

## SUMMARY NOTES

### **INFORMAL DISCUSSION ON THE COUNCIL WORKING GROUP ON LANGUAGES (CWG-LANG)**

An informal discussion on CWG-LANG was held on Thursday, 12 July, after the Council session, to ascertain the views of councillors “*representative of and reflecting the six official ... languages*” (C-05 Res. 1238) on the future of CWG-LANG.

#### **Participants:**

Council: Ms M-T. ALAJOUANINE (F), Ms B. GONZALEZ (S), Mr N. AL-MARZOUQI (A), Mr. G. CAI (C), Mr V. MINKIN (R). *Apologies:* Mr R. BEIARD (E).

Secretariat: Ms C. BRIAND (C&P – Documents and web), Mr A. PITT (C&P - Languages), representing Mr Samaké (Secretary of CWG-LANG), Mr N. VERASTEGUI (C&P – Terminology and ICTs). *Apologies:* Mr I. SAMAKÉ (Chief, C&P - Secretary CWG-LANG), Ms E. BARON (SPM).

#### **Background**

The secretariat distributed a summary table setting out the status of work on the items mandated by PP-10 Res. 154 on languages.

CWG-LANG is still in force (C-05 Res. 1238). Its mandate is essentially set by PP-10 Res. 154. The Council has a reporting requirement to PP-14 under Res. 154.

The group had traditionally worked by correspondence and in informal meetings of the six language representatives, under the able chairmanship of the late Mr Kisrawi. The chair is now vacant.

Many of the items in Res. 154 have in fact been dealt with, and reported to and approved by the Council in Doc. C09/33(Rev.1). It is important for the secretariat to ascertain whether CWG-LANG is still needed and, if so, what items or areas of concern it should focus on.

#### **Discussion and conclusions**

During the discussion, the language representatives raised several issues, on which some information on the current status of work was provided by the secretariat.

The following conclusions may be drawn from the informal discussion:

- Language representatives value CWG-LANG and are of the opinion that it should be maintained
- Work should focus on the following items and concerns:

#### **1) *Important documents still to be translated in all six languages***

Translation policy has been set by the Council in Doc. C09/33(Rev.1). In the implementation of this policy:

- Attention should be given to the translation of certain important texts identified by the representatives, e.g. :
  - Relevant ITU-T Recommendations adopted under TAP but still not translated
  - Output report of TSAG
- Secretariat awareness of the policy adopted should be improved, to ensure that it is duly applied.

## **2) *Multilingual website***

The ITU website language policy had been adopted by the Web Editorial Board and reported to CWG-LANG (ref. Doc. C09/33(Rev.1), § 2.21). However, the current state of the website in terms of languages is deemed less than satisfactory. As the web has become one of the main communication media, for equality of treatment it is essential that users know what is/is not available in the languages and, when it is, be provided with material that is accurate, consistent and up-to-date. Specifically:

- The website language policy should be visible on the website, so that users know what pages are/are not expected to be made available the six languages
- Gaps in the availability of language versions should be eliminated (and, where a language version does not exist, this should be clearly indicated)
- Discrepancies between language pages (in terms of substance/content, up-to-date links, old/new versions, etc.) must be avoided/eliminated, or at least the reader must be alerted.

## **3) *Terminology and ICTs***

The Russian and Chinese terminology projects under CWG-LANG have been completed (30k terms each). A further regional project is under way for Russian, for additional terms. The Arabic project (based in Damascus) is on hold, for reasons of the current political situation.

Representatives identified two action points:

- Ensure coordination of terminology with and between the Sectors (invite SCV and CCV chairs to CWG-LANG meetings, harmonize T and R terminology)
- Report on progress made in the field of machine translation and the possible availability of a tool for use by members.

The UAE representative said he would raise the matter of the Arabic project in an appropriate forum.

### **Chairmanship**

The representatives were keen to put in place a new chairman, preferably from among the representatives with experience of the WG. They requested the secretariat to confer on a way forward.

### **Future**

An informal CWG-LANG meeting should be scheduled during the next round of CWG meetings.

## RESOLUTION 154 (Rev. Guadalajara, 2010)

### **Use of the six official languages of the Union on an equal footing**

The Plenipotentiary Conference of the International Telecommunication Union (Guadalajara, 2010),

*recalling*

- a) Resolution 154 (Antalya, 2006) of the Plenipotentiary Conference;
- b) Resolution 115 (Marrakesh, 2002) of the Plenipotentiary Conference;
- c) Resolution 104 (Minneapolis, 1998) of the Plenipotentiary Conference,
- d) Resolution 66 (Rev. Guadalajara, 2010) of this conference,

*reaffirming*

the fundamental principle of equal treatment of the six official languages, as enshrined in Resolutions 115 (Marrakesh, 2002) and 154 (Antalya, 2006), on the use of the six languages on an equal footing,

*noting with satisfaction and appreciation*

- a) the steps taken so far to implement Resolution 115 (Marrakesh, 2002) as from 1 January 2005 and Resolution 154 (Antalya, 2006);
- b) the progress made in the successful implementation of Resolution 104 (Minneapolis, 1998) and resulting efficiencies and economies,

*recognizing*

- a) the importance of maintaining and improving the multilingual content of services required by the universal character of United Nations system organizations, as called for in the United Nations Joint Inspection Unit report on *Multilingualism in the United Nations System* (Document JIU/REP/2002/11);
- b) that, notwithstanding the successful implementation of Resolution 115 (Marrakesh, 2002), for various reasons the switchover to six languages cannot be achieved overnight, and a "transition period" to full implementation is inevitable;
- c) that, in order to achieve such full implementation, it is necessary also to align working methods and optimize staffing levels in the six languages;
- d) the work accomplished by the Council Working Group on Languages, as well as the start made by the secretariat to implement the working group's recommendations as agreed by the Council at its 2006 session, in particular with regard to the unification of linguistic databases for definitions and terminology and the centralization of editing functions,

*recognizing further*

the budget constraints facing the Union,

*resolves*

to take all necessary measures to maximize interpretation and the translation of ITU documentation in the six languages on an equal footing, although some work in ITU (for example working groups, study groups, regional conferences) might not require the use of all six languages,

*instructs the Council*

- 1 to review the interim measures and principles for interpretation and translation proposed by the three Sectors and the General Secretariat, in order to adopt final measures, taking into consideration the financial constraints, and bearing in mind the objective of full implementation of treatment on an equal footing;
- 2 to pursue and monitor appropriate structural measures, such as:
  - fundamental review of ITU documentation and publication services with a view to eliminating any duplication and creating synergies;
  - appropriate means and measures for expediting the timely and simultaneous delivery of ITU documentation and publications in the six languages;
  - optimum levels of staffing, including core staff, temporary assistance and outsourcing;
  - judicious use of information and communication technologies in language and publications activities, taking into consideration experience gained by other international organizations, notably through the International Annual Meeting on Language Arrangements, Documentation and Publications (IAMLADP);
  - measures to reduce the size and volume of documents (page-limits, executive summaries, material in annexes or hyperlinks), when justified, without affecting the quality and content of the documents to be translated or to be published, and bearing clearly in mind the need to comply with the United Nations system objective of multilingualism;
- 3 to monitor the work carried out by the ITU secretariat on:
  - paying special attention to completion of the integration of the terminology database for Arabic, Chinese and Russian and provide for the priority translation into Arabic, Chinese and Russian of terms and definitions;
  - merging all existing databases for definitions and terminology into a centralized system, with proper measures for its maintenance, expansion and updating;
  - creating the necessary centralized editing functions for each language, on an equal footing between languages;
  - harmonizing and unifying working procedures in the six language services, and providing them with the necessary qualified staff and tools to meet their requirements;

- enhancing ITU's image and the effectiveness of its public-information work, making use of all six languages of the Union, in, among other things, publishing ITU News, creating ITU websites, organizing Internet broadcasting and archiving of recordings, and issuing documents of a public-information nature, including announcements of world and regional ITU TELECOM exhibitions and forums, e-flashes and such like;
- 4           to continue the work of the Council Working Group on Languages, in order to monitor progress and report to the Council on the implementation of this resolution;
- 5           to report to the next plenipotentiary conference on the implementation of this resolution.



**STATUS OF WORK UNDER RESOLUTION 154 (REV. GUADALAJARA, 2010)**

§ of Res. 154	Item	Status	References/implementations
<i>Resolves</i>	to take all necessary measures to maximize interpretation and the translation of ITU documentation in the six languages on an equal footing, although some work in ITU (for example working groups, study groups, regional conferences) might not require the use of all six languages	Implemented - Now a continuing operational objective	C09/33(Rev.1) §§2.1-2.3 CWG-LANG/17(Rev.1), §2 Information is now reported in Op Plan and Rapp Act
<i>Instructs the Council 1</i>	to review the interim measures and principles for interpretation and translation proposed by the three Sectors and the General Secretariat, in order to adopt final measures, taking into consideration the financial constraints, and bearing in mind the objective of full implementation of treatment on an equal footing	Implemented	C09/33(Rev.1) §§2.4-2.7 and Annex 1
<i>Instructs the Council 2</i>	to pursue and monitor appropriate structural measures, such as:		
	fundamental review of ITU documentation and publication services with a view to eliminating any duplication and creating synergies	Implemented	C09/33(Rev.1) §2.8 CWG-LANG/17(Rev.1), §3.1
	appropriate means and measures for expediting the timely and simultaneous delivery of ITU documentation and publications in the six languages	Implemented - Now a continuing operational objective	C09/33(Rev.1) §2.9 CWG-LANG/17(Rev.1), §3.2 Work under Resolution 165 Information is now reported in Op Plan and Rapp Act
	optimum levels of staffing, including core staff, temporary assistance and outsourcing	Implemented	C09/33(Rev.1) §2.10 CWG-LANG/17(Rev.1), §3.3

	<p>judicious use of information and communication technologies in language and publications activities, taking into consideration experience gained by other international organizations, notably through the International Annual Meeting on Language Arrangements, Documentation and Publications (IAMLADP)</p>	<p>Implemented - continuing operational objective</p> <p>Work on MT system requested by Japan - ongoing</p>	<p>C09/33(Rev.1) \$2.12-13 CWG-LANG/17(Rev.1), \$3.4</p> <p>ITU chairs JIAMCATT WG on MT</p>
	<p>measures to reduce the size and volume of documents (page-limits, executive summaries, material in annexes or hyperlinks), when justified, without affecting the quality and content of the documents to be translated or to be published, and bearing clearly in mind the need to comply with the United Nations system objective of multilingualism</p>	<p>Significant measures implemented - Now a continuing operational objective</p>	<p>C09/33(Rev.1) \$2.14 CWG-LANG/17(Rev.1), \$3.5</p> <p>Various resolutions and decisions on page-limits Paperless operation Work on timely submission Information is now reported in Op Plan and Rapp Act</p>
<p>Instructs the Council 3</p>	<p>to monitor the work carried out by the ITU secretariat on</p> <p>paying special attention to completion of the integration of the terminology database for Arabic, Chinese and Russian and provide for the priority translation into Arabic, Chinese and Russian of terms and definitions; merging all existing databases for definitions and terminology into a centralized system, with proper measures for its maintenance, expansion and updating</p>	<p>C &amp; R: Implemented</p> <p>A: On hold</p>	<p>Chinese: Completed - 30k terms generated by special project have been imported into Termitte</p> <p>Russian: Completed - 30k terms generated by special project have been imported into Termitte</p> <p>Arabic: Current regional project not yet completed. Expected completion date was 2012 (15k terms). Second regional project pending outcome of first. However, on hold due to events, notably in SYR.</p> <p><u>Note:</u> Additional Russian project (+ 30k terms) under way</p>



	creating the necessary centralized editing functions for each language, on an equal footing between languages	Implemented	C09/33(Rev.1) §2.16 CWG-LANG/17(Rev.1), §3.7
	harmonizing and unifying working procedures in the six language services, and providing them with the necessary qualified staff and tools to meet their requirements	Implemented	C09/33(Rev.1) §2.17 CWG-LANG/17(Rev.1), §3.8
	enhancing ITU's image and the effectiveness of its public-information work, making use of all six languages of the Union, in, among other things, publishing ITU News, creating ITU websites, organizing Internet broadcasting and archiving of recordings, and issuing documents of a public-information nature, including announcements of world and regional ITU TELECOM exhibitions and forums, e-flashes and such like	Public information – Ongoing objective  ITU News – Implemented  IBS - Implemented  Website: Partly implemented – To be pursued as an ongoing operational objective	C09/33(Rev.1) §2.19  ITU News now produced in six languages Operational measures taken for outsourcing.  See IBS webpage  C09/33(Rev.1) §2.21 Language policy adopted by Web Editorial Board  CWG-LANG/17(Rev.1), §3.10
<i>Instructs the Council 4</i>	to continue the work of the Council Working Group on Languages, in order to monitor progress and report to the Council on the implementation of this resolution		
<i>Instructs the Council 5</i>	to report to the next plenary conference on the implementation of this resolution.		

