

PLENARY MEETING

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Sierra Leone

PROPOSALS FOR THE WORK OF THE CONFERENCE

DRAFT NEW RESOLUTION ON USING ICTS TO BREAK THE CHAIN OF HEALTH-RELATED EMERGENCIES SUCH AS EBOLA VIRUS TRANSMISSION

Sierra Leone is pleased to submit its proposal for consideration by the 2014 ITU Plenipotentiary Conference (PP-14).

Introduction

The socio-economic impact of the Ebola crisis is now widespread. Inflation has spiked exponentially as prices of food commodities have skyrocketed proportionately. The lives of families have been devastated due to the chain deaths of loved ones and the general hardship accompanied by the crisis. The stigma that is attached to survivors and citizens from Ebola affected countries is making life even more difficult.

The rate of transmission of the Ebola virus that is plaguing the affected countries and indeed the world is being exacerbated by lack of access to correct and timely information on preventive measures.

The ITU Secretary General's Brainstorming session on Ebola in Busan brought to light the need for assistance in dealing with health-related emergencies such as Ebola and to leverage ICTs to face this challenge.

The role of ICT in the fight against Ebola has clearly become ever prominent in the dealing with the crucial aspect of communication access and the general flow of information.

The intervention and collaboration of stakeholders including UN agencies, government, operators, civil society and beyond can be of tremendous respite to the ongoing national and international efforts towards the ultimate eradication of Ebola. We have seen the role that ICT's can play in fighting Ebola, and have heard about action taken by the Nigerian government to fight Ebola using ICTs.

As highlighted above, access to information is a central strategy in the fight against Ebola and can enshrine deprived and isolated communities in sensitization programs. Governments play a key role in mobilizing assistance and getting information to communities, particularly rural, remote, and underserved communities.

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DRAFT NEW RESOLUTION [SRL-1]

Using ICTs to break the chain of health-related emergencies such as Ebola virus transmission

The Plenipotentiary Conference of the International Telecommunication Union (Busan, 2014),

recalling

- a) Article 5 of the International Telecommunication Regulations, on safety of life and priority of telecommunications;
- b) § 91 of the Tunis Agenda for the Information Society adopted by the second phase of the World Summit on the Information Society;
- c) Resolution 34 (Rev. Dubai, 2014) of the of the World Telecommunication Development Conference, on the role of telecommunications/information and communication technology in disaster preparedness, early warning, rescue, mitigation, relief and response;
- d) Resolution 36 (Rev. Guadalajara, 2010) of the Plenipotentiary Conference, on telecommunications/information and communication technologies (ICTs) in the service of humanitarian assistance;
- e) Resolution 136 (Rev. Guadalajara, 2010) of the Plenipotentiary Conference, on the use of telecommunications/ICTs for monitoring and management in emergency and disaster situations, and for early warning, prevention, mitigation and relief;
- f) § 20 of Action Line C7 (E-environment) of the Geneva Plan of Action of the World Summit on the Information Society (Geneva, 2003), calling for the establishment of monitoring systems using ICTs to forecast and monitor the impact of natural and man-made disasters, particularly in developing countries.

recognizing

- a) the seriousness and magnitude of potential disasters, including outbreaks of diseases such as Ebola that may cause dramatic human suffering;
- b) the recent tragic events in the world that clearly demonstrate the need for high quality communications infrastructure and for the availability and dissemination of information to assist public safety, health and disaster-relief agencies;
- c) the need to minimize risk to human life and to cover the necessary general public information and communication needs in such situations, convinced that the unhindered use of telecommunication/ICT equipment and services is indispensable for the provision of effective and appropriate humanitarian assistance,

recognizing Further

- a) that there will be a continuing need to assist developing countries in the use of ICTs to preserve life by ensuring a timely flow of information to government agencies, consumers, humanitarian-oriented organizations and industry involved in rescue and recovery operations and

providing medical assistance to those affected by health-related emergencies such as Ebola virus transmission;

- b) that information needs to be accessible and available in local languages so as to ensure maximum impact;
- c) that policy-makers need to create an enabling environment to leverage the use of ICTs to address infrastructure and information needs in emergency situations and to break the chain of health-related emergencies such as Ebola virus transmission;
- d) that the contribution of the private sector is necessary in the prevention, mitigation and relief of health-related emergencies such as Ebola virus transmission;
- e) that a common understanding of the network infrastructure components is required to provide rapidly installed, interoperable, robust telecommunication capabilities in humanitarian assistance and disaster relief operations for health-related emergencies such as Ebola virus transmission,

considering

- a) that ICTs are critical to address all phases of health-related emergencies such as Ebola virus transmission;
- b) that aspects of emergency communications associated with health-related emergencies such as Ebola virus transmission include, inter alia, disaster prediction, detection, alerting and enabling the flow of information to keep individuals informed as to actions they can take to preserve life; and
- c) that ITU-D's m-powering initiative is designed to focus on the use of ICTs to empower communities and people,

noting

- a) § 51 of the Geneva Declaration of Principles adopted by the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS), on the use of ICT applications for disaster prevention,

instructs the Director of the Telecommunication Development Bureau in coordination with the other Directors

- 1 to develop guidelines and Best Practices on how ICTs can be used to identify the communications infrastructure needed to support the exchange of timely information on health-related emergencies such as Ebola virus transmission,
- 2 to develop feasibility studies, project management tools and support to respond to and address health-related emergencies such as Ebola virus transmission,

instructs the Secretary-General

- 1 to collaborate with all relevant parties, including UN agencies and in particular the World Health Organization, to define and engage in programmes to respond to and address health-related emergencies such as Ebola virus transmission in areas within the scope and mandate of the ITU;
- 2 to implement measures aimed at mobilizing support from governments, industry and other partners to break the chain of health-related emergencies such as Ebola virus transmission,

invites Member States and Sector Members

- 1 to cooperate and offer all possible assistance and support to consumers, humanitarian-oriented organizations and industry involved in ICTS, including for disease tracking, natural and man-made disaster and emergency response, rescue and recovery operations; and
 - 2 to promote regional, sub-regional, multilateral and bilateral projects and programmes to address the need to use ICTs as a tool to support responses to different types of disasters such as Ebola so that life preventing infrastructure and information can be provided to local communities, especially in local languages.
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