INTERNATIONAL TELECOMMUNICATION UNION

INFORMATION DOCUMENT

Report on Secretary General's Public Consultation on the 2016-2019 ITU Strategy

1 Introduction to the Secretary General's Public Consultation on the ITU 2016-2019 Strategic Plan

The Council Member States launched in June 2013 the development of the ITU Strategic Plan for 2016-2019, which should be approved at the ITU Plenipotentiary Conference in October 2014.

In preparing the Secretary General's input to this work of the Council, the Secretary General has requested informal public inputs to the debate, asking for views and ideas on what it is expected from ITU in the future, where ITU should direct its efforts to serve best interests of all stakeholders, and which challenges ITU should be prepared to meet.

The Public Consultation was held from August 7, 2013 to September 23, 2013 (extended from the original deadline of September 6, 2013). An interactive platform[1] (www.itu.int/PublicConsultations) was launched for this purpose, and all contributions, including the ones received via e-mail to strategy@itu.int, have been published on this platform, upon contributors' authorization.

The Secretary General received 19 detailed comments and contributions, 5 institutional (1 administration, 1 vendor of ICT equipment, and 3 civil society and NGOs) and 14 from individuals.

This document highlights the main trends of the consultation and comments that were made with regards to the ITU 2016-2019 Strategy and reflects solely the views of the authors and organizations who participated in the consultation.

The main findings of the Consultation and overall suggestions for the 2016-2019 ITU Strategy are summarized below:

- Strengthen focus on clearly defined strategic goals of the Union;
- Be aligned with the global development agenda;
- Engage in enhanced coordination around ICT issues (cooperate with relevant organizations – e.g. WIPO, WTO, ICANN, IETF, etc.);
- Embrace multi-stakeholders processes;
- Focus on the importance of broadband;
- Emphasize importance of activities related to spectrum management and standards;
- Continue efforts on cybersecurity;
- Be people-centered.

The key findings for ITU's strategic priorities and challenges will be further analyzed below, along with an overview of the responses provided to the questionnaire of the public consultation.

2 Key Findings

2.1 Strengthen focus on clearly defined strategic goals

Contributions agree on the major role ITU has to play in facilitating citizens' full participation and enjoyment of the evolving digital environment in order to maximize its socio-economic benefits. Some inputs (UK, Individuals: 10, 18)[2] suggest that this role should be clearly highlighted and that the Union's priorities should focus on clearly defined strategic goals.

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[1] Based on Crowdicity® - http://itu-ideas.crowdicity.com/

[2] Contributions by organizations/administrations are referenced by the name of the entity, while individual contributions are referenced according to the numbering in Table 2 (Section 4). For the full list of contributions, see Section 4.

Some contributions (UK, ICANN) suggest that ITU should prioritize work in its areas of expertise, should not necessarily undertake every activity proposed, and should avoid duplication of efforts.

2.2 Alignment with the global development agenda

Many contributions (UK, ICANN, SAMENA, Individuals: 12, 18) agree that the Union should focus on enabling and fostering the growth and sustained development of telecommunication networks, applications and services, in order to maximize the telecommunications' role as an essential enabling facility for socio-economic development.

Some inputs (Luqcom, SAMENA, Individual: 18) emphasize the importance of the formulation of a global framework for achieving sustainable development goals with assistance of ICTs. A commonly proposed theme is that ITU's work should be aligned with the global development agenda and ITU's work should contribute in achieving the millennium/sustainable development goals.

2.3 Enhanced coordination and collaboration

Several contributions suggested active collaboration and establishment of global ICT partnerships. A contribution (UK) suggests that:

> "ITU should engage positively and actively with other organisations involved in ICT issues. Because in the digital ecosystem there are so many actors with specific roles and responsibilities and outlooks, all stakeholders have to play their part, and this is the case in particular among international institutions. As part of that progress, we should see International agencies working hand in hand, making the most of their respective expertise and remit for the benefit of all nations and people."

The contributor complements that:

> "this approach should be about applying the multi-stakeholder ways of working (from inception, through discussion to decision) in a collaborative and transparent manner between all these agencies amongst others, and interacting with stakeholders beyond those IOs, so that ICT and Internet Governance systems can deliver as much economic and social benefit as possible. That should include one of the most pressing challenges that stakeholders should work together on – namely, the continuing need to expand and lower the cost for citizens of Internet access, especially in developing regions."

Another contribution (ICANN) suggests that ITU should:

> "align work plans to ensure that its work is complementary to that of the Internet organizations, including but not limited to ICANN, the Internet Society (ISOC), the Internet Engineering Task Force (IETF), the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C), and the Regional Internet Registries (RIRs)."

2.4 Embrace multi-stakeholder processes

Embracing the multi-stakeholder process is a common theme to a number of the contributions received.

A contribution (UK) suggests that:

> "ITU should proactively and swiftly work so that all its processes and fora become inclusive of all relevant stakeholders, and for information to be made publicly, transparently available whenever possible. As recognised and committed to by the WSIS, the ability of industry and other nongovernment representatives such as users, academia and the technical community, to participate actively in ICT and Internet governance decision-making processes is not only good governance, but necessary in order for any policy or regulation to have the most relevance and chances of success."

Another contribution (ICANN) recognizes that:

> "ITU showed during the preparatory process for the World Telecommunication Policy Forum (WTPF) that it is able to facilitate multistakeholder engagement. The Multistakeholder Preparatory Platform (MPP) for the WSIS+10 Review High Level Meeting appears to be following the same approach."

Other contributions (Luqcom, SAMENA, Individuals: 6, 18) note that implementing an effective multi-stakeholder process is a challenge and suggest certain options for enhancing such a process.

2.5 Fostering broadband and bridging the digital divide

The importance of bridging the digital divide and the significant role that ITU can play in fostering access to and increased use of broadband have been identified by most contributions.

A contribution (UK) highlights the required focus on supporting universal connectivity and access to broadband, by suggesting that "ITU should use its resources and expertise to support Members in fostering the rollout of dynamic, competitive telecommunications network infrastructure with a well regulated market environment".

The importance of investments and fair competition has been highlighted by all organizations contributing to the public consultation. It is recognized that promotion of broadband and ICT infrastructure investment is a challenge, therefore it should be prioritized.

A contribution (Huawei) suggests that:

> "ITU could continue developing initiatives that explain the benefits of different financial models for the deployment of broadband networks. The use of Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) schemes and the rollout of National Broadband Networks (NBNs) are, for instance, good examples of initiatives that have brought tremendous progress to dozens of millions of people worldwide".

Another contribution (ICANN) suggests to:

> "focus on the provision of both fixed and mobile Broadband services. This could be facilitated through an enhanced emphasis on good regulatory practice; with sound economic based regulation for telecommunication services and with encouragement of countries to have commercially and politically independent Telecommunication Regulators."

It is also suggested (SAMENA) that:

> "ITU should consider in its strategy, conditions improving investment activities, inter alia through a flexible environment that fosters growth and innovation; shifting the focus of national stakeholders towards new regional and international challenges; establishing dynamic efficiency as the centerpieces of policies; and strengthening technological neutrality as a basic principle".

As noted by another contribution (UK) "spreading networks further will also require investment, which only a genuine competitive dynamic and good governance can deliver". According to another contribution (Individual: 8) ITU could "inculcate a sense of healthy competition among the newbies and promote an innovation friendly environment".

Bridging the digital divide is considered to be a top priority and a challenge by most contributions (SAMENA, Individuals: 6, 15, 16, 18), not only with regard to the access and connectivity, but also in terms of the ICT skills gap.

2.6   Emphasize spectrum management and standards

Most contributions (UK, ICANN, SAMENA, Individuals: 11, 14, 17, 18, 19) suggest emphasis on spectrum coordination as well as technical harmonization and standardization. ITU is recognized (UK) as "the expert on telecommunications issues, with in particular a crucial role in the global management of the radio frequency spectrum and satellite orbits". The contribution suggests continuing "promoting better and innovative use of spectrum as well as fostering future-looking, enlightened approaches to spectrum allocation, regulation and management. The Union's standards work continues to be important of course e.g. on the 'green agenda', and on IPV6 etc." Another contribution (ICANN) recognizes spectrum as "an area where ITU has unquestioned policy expertise" and suggests that resources are accordingly aligned to what is considered to be part of the core mandate of ITU.

2.7   Continue efforts on Cybersecurity

Cybersecurity is referred to by most of the contributions (Luqcom, SAMENA, Individuals: 9, 12, 13, 15, 17, 18) as a challenge for ICTs and an area where ITU has a vital and, potentially, enhanced role to play.

Concerns about recent developments related to the security of information and personal data have been raised (Individual: 9), as well as concerns related to security of mobile banking and financial transactions (Individuals: 8, 13).

2.8   Be People-centered

There is a virtually unanimous claim amongst the individual contributors (Individuals: 6, 7, 8, 13, 14, 15, 17) about the need to put the human being and its wellness at the center of the work of ITU, by focusing on people and delivering results that matter to everyone.

2.9   Other trends

Capacity building

Many contributions (UK, ICANN, Individuals: 10, 18) agree that ITU is well placed to provide capacity assistance to Member States, particularly in the development context. Others (Individuals: 13, 14, 17) propose that strengthening the capacity of less developed countries in respect of ICT development should be a top priority for ITU.

Accessibility

Accessibility has been identified as an important area for ITU's activities by several contributions (Luqcom, Individuals: 8, 13, 18). A person with disabilities (Individual: 8) describes how the ease of access to learning, facilitated by ICTs, enables education for persons with disabilities; how ICTs enable their ability to work and grow professionally; how improved ICT-enabled mobility is significantly improving life, and how ICTs bring "the world to our finger-tips" via mobile and portable computers and devices.

3   Overview of the answers to the questionnaire

The Section below summarizes individual responses to the questionnaire.

Awareness of the mandate of the ITU

The mandate of ITU was well known to all of those who participated in the Public Consultation.

Main ways in which life and activities are affected by information and communication technologies

Access to information, anywhere and anytime, is crucial for most contributors. They also highlight that ICTs positively impact life "as a means of easy communication, as access to the global village, by bridging geographic barrier and as a means of fostering change for global good". Access to "information, entertainment and market places on a mouse click" is described as life changing.

Trends in information and communication technologies that ITU should consider

Main ICT trends identified, to be considered by ITU when designing its future strategy, include: Ubiquitous broadband, Internet of Things, Cloud Computing, Big Data, Mobility, as well as Advancements in Nanotechnology, Artificial Intelligence and Energy Efficiency. Contributions also pointed out increasing importance of social media as a major influencer in the patterns of usage of ICTs.

Negative trends have also been identified by contributors, mainly potential increase of cyber-security issues.

Main areas and opportunities for improvement of the ITU

Bridging the digital divide and generally ensuring inclusiveness are considered to require the key focus of ITU's future work. In particular, contributions suggest that ITU should further focus on its work on reaching out to digitally disadvantaged regions; bringing industry and academia together; and working more closely to empower women in technology. Other contributions identify "Inclusive governance" as an area for possible improvement, "need to focus more on linking health and communications" and stronger focus on "standardization of existing and future explored technologies". Further areas identified are accessibility, cyber-security, internet governance, "efficient and optimized use of spectrum across the globe", and "use of telecom, broadband and ICTs for financial inclusion".

Top achievements for ITU to accomplish in 2016-2019

The top achievements contributors would like to see ITU accomplishing in 2016-2019 are:

- Succeed in bridging the digital divide;
- Cooperate with all major actors in the ICT field;
- Promote broadband access, along with access to ICTs, as a fundamental right of the world citizen;
- Empower women online and inspire more women and girls to become active players in the ICT industry;
- Manage to develop within the global financial situation.

Top challenges for the ITU's work

The top challenges for the ITU's work are considered by individual contributors to be:

- Ensuring ICT safety and privacy of data;
- Overcoming the digital divide and ensuring access to ICTs for all;
- Building capacity in less developed countries;
- Increasing demand for cost effective deployment of broadband connectivity;
- Completion of the digital switch over.

4   List of Contributions

All contributions received for the Secretary General's Public Consultation on the 2016-2019 Strategy are listed below. The detailed contributions are available online on the interactive platform (www.itu.int/PublicConsultations).

Table 1: Contributions by organizations/administrations

Date	No.	Organization / Administration
5 Sep	1.	UK
6 Sep	2.	Huawei Technologies
7 Sep	3.	Luqcom Informatics / Nigeria
9 Sep	4.	ICANN
23 Sep	5.	SAMENA

Table 2: Individual contributions

Date	No.	Individual Contributor	Country	Title
3 Aug	6.	Anonymous	Switzerland	Foster international cooperation and global partnerships on ICT's
4 Aug	7.	Subrat Kumar Prusty		Survival and happiness for all with ICT
4 Aug	8.	Raabia Irfan	Pakistan	Earth - Planet with Humans
12 Aug	9.	Rustam Yunusov		
22 Aug	10.	Richard Hill	US	
22 Aug	11.	Grigori Saghyan	Armenia	Reconfiguration
5 Sep	12.	Sanjay Chaudhary	India	
5 Sep	13.	Mansoor Khan	Pakistan	Mobile Banking - an improved way of living
5 Sep	14.	Ashraf Hasanov	Azerbaijan	Human and community based telecommunication is higher priority than business interests!
6 Sep	15.	Arshad Masih	Cambodia	Connected Life Loop
9 Sep	16.	Tony Rutkowski	USA	Minding the Gap at the ITU-T
16 Sep	17.	Sanjay Chaudhary	India	Bringing ITU to developing world
23 Sep	18.	Zakir Syed	Pakistan	
23 Sep	19.	Marcia Santos	Brazil	Concrete wide social benefits through IoT, Big Data and Cloud Computing