

RESOLUTION 46 (Rev. Baku, 2025)

Assistance to Indigenous Peoples and communities through information and communication technologies

The World Telecommunication Development Conference (Baku, 2025),

recalling

- a) Resolution 139 (Rev. Bucharest, 2022) of the Plenipotentiary Conference, on the use of telecommunications/information and communication technologies (ICTs) to bridge the digital divide and build an inclusive information society;
- b) Resolution 200 (Rev. Bucharest, 2022) of the Plenipotentiary Conference, on the Connect 2030 Agenda for global telecommunication/ICT, including broadband, for sustainable development,

recognizing

- a) the unique cultural, social and linguistic identities of Indigenous Peoples, which are essential to the diversity of human heritage and crucial for global sustainability;
- b) the need to achieve the goal of digital inclusion, enabling universal, sustainable, ubiquitous and affordable access to ICTs for all, including Indigenous Peoples, and to facilitate accessibility of ICTs for all, in the framework of access to information and knowledge;
- c) the need to ensure the inclusion of Indigenous Peoples in the information society, as outlined in the Geneva Declaration of Principles and the Tunis Commitment of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) and other relevant United Nations documents, and to contribute to the development of their communities using ICTs, based on tradition and self-sustainability;
- d) that it is necessary to address obstacles that hinder the participation of Indigenous Peoples in the development of relevant telecommunication/ICT projects, and to have the necessary capacity building and digital skills to ensure better oversight of their telecommunication/ICT infrastructure;
- e) that digital public goods and digital public infrastructure can be key drivers of inclusive digital transformation and innovation,

considering

- a) the ongoing work of ITU in facilitating inclusive and equitable telecommunication/ICT development;
- b) that the Telecommunication Development Bureau (BDT) provides assistance to Indigenous Peoples through its various programmes;
- c) that the multistakeholder report delivered by the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues and the International Indigenous Steering Committee to the Tunis WSIS plenary (November 2005) highlighted the size of the population of Indigenous Peoples around the world and the essential role of public-private partnerships and multistakeholder cooperation to effectively integrate indigenous communities into the information society,

taking into account

- a) that the WSIS Geneva Plan of Action and Tunis Commitment established that the attainment of their objectives with regard to Indigenous Peoples and communities is a priority;
- b) that Article 16 of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples states the following: "Indigenous peoples have the right to establish their own media in their own languages and to have access to all forms of non-indigenous media without discrimination";
- c) that Article 41 of the aforementioned Declaration states that: "The organs and specialized agencies of the United Nations system and other intergovernmental organizations shall contribute to the full realization of the provisions of this Declaration through the mobilization, *inter alia*, of financial cooperation and technical assistance";
- d) that according to the WSIS 10-year review (WSIS+10) statement on implementation of the WSIS outcomes, digital integration remains an overall priority, beyond affordability and access to ICT networks, services and applications, particularly in rural and remote areas;

e) the linkage between WSIS Action Lines C2, C5 and C6 and the targets of Goal 9 of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which include significantly increasing access to telecommunication/ICTs, improving digital inclusion and striving to facilitate universal and affordable Internet access in the least developed countries by 2030 at the latest,

recognizing further

a) that the public policy recommendations and best practices developed through the Connect a School, Connect a Community initiative, in accordance with the principles established by WSIS, indicate that there are minimum conditions in the sphere of technology, capacity building, regulatory framework, self-sustainability and participation, and content development, which must be ensured to achieve ICT development in indigenous regions;

b) that the Declaration of the Second Continental Summit on Indigenous Communication of Abya Yala, held in Mexico in 2013, decided to move ahead on consultation processes with international organizations in the interests of operationalizing the rights of Indigenous Peoples to communication laid down in the above-mentioned United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples;

c) the necessity of continuing to foster efforts and training programmes for Indigenous Peoples and indigenous communities focusing on telecommunication/ICT skills that are relevant to their cultural practices and technological innovations, while at the same time ensuring the availability of resources and spectrum to support the development and sustainability of telecommunication/ICT networks operated by Indigenous Peoples;

d) that it is important to monitor closely the evolving communication experiences of the peoples in question and add to the public policy recommendations and best practices developed by ITU, taking into account the underlying technological innovations and organizational approaches that have stimulated their growth;

e) that the ITU Telecommunication Development Sector (ITU-D) is working towards digital inclusion to guarantee that, in the development of the information society, no one is left behind, and some groups might require specific attention within the context of intersectionality;

- f) that Indigenous Peoples and indigenous communities generally live in remote and rural areas, which also require priority attention;
- g) that challenges faced by Indigenous Peoples may be addressed through making use of telecommunications/ICTs, including new and emerging telecommunications/ICTs, to promote their digital inclusion,

resolves

- 1 to reinforce assistance to Indigenous Peoples in all BDT programmes to ensure that these programmes pay specific attention to their needs and serve the groups among them that require priority attention;
- 2 to promote and support digital inclusion of Indigenous Peoples in general, and in particular their participation in workshops, seminars, forums and training on telecommunications/ICTs, including new and emerging telecommunications/ICTs for social and economic development, considering the generation of information in linguistic variations;
- 3 to support, through the ITU Academy¹, human-resource training programmes in the design and management of public policies and strategies aimed at the development of ICTs for Indigenous Peoples and indigenous communities, within available BDT funds and human resources;
- 4 to support, through the ITU Academy, capacity-building programmes for Indigenous Peoples in the installation, operation, administration, maintenance and development of ICTs and networks in indigenous communities;
- 5 to incorporate, in these training programmes, best practices, experience and knowledge that the Indigenous Peoples have developed on the matter and, where appropriate, include the participation of indigenous experts and mechanisms for exchange and internships among their members, in accordance with applicable ITU rules and regulations governing recruitment;
- 6 to update the research on best practices and public policy recommendations for the development of ICTs in indigenous communities and foster the study of mechanisms that ensure the availability of spectrum for network deployment;

¹ The ITU Academy initiative encompasses the ITU Academy training centre (ATC) and Internet training centre initiatives.

7 to promote training and innovative solutions through pilot projects that enable the implementation of local communication networks administered and operated by Indigenous Peoples;

8 in line with the above, the purposes of the Union, the WSIS outcomes and the SDGs, to recognize the global initiative of assistance to Indigenous Peoples worldwide as an integral part of the activities of BDT;

9 to promote and support research on telecommunication/ICT solutions that facilitate access to the use of telecommunication/ICT services for Indigenous Peoples;

10 to support the strengthening and creation of capacity-building for Indigenous Peoples on open standards and interoperable telecommunications/ICTs to promote access to, and delivery of, telecommunication/ICT services,

instructs the Director of the Telecommunication Development Bureau

1 to carry out the necessary actions to reinforce the implementation of the ITU-D action plan as it relates to Indigenous Peoples, establishing collaboration mechanisms to enable the Member States and relevant regional and international organizations and cooperation agencies to share best practices, knowledge and experiences related to telecommunication/ICT development for Indigenous Peoples;

2 to invite ITU-D Study Group 1 to continue its studies under the respective study Question (ICT accessibility) on the best means for providing access to telecommunication/ICT services in rural, isolated, underserved and unserved areas for indigenous communities;

3 to promote further the use of all appropriate means of telecommunications/ICTs in order to facilitate effective development and implementation of telecommunication/ICT services and applications to indigenous communities through the relevant programmes;

4 that, within the allocated resources in the financial plan and biennial budget as approved by the ITU Council, as well as through partnerships, the necessary financial and human resources be allocated within BDT to respond to the existing global initiative for Indigenous Peoples;

5 to recognize the importance of issues affecting Indigenous Peoples worldwide in the determination of priority activities for ITU-D;

6 in line with the above, the purposes of the Union, the WSIS outcomes and the SDGs, to recognize the global initiative of the assistance to Indigenous Peoples as an integral part of the activities of BDT;

7 to coordinate efforts on supporting governments for the development of telecommunication/ICT services in indigenous communities, fostering collaboration, policy development, and capacity-building initiatives to ensure long-term impact,

requests the Secretary-General

1 to bring the continuous assistance provided by BDT to Indigenous Peoples through its activities to the attention of the next plenipotentiary conference, with a view to providing appropriate financial and human resources for the relevant actions and projects to be implemented in the telecommunication sector;

2 to submit a report on the BDT outcomes and activities in implementing this resolution to the Plenipotentiary Conference (Doha, 2026), with a view to providing appropriate financial and human resources for the relevant actions and projects to be implemented in the telecommunication sector,

invites Member States

1 to provide the necessary facilities and information to enable the participation of members of Indigenous Peoples and indigenous communities in the activities provided for in this resolution;

2 to support the integration of Indigenous knowledge into ICT curricula and training materials, in order to empower youth and local communities to preserve their heritage through technology;

3 to develop digital literacy programmes and create awareness among Indigenous Peoples and communities on the availability and use of telecommunication/ICT services and applications.