

**Document WTDC14/4-E**  
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**SOURCE:** Director, Telecommunication Development Bureau  
**TITLE:** Report of the TDAG to WTDC-14 on the matters assigned to it by WTDC-10

### **Background**

According to No. 215JA of the Convention of the International Telecommunication Union, the Telecommunication Development Advisory Group (TDAG) shall submit a report to the 2014 World Telecommunication Development Conference (WTDC-14) on the specific matters assigned to it by WTDC-10, in accordance with No. 213A of the said Convention.

WTDC-10 adopted Resolution 24 (Hyderabad, 2010) authorizing the TDAG to continue acting between two consecutive WTDCs, in consultation with the Director of the BDT, on the following specific matters:

- i) continue to maintain efficient and flexible working guidelines, and update them as necessary, including to provide opportunities for cross-regional sharing of experiences on the implementation of regional actions, initiatives and projects;
- ii) evaluate periodically the working methods and functioning of the ITU-D study groups, to identify options for maximizing programme delivery and to approve appropriate changes thereto following an assessment of their work programme, including strengthening of the synergy between Questions, programmes and regional initiatives;
- iii) conduct the assessment pursuant to resolves 1 ii) above, taking into account the following actions in relation to the current work programme of the study groups, if needed:
  - redefinition of the terms of reference of Questions in order to provide focus and eliminate overlap;
  - deletion or merging of Questions as appropriate; and
  - evaluation of criteria to measure the effectiveness of Questions, both in qualitative and quantitative terms, including a periodical review based on the ITU-D strategic plan with a view to further exploring performance measures in order to more effectively implement actions referred to in resolves 1 ii) above;
- iv) restructure ITU-D study groups, if required, and, as a result of a restructuring or creation of ITU-D study groups, appoint chairmen and vice chairmen to act until the next WTDC in response to the needs and concerns of the Member States, within the agreed budgetary limits;
- v) continue to issue advice on study group schedules that meet development priorities;

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- vi) continue to advise the Director of BDT on relevant financial and other matters;
- vii) continue to approve the programme of work arising from the review of existing and new Questions and determine the priority, urgency, estimated financial implications and time-scale for the completion of their study;
- viii) in order to promote flexibility in responding rapidly to high-priority matters, if required, create, terminate or maintain other groups, appoint their chairmen and vice-chairmen, and establish their terms of reference with a defined duration, in accordance with Nos 209A and 209B of the Convention and taking into account the leading role of the study groups in carrying out the studies on such matters; such other groups shall not adopt Questions or Recommendations.

The actions taken by TDAG between WTDC-10 and WTDC-14 in this regard are presented below.

### **Upkeep of up-to-date, efficient and flexible working guidelines**

Electronic working methods, including remote participation, have been embedded in the work of the TDAG during the period under consideration.

TDAG created several correspondence groups to work electronically on issues such as the ITU-D input to the ITU Strategic Plan (the result of the work of this group can be found in TDAG document 22), the review of WTDC Resolutions and Recommendations (the result of the work of this group can be found in TDAG document 23) as well as the rules of procedure for the appointment and maximum term of office for Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen of Sector Advisory Groups, ITU-D study groups and other groups.

TDAG noted with appreciation the innovative steps taken by the BDT to provide electronic working facilities for the use of the membership, in particular regarding remote participation, and requested that further work be carried out towards arriving at a harmonized approach (systems and models) to provide remote participation for meetings across all Sectors and the General Secretariat. TDAG further requested BDT to continue in its efforts to include electronic working methods in areas other than remote participation as others Sectors do.

### **Evaluation of the working methods and functioning of the ITU-D study groups, and approval of changes to improve efficiency and maximize programme delivery**

Throughout the study period the Chairmen of the two ITU-D study groups reported systematically to TDAG on the progress made by their respective study group and any challenges encountered that may have prevented the Groups from finalizing their work. Items discussed during the Management Team meetings, including the Joint Management Team meeting of the two study groups, have been included in these reports and brought to the attention of TDAG.

Following proposals made by the study groups aimed at improving the efficiency of study group working methods and their specific needs to ensure ample coordination with ITU-D Programmes, Projects and Regional Initiatives, TDAG endorsed the following measures:

- To request BDT to provide both study groups with information on all the events, innovations, and activities being undertaken in the Development Sector as well as elsewhere, and to bring relevant information on the Programmes, Projects and Regional Initiatives being carried out to the attention of the study groups.
- To recommend continued close collaboration with the other Sectors, and especially with the focus groups in the Standardization Sector.

- To encourage the membership to participate actively in the ITU-D study groups and to request the BDT Director to consider possibilities to provide further assistance to facilitate participation in the meetings and to improve and extend remote participation for future study group meetings.
- To request further information on electronic working methods, including remote participation, for TDAG to be able to determine whether or not there is a need to set up a correspondence group on electronic working methods.
- To request the ITU-D study groups and their management teams to work on and submit their proposals on steps that can be taken to review its working methods towards improving efficiency as well as enhancing the participation of Member States and Sector Members in the work of both study groups.

These measures, particularly the enhancement of the coordination between the different study Questions and the other work being carried out under the ITU-D Programmes, Projects and Regional Initiatives, have allowed the study groups to finalize their outputs, which consist of 19 reports/guidelines and 2 Recommendations, within the expected timeframe.

The relationship between Questions on the one hand and BDT Programmes on the other has been further streamlined and closer synergies have been built. Inputs from the other Sectors in the form of liaison statements as well as presentations by representatives from the other Sectors on the on-going work in related areas has been greatly enhanced. This can be seen in the numerous cross-references to such work present in the final deliverables of the ITU-D study Questions. Cooperation with different regional and international organizations that are involved in work related to the topics under study was improved, and input from those organizations have been incorporated and addressed in the specific deliverables of the Questions.

During its last meeting TDAG received for consideration several proposals for the revision of Resolution 1 (Rev. Hyderabad, 2010), including details on revised cut-off dates and deadlines for the submission and posting of documents for consideration by WTDC, and TDAG and ITU-D study group meetings. TDAG requested the Secretariat to continue the process of collecting proposals to revise Resolution 1, and encouraged participants to submit their proposals to the Correspondence Group on Resolutions and Recommendations to help membership prepare for WTDC. Those who had already put forward proposals were also requested to share any amendments they may have on their proposals. A document containing all input received has been prepared for consideration by WTDC.

### **Restructuring or creation of ITU-D study groups, and appointment of chairmen and vice-chairmen to act until the next WTDC in response to the needs and concerns of the Member States**

The two ITU-D study groups and their nineteen topics under study have been maintained throughout the study period. Of the 15 appointed representatives from Member States and Sector Members listed in the Annex 3 to Resolution 2 (Rev. Hyderabad, 2010) "List of chairmen and vice-chairmen", four have stepped down during the course of the study period. New appointments have been made in all but one case.

There has been strong support in the study groups for the strengthening of links between the study groups, BDT Programmes, Projects and Regional Initiatives. Contributions from members with proposals for reform and changes to the working methods of the study groups have been received in 2013 by the study groups and by the RPMs. However, during the last study group

meetings for the study period held in September 2013 it was mentioned that any proposals for reform should focus on what results the members want to see come out of the study group process. Currently the focus is on reports and guidelines. Participants to the study groups meetings have proposed re-focusing the work and converting Reports into Recommendations. It was further suggested that the BDT and the members ensure that when considering any possible reform to the ITU-D study groups the goal of “maximizing the participation of developing countries” and “encouraging participation of developed countries” be kept in mind. The need to have a good understanding as to the financial, and other implications of proposed changes to ITU-D study groups has also been highlighted by members.

In preparation for WTDC-14 and in light of the proposals for restructuring of the ITU-D study groups that had been submitted by members for consideration during the RPMs, Study Group meetings and TDAG, TDAG encouraged members to examine and exchange their opinions on the different proposals. Appreciation was expressed for the ideas presented to increase the efficiency of the study group activities, which could contribute towards improving the work of the ITU-D Sector as a whole. It was noted that while some of the proposals could be agreed on, others would require further reflection and consideration at WTDC. The set of proposals could not be agreed on as a package, especially as some concerned the creation of Working Parties and converting a specific Question into an intersectoral group. The need to understand the financial and cost implications of the proposals was further highlighted. In discussing the specific needs associated with the running of ITU-D study group meetings, the financial implications of providing fellowships, interpretation and translation of documents and case studies also mentioned. For the translation of case studies, the introduction of web translation as well as outsourcing was put forward as options that could be considered for the next period.

TDAG further highlighted that for the appointment of chairmen and vice-chairmen of TDAG and ITU-D study groups, members need to consider competency and participation in the work of TDAG and the study groups to date when putting forward their nominees for the posts.

#### **Provision of advice to the Director of BDT on relevant financial and other matters**

In considering the strategy for the implementation of the Hyderabad Action Plan (HAP), TDAG expressed its support for the results-based approach focusing on outcomes. It advised that in securing additional funds for BDT projects, Regional Initiatives (RIs) and programme activities, cooperation needed to be strengthened with regional and international organizations (such as United Nations organizations and regional commissions), financial institutions (such as World Bank, International Monetary Fund and regional development banks), other ITU Bureaus and the General Secretariat, as well as the ITU-D study groups.

TDAG also noted that the main topics addressed by several Regional Initiatives were common to multiple regions and therefore synergies between regions should be sought for implementation. The need to use solutions that have already been put in place by the different regional organizations and share information across regions through the regional offices was also emphasized. In order to achieve the goals set up by the RIs, as well as to find new sources of funding, TDAG reiterated that BDT should strengthen contacts and collaboration with development banks, other UN organizations and sub-regional and regional organizations, as well as entities that are running projects in the regions. In addition, the participation of academic and scientific institutions in implementing the RIs should be sought.

In relation to project implementation, TDAG recommended that BDT create a list of ITU projects (including title, brief description, and status of implementation for each project) to be posted on

the ITU website. It further recommended that the same approach be applied to tracking the implementation of the WSIS goals through the Action Line roadmaps.

Throughout its various meetings, TDAG stressed the important role of the private sector in the work of ITU-D and highlighted the need to further foster collaboration with the private sector. It recommended that the BDT Director continue thinking about innovative ways of attracting new members as well as retaining the existing ones. TDAG further noted that the resources and expertise of the private sector can greatly contribute to all BDT activities and therefore the private sector should have access to more information and opportunities regarding these. It also recommended BDT to leverage on the new electronic means, such as online portals and remote participation, in order to enhance the communication channels not only with the private sector but with all members.

At the last meeting TDAG expressed its appreciation for the leadership of the BDT Director in successfully implementing HAP. Special thanks were also extended to the Regional Directors for their constructive and efficient approach in coordinating RPMs, RDFs and multiple other regional events in preparation for the WTDC-14. Globally, the excellent work of BDT carried out during the past period was recognized as well as the important achievements towards the priorities identified by Membership. The Connect the World regional events in the Americas, CIS and Arab States were singled out as fine examples of pro-active and innovative strategies to boost ICT development across regions and stimulate investment.

In all the various activities, projects and RIs, it was noted that the efforts of the Bureau have been instrumental, and developing countries noted that this work has enhanced their respective ICT sectors and their overall economies. It was proposed that the positive experiences of the various regions be shared between regions. It was also mentioned that project implementation should be permanently monitored and that best practices for mobilizing financial resources for these projects should also be shared between regions.

#### **Creation of other groups to respond rapidly to high-priority matters, appointment of chairs and vice-chairs, and establishment of their terms of reference**

TDAG invited Study Group 1 to set up a working group on the elaboration of a working definition of the term "ICT", open for the participation of members of other Sectors and working primarily by correspondence, and to submit the results of its work to both ITU-D study groups and TDAG, the ultimate aim being to subsequently submit a proposed working definition of the term "ICT" to the consideration of the Council in 2014. The result of the work of this working group and the agreed working definition of the term "ICT" as *"Technologies and equipment that handle (e.g., access, create, collect, store, transmit, receive, disseminate) information and communication."* was presented to the last session of TDAG. Details can be found in TDAG document 24.

TDAG endorsed the work of the Correspondence Group and thanked the Chairman, and those members who had contributed, for their work. TDAG took note of the proposed working definition of the term "ICT". It also took note of the comments received through the liaisons statements from the TSB, ITU-T Study Group 12, and the Chairman of ITU-T Study Group 2 concerning the proposed working definition. As per PP-10 Resolution 140, the report on the work of the Correspondence Group, established under the umbrella of ITU-D Study Group 1, and open to all ITU members, will be sent to ITU Council which will decide on the next steps for the working definition on "ICT". It was noted that any further comments can be sent directly to Council-14.