

INTERNATIONAL TELECOMMUNICATION UNION

General Secretariat



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Subject: **Planning schedule for the fourth World Telecommunication Policy Forum (WTPF) on convergence and emerging policy issues**

Dear Sir/Madam,

The Plenipotentiary Conference, in Resolution 2 (Revised, Marrakesh, 2002), decided to establish and maintain the World Telecommunication Policy Forum (WTPF) as a venue for discussing strategies and policies of high current policy interest in the changing telecommunication environment, with non-binding outcomes.

At the 2006 Plenipotentiary, by Decision 9 (Antalya, 2006) (attached), it was decided to convene a fourth WTPF in Geneva, in the first quarter of 2009, in order to discuss and exchange views on the following topics:

- convergence, including internet-related public policy matters;
- the implications of the continued development of convergence, next-generation networks, and internet for several domains, particularly for capacity building, especially in developing countries;
- emerging telecommunications policy and regulatory issues;
- new and emerging issues as referred to in Resolution 146 (Antalya, 2006) (attached) on the Review of the International Telecommunication Regulations.

Pursuant to the Decision of the Plenipotentiary Conference, the arrangements for the fourth WTPF will be similar to those for the first three. In particular, the discussions will be based on a report by the Secretary-General, which will incorporate the contributions of Member States, Sector Members and Associates, and serve as the Forum's only working document. Furthermore, the fourth WTPF shall draw up a report and, if possible, opinions for consideration by Member States, Sector Members and relevant ITU meetings.

In accordance with the decision by the ITU Council, I shall be convening a balanced, informal group of experts - who are active in preparing for the Forum in their own country - to assist in the successive stages of the preparatory process. The proposed deadline for nominations for this group of experts is 15 December 2007.

To give the Membership as much opportunity as possible for contributing to the preparations for this important event, at different stages, the Report of the Secretary-General should be prepared according to the following proposed timetable (subject to confirmation by Council 2007):

30 June 2007	Deadline for membership to submit materials considered relevant for the first draft of the Secretary General's Report.
1 September 2007	Online posting and circulation to membership of the first draft of the Secretary General's report (drawn up on the basis of available material).
15 December 2007	Deadline for receipt of membership comments on the first draft and additional materials for the second draft. Deadline for nominations for a balanced group of experts, to advise the Secretary-General on the further elaboration of the report and of draft opinions associated with it.
Spring 2008	First meeting of the group of experts.
30 June 2008	Online posting and circulation of second draft (incorporating comments and broad outlines for possible draft opinions).
30 September 2008	Deadline for receipt of comments on second draft.
Autumn 2008	Second meeting of the group of experts.
15 December 2008	Finalizing the Report of the Secretary General, and deadline for its publication.
24 March 2009	Proposed date for Information Session
25-27 March 2009	Proposed dates for 4 th WTPF on Convergence and emerging policy issues

The first meeting of the group of experts is scheduled for spring 2008 in Geneva and a second meeting is tentatively planned for autumn 2008. Additional meetings might be scheduled as required. Documents related to the 4th WTPF will be placed on the ITU website, at: <http://www.itu.int/wtpf/> .

In accordance with past practice, an Information Session will be held on the day before the opening of the WTPF. Furthermore, participation in the WTPF will be open not only to Member States, Sector Members and Associates but also to the public and the media, who will be able to attend the Forum without, however, the right to intervene directly, unless invited to do so.

Finally, I should like to appeal to the Union's membership as well as to all other interested parties to make voluntary contributions towards a Trust Fund that will be established to cover the costs of the 4th WTPF and to assist representatives from the least developed countries (LDCs) to participate.

Yours sincerely,

Dr Hamadoun I. TOURE
Secretary-General

Attachment: Decision 9 and Resolution 146 (Antalya, 2006)

DECISION 9 (Antalya, 2006)

Fourth World Telecommunication Policy Forum

The Plenipotentiary Conference of the International Telecommunication Union (Antalya, 2006),

considering

a) Resolution 2 (Rev. Marrakesh, 2002) of the Plenipotentiary Conference on the maintaining of the World Telecommunication Policy Forum (WTPF) in order to discuss and exchange views and information on telecommunication policy and regulatory matters, especially on global and cross-sectoral issues;

b) Resolution 146 (Antalya, 2006) of this conference on the review of the International Telecommunication Regulations,

noting

a) the relevant outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society;

b) that the purposes of the Union are, *inter alia*, to promote, at international level, the adoption of a broader approach to the issues of telecommunications in the global information economy and society, to promote the extension of the benefits of the new telecommunication technologies to all the world's inhabitants and to harmonize the actions of Member States and Sector Members in the attainment of those ends;

c) that ITU is uniquely positioned and has the necessary experience to provide a forum for the coordination of, exchange of information on, discussion of and harmonization of national, regional and international telecommunication strategies and policies;

d) that WTPF has provided a venue for discussion of global and cross-sectoral issues by high-level participants, thus contributing to the advance of world telecommunications,

considering further

a) that convergence, including Internet-related public policy matters, is one of the topics of high current interest to ITU Member States and Sector Members;

b) that the continued development of convergence, next-generation networks, and Internet also has significant implications for several domains, particularly for capacity building, especially in developing countries;

c) that a study of emerging telecommunications policy and regulatory issues is also amongst the topics of high current interest to ITU Member States and Sector Members;

d) that a study of new and emerging issues as referred to in Resolution 146 (Antalya, 2006) is also among the topics of high current interest to ITU Member States and Sector Members,

decides

1 to convene the fourth WTPF in Geneva in the first quarter of 2009, in order to discuss and exchange views on the themes listed above, with the draft agenda shown in the Annex to this Decision;

2 that the fourth WTPF shall draw up a report and, if possible, opinions for consideration by ITU Member States and Sector Members and relevant ITU meetings;

3 that arrangements for the fourth WTPF shall be in accordance with applicable Council decisions for such fora.

ANNEX TO DECISION 9

Draft agenda

Fourth World Telecommunication Policy Forum

- 1 Inauguration of the fourth World Telecommunication Policy Forum
- 2 Election of the chairman
- 3 Opening remarks and presentations
- 4 Organization of the work of the Forum
- 5 Presentation of the Secretary-General's report
- 6 Presentation of comments by the membership on the report
- 7 Discussion
- 8 Consideration of draft opinions
- 9 Adoption of the chairman's report and opinions
- 10 Other business

RESOLUTION 146 (Antalya, 2006)

Review of the International Telecommunication Regulations

The Plenipotentiary Conference of the International Telecommunication Union (Antalya, 2006),

considering

- a) that the International Telecommunication Regulations (ITRs) were last amended in Melbourne in 1988;
- b) that Resolution 121 (Marrakesh, 2002) of the Plenipotentiary Conference instructed the Council to establish a working group to study the ITRs and to prepare a report to the 2005 session of the Council for transmission to the Plenipotentiary Conference (Antalya, 2006);
- c) that the studies conducted by that working group of the Council did not result in a consensus regarding how to proceed (see PP-06/20(Rev.1)(Add.6));
- d) that treaty-level provisions are required with respect to international telecommunication networks and services;
- e) that the international telecommunications environment has significantly evolved, both from the technical and policy perspectives, and that it continues to evolve rapidly;
- f) that advances in technology have resulted in an increased use of IP-enabled infrastructure and relevant applications presenting both opportunities and challenges for ITU Member States and Sector Members;
- g) that as technology evolves, Member States are evaluating their policy and regulatory approaches to ensure an enabling environment that fosters supportive, transparent, pro-competitive, and predictable policies, as well as legal and regulatory frameworks that provide appropriate incentives for investment in, and development of, the information society;
- h) that ITU can play an important role in facilitating a discussion of new and emerging issues, including those arising from the changing international telecommunication environment,

believing

- a) that, in order for ITU to maintain its pre-eminent role in global telecommunications, it must continue to demonstrate its capacity to respond adequately to the rapidly changing telecommunication environment;
- b) that there is a need to build broad consensus on what could appropriately be covered in the ITU treaty framework, within its standardization activities, and within its development activities;
- c) that it is important to ensure that the ITRs are reviewed and, if deemed appropriate, revised and updated in a timely manner in order to facilitate cooperation and coordination among Member States and to reflect accurately the relations between Member States, Sector Members, administrations and recognized operating agencies;
- d) that the World Telecommunication Policy Forum (WTPF) has historically provided an appropriate venue for discussing global and cross-sectoral issues of high concern to the ITU membership,

noting

- 1 that the fourth WTPF convened by Decision 9 of this conference will provide an opportunity to study global and cross-sectoral issues of high concern to the ITU membership;
- 2 that further studies can take place in the Telecommunication Standardization Sector (ITU-T), and, as may be required, in liaison with the other Sectors, with ITU-T as the focal point,

resolves

- 1 that a review of the ITRs should be carried out;
- 2 that ITU-T should undertake a review of the existing ITRs, engaging with the other sectors as may be required, with ITU-T as the focal point;
- 3 that the fourth WTPF should consider emerging telecommunications policy and regulatory issues, with respect to international telecommunication networks and services, for the purpose of understanding them and possibly developing opinions as appropriate;
- 4 that WTPF should prepare reports and, where appropriate, opinions for consideration by Member States, Sector Members, relevant ITU meetings and the Council;
- 5 that a World Conference on International Telecommunications (WCIT) be convened at the seat of ITU in 2012, on the basis of the recommendations arising from this process of review,

instructs the Council

- 1 to consider the reports on the above-mentioned matters and take actions, as appropriate;
- 2 to adopt the agenda and fix the dates of WCIT by 2011,

urges the three Sectors, following the world telecommunication policy forum

each within its field of competence, to carry out any further necessary studies aimed at preparing for WCIT, and to participate in a series of regional meetings as required, in order to identify topics to be addressed by WCIT, within existing budgetary resources,

instructs the Secretary-General, following the above studies

to undertake the necessary preparatory arrangements for WCIT, in accordance with the applicable rules and procedures of ITU,

invites the membership

to contribute to the review of the ITRs and to the preparatory process of WCIT.
