International Telecommunication Union

ITU-T

TELECOMMUNICATION
STANDARDIZATION SECTOR
OF ITU

WORLD TELECOMMUNICATION STANDARDIZATION ASSEMBLY
Hammamet, 25 October – 3 November 2016

Resolution 70 – Telecommunication/information and communication technology accessibility for persons with disabilities and persons with specific needs

FOREWORD

The International Telecommunication Union (ITU) is the United Nations specialized agency in the field of telecommunications, information and communication technologies (ICTs). The ITU Telecommunication Standardization Sector (ITU-T) is a permanent organ of ITU. ITU-T is responsible for studying technical, operating and tariff questions and issuing Recommendations on them with a view to standardizing telecommunications on a worldwide basis.

The World Telecommunication Standardization Assembly (WTSA), which meets every four years, establishes the topics for study by the ITU-T study groups which, in turn, produce Recommendations on these topics.

The approval of ITU-T Recommendations is covered by the procedure laid down in WTSA Resolution 1.

In some areas of information technology which fall within ITU-T's purview, the necessary standards are prepared on a collaborative basis with ISO and IEC.

RESOLUTION 70 (Rev. Hammamet, 2016)

Telecommunication/information and communication technology accessibility for persons with disabilities and persons with specific needs

(Johannesburg, 2008; Dubai, 2012; Hammamet, 2016)

The World Telecommunication Standardization Assembly (Hammamet, 2016),

recognizing

a) Resolution 175 (Rev. Busan, 2014) of the Plenipotentiary Conference, on telecommunication/information and communication technology (ICT) accessibility for persons with disabilities, including age-related disabilities and persons with specific needs;

b) Resolution 58 (Rev. Dubai, 2014) of the World Telecommunication Development Conference (WTDC), on telecommunication/ICT accessibility for persons with disabilities, including persons with age-related disabilities, and WTDC Resolution 17 (Rev. Dubai, 2014), on implementation of regionally approved initiatives at the national, regional, interregional and global levels;

c) the mandate of and work carried by the Joint Coordination Activity on Accessibility and Human Factors (JCA-AHF), and in particular ITU Telecommunication Standardization Sector (ITU-T) actions to increase cooperation with other United Nations organizations and activities, as well as all United Nations specialized agencies, in order to raise awareness about ICT accessibility in the framework of standardization, and ITU-T actions aimed at upholding JCA-AHF;

d) studies under ITU-T Question 24/16, on human factors-related issues for improvement of quality of life through international telecommunications, recognizing the need to inclusion of human factors in Recommendations and technical papers;

e) studies under ITU-T Question 26/16, on accessibility to multimedia systems and services, including the recent Recommendation ITU-T F.790 on telecommunication accessibility guidelines for older persons and persons with disabilities;

f) studies under Question 7/1 of the ITU Telecommunication Development Sector (ITU-D), on access to telecommunication/ICT services by persons with disabilities and with specific needs;

g) ongoing work in the ITU Radiocommunication Sector (ITU-R) in accordance with Resolution ITU-R 67 (Geneva, 2015) of the Radiocommunication Assembly (RA), on telecommunication/ICT accessibility for persons with disabilities and persons with specific needs;

h) the publication by the Telecommunication Standardization Advisory Group (TSAG) of the guide for ITU study groups: Considering end-user needs in developing Recommendations;

i) the mandate of JCA-AHF for the purposes of awareness-raising, advice, assistance, collaboration, coordination and networking;

j) the activity carried out by the Internet Governance Forum (IGF) Dynamic Coalition on Accessibility and Disability (DCAD) sponsored by the Director of the Telecommunication Standardization Bureau (TSB), and the partnership between ITU-T and DCAD for the purposes of maximizing the benefits for all sectors of the global community of electronic communications and online information through the Internet;

k) the activity carried out by the Council Working Group on international Internet-related public policy issues (CWG-Internet) on issues related to access to the Internet for persons with disabilities and specific needs,

considering

a) that the World Health Organization estimates that more than one billion of the world's population live with some form of disability, of whom almost 200 million experience considerable difficulty in their daily lives, and it is to be expected that, in the future, disabilities will rise because of the increasing population of older persons and the risk that disability is greater among older persons;

b) that the United Nations has moved from a health and welfare perspective to an approach based on human rights, which recognizes that persons with disabilities are people first, and that society places barriers upon them as opposed to their disabilities, and which includes the goal of full participation in society by persons with disabilities (Resolution 175 (Rev. Busan, 2014));

c) that maximizing the accessibility and usability of telecommunication/ICT services, products and terminals through universal design will increase their uptake by all persons, including persons with disabilities and older persons, and thereby increase revenues;

d) that United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) Resolution 61/106 adopting the Convention on the rights of persons with disabilities requests the Secretary-General (§ 5) "… to implement progressively standards and guidelines for the accessibility of facilities and services of the United Nations system, taking into account relevant provisions of the Convention, in particular when undertaking renovations";

e) the importance of cooperation between governments, the private sector and relevant organizations to promote affordable access possibilities;

f) the RA resolution on telecommunication/ICT accessibility for persons with disabilities and persons with specific needs,

recalling

a) § 18 of the Tunis Commitment, made at the second phase of the World Summit on the Information Society (Tunis, 2005): "We shall strive unremittingly, therefore, to promote universal, ubiquitous, equitable and affordable access to ICTs, including universal design and assistive technologies, for all people, especially those with disabilities, everywhere, to ensure that the benefits are more evenly distributed between and within societies, …"[1];

b) the Phuket Declaration on Tsunami Preparedness for Persons with Disabilities (Phuket, 2007), which emphasizes the need for inclusive emergency warning and disaster management systems using telecommunication/ICT facilities based on open, non-proprietary, global standards;

c) Article 12 of the International Telecommunication Regulations,

taking into account

a) Resolution 44 (Rev. Hammamet, 2016) of this assembly, on bridging the standardization gap between developing and developed countries, and Resolution 18 (Rev. Hammamet, 2016) of this assembly, on strengthening coordination and cooperation among the three ITU Sectors on matters of mutual interest;

b) Resolution GSC-17/26 (revised), on user needs, considerations and involvement, agreed upon at the 17th Global Standards Collaboration meeting (Jeju, Republic of Korea, 2013);

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[1] Geneva Declaration of Principles §§ 13 and 30; Geneva Plan of Action §§ 9 *(e)* and *(f)*, 12 and 23; Tunis Commitment §§ 18 and 20; Tunis Agenda for the Information Society §§ 90 *(c)* and *(e)*.

c) publications of the Special Working Group on Accessibility (ISO/IEC JTC 1 SWG – Accessibility) of the Joint Technical Committee on Information Technology (JTC 1) of the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) and the International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC), as well as the Mandate 376 project teams, identifying user needs and developing a comprehensive inventory of existing standards as part of the ongoing effort to identify areas where research or new standards work is needed;

d) the activities of ITU-T Study Group 16 (Multimedia coding, systems and applications), which is the lead study group on telecommunication/ICT accessibility for persons with disabilities, and ITU-T Study Group 2 (Operational aspects of service provision and telecommunication management) for the part relating to human factors;

e) activities relating to the development of new standards (e.g. ISO TC 159, JTC 1 SC35, IEC TC100, ETSI TC HF, and W3C WAI), and the implementation and maintenance of existing standards (e.g. ISO 9241-171);

f) the joint efforts of ITU and the Global Initiative for Inclusive ICTs (G3ICT), including the development of the Model ICT accessibility policy;

g) the Model ICT accessibility policy report (November, 2014), the release of the report "Making TV accessible", on the occasion of the International Day of Persons with Disabilities (3 December 2011), the report on "Making Mobile Phones and Services Accessible to Persons with Disabilities" (August, 2012), and the e-Accessibility Policy Toolkit for Persons with Disabilities (February, 2010);

h) various international, regional and national efforts to develop or revise guidelines and standards for telecommunication/ICT accessibility, compatibility and usability by persons with disabilities,

resolves

1 that ITU-T Study Group 16 shall continue giving high priority to work on the relevant Questions, Recommendation ITU-T F.790, the guide for ITU-T study groups on telecommunication accessibility guidelines for older persons and persons with disabilities, and Recommendation ITU-T F.791, on accessibility terms and definitions;

2 that ITU-T study groups should consider aspects of universal design in their work, including the drafting of non-discriminatory standards, service regulations and measures for all persons, including persons with disabilities and older persons, with cross-cutting user-protection actions;

3 that all ITU-T study groups utilize the Telecommunications Accessibility Checklist, which makes it possible to incorporate the principles of universal design and accessibility;

4 that an ITU workshop be held to inform about the progress in the work and the results achieved by the study groups in charge of ICT accessibility before the next world telecommunication standardization assembly,

instructs the Director of the Telecommunication Standardization Bureau

1 to report to the ITU Council on the implementation of this resolution;

2 to contribute to the development of an ITU-wide internship programme for persons with disabilities who have expertise in the field of ICTs, so as to build capacity among persons with disabilities in the standards-making process and to raise awareness within ITU-T of the needs of persons with disabilities;

3 that ITU-T employ the technical papers FSTP-AM "Guidelines for accessible meetings" and FSTP-ACC-RemPart "Guidelines for supporting remote participation for all", as appropriate, to make it possible for persons with disabilities to be able to attend ITU meetings and events,

invites the Director of the Telecommunication Standardization Bureau

1   to identify and document examples of best practice for accessibility in the field of telecommunications/ICT for dissemination among ITU Member States and Sector Members;

2   to review the accessibility of ITU-T services and facilities and consider making changes, where appropriate, pursuant to UNGA Resolution 61/106, on the Convention on the rights of persons with disabilities, and to report to the Council on these matters;

3   to work collaboratively on accessibility-related activities with the Directors of the Radiocommunication Bureau (BR) and the Telecommunication Development Bureau (BDT), in particular concerning awareness and mainstreaming of telecommunication/ICT accessibility standards, reporting findings to the Council as appropriate;

4   to work collaboratively on accessibility-related activities with ITU-D, in particular developing programmes that enable developing countries to introduce services that allow persons with disabilities to utilize telecommunication services effectively;

5   to work collaboratively and cooperatively with other standardization organizations and entities, in particular, in the interest of ensuring that ongoing work in the field of accessibility is taken into account, in order to avoid duplication;

6   to work collaboratively and cooperatively with disability organizations in all regions to ensure that the needs of the disabled community are taken into account in all standardization matters;

7   to continue JCA-AHF, and any other accessibility coordination functions and advisory function within ITU-T, in order to assist the Director of TSB in reporting the findings of the review of ITU-T services and facilities;

8   to consider using accessibility resources in the meetings organized by ITU-T in order to encourage the participation of persons with disabilities in the standardization process,

instructs the Telecommunication Standardization Advisory Group

1   to revise the guide for ITU study groups: Considering end-user needs in developing Recommendations,

2   to request study groups to facilitate, in their respective work, the implementation of new software, services and proposals enabling all persons with disabilities, including persons with age-related disabilities, to effectively use telecommunication/ICT services, and relevant guidelines for end-user needs, in order specifically to include the needs of persons with disabilities, and to update the guide on a regular basis, based on contributions from Member States and Sector Members as well as the ITU-T study groups, as appropriate,

invites Member States and Sector Members

1   to consider developing, within their national legal frameworks, guidelines or other mechanisms to enhance the accessibility, compatibility and usability of telecommunication/ICT services, products and terminals;

2   to consider introducing services or programmes, including telecommunication relay services[2],to enable persons with hearing and speech disabilities to utilize telecommunication services that are functionally equivalent to telecommunication services for persons without disabilities;

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[2]   Telecommunication relay services enable users of different modes of communication (e.g. text, sign, speech) to interact by providing convergence between the modes of communication, usually through human operators.

3   to participate actively in accessibility-related studies in ITU-R, ITU-T and ITU-D, and to encourage and promote self-representation by persons with disabilities in the standardization process so as to ensure their experiences, views and opinions are taken into account in all the work of study groups;

4   to consider designating focal points for the implementation and monitoring of this resolution;

5   to encourage the provision of differentiated and affordable service plans for persons with disabilities in order to increase the accessibility and usability of telecommunications/ICT for these persons;

6   to encourage the development of applications for telecommunication products and terminals to increase the accessibility and usability of telecommunications/ICT for persons with visual, auditory, verbal and other physical and mental disabilities;

7   to encourage regional telecommunication organizations to contribute to the work and consider implementing the results achieved in the study groups and the workshop on this topic;

8   to encourage industry to consider accessible features when designing telecommunication devices and services.