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| **TD** |
| **Source:** | Rapporteur, RG-WTSA |
| **Title:** | RG-WTSA Rapporteur’s proposal on draft A.BN “Briefing note on how to chair WTSA Sub-committee/Ad Hoc Group meetings” |
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| **Abstract:** | This document is the RG-WTSA Rapporteur’s proposal, revision based on TD262, taking into consideration C59R1, for draft A.BN “Briefing note on how to chair WTSA Sub-committee/Ad Hoc Group meetings”. |
| **Action** | For further discussion and progress by RG-WTSA AHC drafting session at 0830-0930 on 24 Jan 2024. |

**Briefing note on how to chair WTSA Sub-committee/Ad Hoc Group meeting**

**Introduction:**

The ITU provides a platform for member states to engage in dialogue, negotiation, and decision-making processes, aiming to reach agreements and harmonize approaches on matters of common interest.

This document is based on the [General rules](https://www.itu.int/en/council/Documents/basic-texts/General-Rules-E.pdf) and aggregates information for guiding a chairman of a WTSA **sub-committee** ( e.g., a working group of a Committee of the Assembly, Ad hoc groups) discussion to consensual agreement and highlight current common practices. This is not intended for use by the WTSA chair or COM Chairmen. [General rules, chapter II, clause 12.](https://www.itu.int/council/pd/generalrules.html)

If time permit, it is recommended to read [TSAG TD-120](https://www.itu.int/md/T22-TSAG-221212-TD-GEN-0120/en) “TSAG leadership team training” as well as the ITU Tutorial on[“the art of reaching consensus”](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-T/tutorials/202203/Documents/Reinhard%20Scholl_v2_The%20art%20of%20reaching%20consensus.pdf)**;** however keep in mind that these documents are not tailored to WTSA sub-committees and some information are not pertinent to your situation.

**Consensus:**

Note: There is no definition of consensus in ITU-T texts and consensus is left to the chairman’s appreciation. Consensus-building is understood as a process where the chairman of a meeting accommodates the different views, which culminates with the chairman concluding that there is general agreement for adopting a decision without formal opposition.

The chairman should:

* Start the session by providing a concise overview of the agenda and discussions of the WTSA Sub-committee/Ad Hoc Group meeting.
* Emphasize the significance of effective time management during the session.
* Try to resolve all concerns to the best of its ability.
* Ensure that discussion is limited to the point at issue, and may interrupt any speaker who departs therefrom and request such speakers to confine their remarks to the subject under discussion.
* Encourage the membership to negotiation and provide productive/constructive discussion to reach consensus.
* After consuming all possible options to achieve consensus, the Chair may opt to a “no consensus - no change”[Reference 1] result, and report to COM or Plenary with remaining issues for discussion if any exist.

*Reference 1: See WTSA-20 Proceedings Section V-1 – Plenary reports, clause 15: “when consensus on Resolutions and Recommendations cannot be achieved, it is preferable to agree to ‘no change’ rather than voting” . “Such arrangement ... remain subject to negotiation at a specific conference.*

By order of preference, when a concern remains, the following can be offered:

* A session break (coffee break, or longer if time permit) can be a useful tool to solve a particular point.
* Text may be bracketed and revisited at the end of the session. Bracketed text should be the exception, and not widely used.
* Provide a chairman’s proposal, consisting of a compromise, a new approach.
* Rephrase and summarise the proposed resolution.
* Check consensus as a matter of fact “I see no objection/no support” rather than with open ended questions (e.g., “is there objections? Support?) to avoid reopening an issue.

*[editor’s note: For further study. Contribution is invited.]*

* Silence is approval.
* Declare consensus.
* Record dissent/objection in the meeting report, allowing to proceed with a resolution.
* Worst case scenario, text can remain in bracket when there is no consensus and be sent to COM/Plenary. This should happen in very limited instances.

**Comments and objection in Reports and Minutes:**

Subcommittee may prepare interim reports and may submit a final report recapitulating in concise terms the proposals and conclusions of its work. The chairman shall inquire whether there are any comments on the minutes of the previous meeting. In case of a substantive comment or objection (either made verbally or submitted in writing), the appropriate amendments shall be made in the minutes. Any interim or final report w must be approved by the subcommittee .

*Reference 2: General Rules Chapter II, clause 25.*

**Vote:**

According to ITU General Rules, vote is not allowed in working group. For Subcommittee meetings, it is strongly advised to not conduct voting; instead, to focus on seeking consensus through thorough discussions, open communication, and understanding different perspectives. Sensing the temperature of the mood in the room or Informal polling (such as show of hands) may be used but may be difficult to interpret and depends heavily on how the question is phrased.

*Reference 3: General Rules, clause 21, clause 21.5, clause 22.*

**Editorial changes:**

An editorial committee is available during WTSA to address all editorial changes. A chairman should indicate at the beginning of the session that editorial aspects will be deferred to the editorial committee in order for the group to spend time on substantial matters. General rules, Chapter II 69, 70. Terminology aspect can be dealt with by the editorial committee.

**Expectation from a chairman:**

1. Be fair and impartial, and be seen to be so.
2. Act in the interest of WTSA, not as a representative of your company/country
3. Listen with care, be sensitive to language and culture.
4. Give everyone the chance to express their views.
5. Be mindful of time.
6. Know when & how to close the debates and declare consensus
7. Be familiar with the topics of discussions and the documents submitted for consideration,
8. Know and follow the rules for holding meetings,
9. Be ready to propose a compromise text,
10. Cooperate closely with the secretariat before, during and after a meeting,
11. Encourage membership to negotiation and provide productive/constructive discussion to reach consensus.

**Where to find information:**

**On WTSA:**

* CS/CV on WTSA
* General Rules Chapter II
* Legal advisor’s briefing note for WTSA-20
* Rules of procedures of ITU-T: [WTSA Resolution 1](http://handle.itu.int/11.1002/pub/81c722f0-en)

ITU-T Working methods:

* Working methods for study groups of the ITU-T : ITU-T [**A.1**](https://www.itu.int/rec/T-REC-A/recommendation.asp?lang=en&parent=T-REC-A.1)
* Focus Group: Establishment and working procedures ITU-T [A.7](https://www.itu.int/rec/T-REC-A.7/en) ?

Collaboration:

* collaboration with ISO and IEC: ITU-T [**A.23**](https://www.itu.int/rec/T-REC-A/recommendation.asp?lang=en&parent=T-REC-A.23)[and WTSA Resolution 7](http://handle.itu.int/11.1002/pub/81c722f2-en) ?
* Normative Referencing of text from other organizations: ITU-T [**A.5**](https://www.itu.int/rec/T-REC-A/recommendation.asp?lang=en&parent=T-REC-A.5)
* Incorporation of text in part or in whole from other organizations: ITU-T [**A.25**](https://www.itu.int/rec/T-REC-A/recommendation.asp?lang=en&parent=T-REC-A.25)

Approval process of ITU-T Recommendations:

* TAP: The traditional approval process (TAP) is described in [WTSA Resolution 1](http://handle.itu.int/11.1002/pub/81c722f0-en), section 9. Section 8 of the same Resolution defines how selection is done between the traditional approval process and the alternative approval process (AAP).
* AAP: The Alternative Approval Process for new and revised ITU-T Recommendations is defined in ITU-T [A.8](https://www.itu.int/rec/T-REC-A.8/en)

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