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| **Council 2017Geneva, 15-25 May 2017** |  |
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| Note by the Secretary-General |
| CONTRIBUTION FROM THE AZERBAIJAN REPUBLIC, REPUBLIC OF ARMENIA, REPUBLIC OF BELARUS, REPUBLIC OF KAZAKHSTAN, KYRGYZ REPUBLIC, RUSSIAN FEDERATION, REPUBLIC OF TAJIKISTAN, AND TURKMENISTAN |
| STRENGTHENING ITU'S REGIONAL PRESENCE IN THE CIS REGION |

I have the honour to transmit to the Member States of the Council the attached contribution submitted by **the Republic of Azerbaijan, Republic of Armenia, Republic of Belarus, Republic of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Russian Federation, Republic of Tajikistan, and Turkmenistan.**

 Houlin ZHAO
 Secretary-General

Republic of Azerbaijan, Republic of Armenia, Republic of Belarus,
Republic of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Russian Federation,
Republic of Tajikistan, and Turkmenistan

STRENGTHENING ITU's REGIONAL PRESENCE IN THE CIS REGION

# I Introduction

In order to enable the Union to be as close as possible to its membership and deliver timely and high-quality results at country and regional levels, the Plenipotentiary Conference in 1994, in Resolution 25, defined the general functions and principles of ITU's regional presence.

Strengthening the regional presence is an evolving process. PP-14 revised Resolution 25 on the strengthening of the regional presence, emphasizing the importance of the role of the regional and area offices in the preparation and implementation of the strategic plan as well as the fact that regional and area offices represent the entire Union.

Under the terms of Resolution 25 (Rev. Busan, 2014), the Council is instructed to examine the question of the regional presence regularly in order to examine its evolution and adopt decisions for its continuing structural adaptation and operation, with the aim of fully meeting the requirements of the Union's membership and of consolidating the coordination and complementary aspects of activities between ITU and regional and subregional telecommunication organizations.

# II Background

In ITU's current structure, there are 12 permanent regional and area offices covering five regions:

– Africa (Regional Office in Addis Ababa and three area offices);

– South and Central America (Regional Office in Brasilia and three area offices);

– Arab States (Regional Office in Cairo);

– Asia and the Pacific (Regional Office in Bangkok and one area office);

– CIS (area office in Moscow).

There are thus regional offices in all regions except the CIS.

Europe is a special case. For the countries of the European Union and the Baltic States there is a coordination unit at ITU headquarters. Clearly the location of ITU headquarters in Europe significantly facilitates cooperation between the countries of the European Region and ITU.

The regional offices promote direct contacts with national authorities, regional telecommunication organizations, Sector Members in a given region, and other key stakeholders.

The Area Office for the countries of the CIS collaborates with 12 ITU Member States, 24 Sector Members of the Union, the Regional Commonwealth in the field of Communications (RCC), and the Coordinating Council for Informatization for the countries of the CIS within the RCC. There is potential for further development of cooperation with other CIS bodies, including the Interstate Council on Cooperation in the Scientific-Technical and Innovation Spheres, the Interstate Council for Standardization, Metrology and Certification, and with the Eurasian Economic Union.

In terms of the expectations of the administrations of countries in the region, events organized including regional events, the level of direct assistance provided, and the establishment of partnerships with interested institutions and organizations in the region, the Area Office carries out functions that are comparable with those of fully-fledged regional offices, a fact that was noted by the UN Joint Inspection Unit.

Regional office status would help to raise the visibility and significance of ITU's CIS Area Office, facilitate the establishment of high-level contacts, enhance its influence with partners in the region (private sector, Academia, public institutions) and encourage their active involvement in ITU activities. In addition such status could correct the imbalance that has arisen as regards representation of the Union in the regions.

# III Proposals for the Council

1 To approve the proposal to raise the status of the ITU Area Office for the Countries of the CIS in Moscow to that of Regional Office.

2 In accordance with the recommendations of the UN Joint Inspection Unit (Document C16/49 of 18 March 2016, § 195), to request the Secretary-General, in collaboration with the Director of BDT, and also involving the Directors of BR and TSB, to submit to the Council in 2018 specific terms of reference for a CIS regional office, taking into account the specificities of the region, and the regional initiatives, priorities and conditions.

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