency Telecommunications;

12 to contribute to the Global Emergency Fund for Rapid Response,

urges Member States Parties to the Tampere Convention

to take all practical steps for the application of the Tampere Convention and to work closely with the operational coordinator as provided for therein.

(Antalya, 2006) – (Rev. Guadalajara, 2010) – (Rev. Busan, 2014) – (Rev. Dubai, 2018)
