
Agenda item: PL 4.2

Document C14/57-E
22 April 2014
Original: French

Note by the Secretary-General

CONTRIBUTION FROM CAMEROON
FREE ONLINE ACCESS TO ITU PUBLICATIONS

I have the honour to transmit to the Member States of the Council a contribution received from **Cameroon**.

Dr Hamadoun I. TOURE
Secretary-General

Contribution from Cameroon

FREE ONLINE ACCESS TO ITU PUBLICATIONS

1 Background

Article 1 of the ITU Constitution provides that the purposes of the Union include promoting access to information and extension of the benefits of the new telecommunication technologies to all the world's inhabitants.

One of the measures designed to give effect to that principle was the adoption by Council-12 of **Decision 571**, on free online access to the Administrative Regulations, authorizing such access to the International Telecommunication Regulations to the general public on a permanent basis, and to the Radio Regulations for a trial period lasting until the 2014 Plenipotentiary Conference.

ITU publications are available in three major types of format, namely paper, CD/DVD-ROM and online.

To date, online access to the majority of the Union's documents has been against payment and in a single download. This has the effect of strengthening discriminatory access to information sources, given the modest incomes of developing country populations and the financial constraints with which those States regularly have to contend.

The report on this subject that resulted from the deliberations of the 20th session of the Radiocommunication Advisory Group (RAG) (Geneva, 22-24 May 2013) clearly states that free online access does not seem to have produced any negative impact on sales of the other two types of support. RAG therefore invited the Director of the Radiocommunication Bureau to bring the results of the corresponding financial evaluation to the attention of the Council so that appropriate decisions could be taken to expand the free online access policy to other ITU-R publications.

In Cameroon, ever-increasing use is being made of the Union's documents, this having resulted in a considerable increase in requests for the opening of TIES accounts.

2 Proposal

The Administration of Cameroun supports the principle of free online access and proposes that such access be extended to other documents of the Union.
