Telecommunication Development Sector

For information

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Chairman, Working Group on WSIS (WG-WSIS)

REPORT ON THE MAIN RESULTS OF WG-WSIS SINCE THE 2007 COUNCIL

Summary

This report summarizes the main results of the Working Group on WSIS (WG-WSIS) since the 2007 Council, in line with PP-06 Resolutions 140 and 102 and 2007 Council Resolution 1282.

Action required

Council invited the WG-WSIS to facilitate membership input and guidance on the ITU implementation of relevant WSIS outcomes, and to elaborate proposals to the Council that may be necessary for adapting ITU to its role in building the information society. In line with PP-06 Resolution 102, proposals concerning ITU's role in international public policy matters pertaining to the Internet are forwarded to Council via WG-WSIS. Council is invited **to take note** of the report and **to take appropriate action**.

References
Resolution 140 (Antalya 2006), Resolution 102 (Antalya, 2006), 2007 Council Resolution 1282.

1. Introduction

1.1 This document reports on the main results of the ITU Council Working Group on WSIS (WG-WSIS) since the 2007 Council. During this period, the Group held its 1st meeting on 25 and 28 January 2008, and its 2nd meeting on 25-26 September 2008, both in Geneva. The documents and reports from these meetings, including summary records, are available on the WG-WSIS website at: www.itu.int/wg-wsis .

1.2 The work of the WG-WSIS was conducted in line with Resolution 140 of the Plenipotentiary Conference (Antalya, 2006), which calls upon the Working Group to:

  i. *facilitate membership input and guidance on ITUs implementation of relevant WSIS outcomes and;*

  ii. *present proposals to Council that may be necessary for ITU to adapt to its role in building the information society Res. 140 (Antalya 2006)*

1.3   The Group was also invited to consider and discuss the different activities of the ITU Secretary-General and Bureaux in relation to the implementation of Resolution 102 of the Plenipotentiary Conference (Antalya, 2006).

1.4   Furthermore, ITU Council 2007 (Resolution 1282) resolved that the Council Working Group on WSIS, open to all Member States and Sector Members, should continue its work with its revised terms of reference.

1.5   The Group was chaired by Prof. Dr Vladimir Minkin (Russian Federation).

2.   ITU's activities in WSIS implementation and follow-up

2.1   Information reports were provided on:

2.1.1   Document: WG-WSIS-12/3: Director of TSB: Follow-up and implementation of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) within ITU-T was presented by TSB. This report complements earlier ones provided to the WG-WSIS, notably the report to the 11th WG-WSIS meeting (WG-WSIS-11/7) in June 2007. The document highlights the main results relating to the Action Lines C2 and C5 and contains some additional information on C3, C8 and C9, especially on standardization, workshops and other activities concerning bridging the standardization gap, next generation networks, security, multimedia, Quality of Service, emergency, accessibility and the emerging activity in ICT and climate change, including two symposia in Kyoto, Japan (15-16 April 2008) and London, United Kingdom (17-18 June 2008) which resulted in creating a Focus Group on Climate Change.

2.1.2   At the request of the WG-WSIS, the secretariat of TSB provided information about the results of the Focus Group on Identity Management (WG-WSIS-12-17) and it informed those present that the re-structuring of ITU-T will be a topic of the World Telecommunication Standardization Assembly, where further discussions on this issue will be held. Mr. M. Johnson provided further information about ITU Symposia on ICTs and Climate Change, which is contained in the TSB Circular 189.

2.1.3   Document WG-WSIS-12-4: Director of BDT: Report on the facilitation of WSIS Action Line C2 was presented by BDT staff; this reports on the activities undertaken since April 2007, i.e. since the last TDAG meeting. Within the framework of the cluster of WSIS related events, ITU-D, in collaboration with UNDP, organized a Joint Facilitation Meeting on WSIS Action Lines C2, C4 and C6, which took place in Geneva on 16 May 2007. One of the goals of the meeting was to encourage synergies across three action lines, focusing on infrastructure, enabling environments and capacity building. As a result of the discussions, the meeting reaffirmed the willingness of the participants to follow the agreed directions of the facilitation framework, in particular the facilitation of the implementation of large scale, impact making initiatives and the development of thematic activities.

2.1.4   Document WG-WSIS-12-8: Director of BDT: Report on ITU-D Contributions to the WSIS follow-up and implementation was presented by BDT. In order to establish effective coordination, in October 2007 the BDT Management Committee decided to establish a WSIS Coordination Group, under the chairmanship of the BDT Deputy to the Director, with representatives of all BDT Divisions carrying out WSIS-related activities. Since the last TDAG meeting in April 2007, through programmes and projects, ITU-D has undertaken numerous actions related to WSIS-related facilitation and implementation. This includes WSIS Action Line C2 and activities related to the Action Lines C1, C3, C4, C5, C6, C7, C8, C11, the Connect the World Initiative, Emergency Telecom Services and Telecoms for Disaster Relief, Measurement of the Information Society Development, and the WSIS Stocktaking and ICT Success Stories. During the presentation the attention of the delegates was drawn to the additional information documents, i.e. Document WG-WSIS-12-5 and Document WG-WSIS-12-6.

2.1.5   The Document WG-WSIS-12-5: Director of BDT: Connect the World Series of Events, addresses the series of Connect the World events to be organized in various parts of the world over the coming years, with the aim of mobilizing resources and partners to help implement WSIS commitments and the WTDC Doha Action Plan, in particular the Regional Initiatives. The first of these events was the Connect

Africa Summit, which took place in Kigali, Rwanda, from 29 to 30 October 2007, and gathered some 1036 participants from 54 countries, including six Heads of State and Government. Forty-three countries in Africa were represented, including 23 at the Ministerial level. Some 20 leading ICT companies participated, along with development banks, international organizations and other stakeholders.

2.1.6   Document WG-WSIS-12-6: Director of BDT: Emergency Telecommunications Activities presented ITU-D activities relevant to the WSIS outcome documents, more precisely Para 91 of Tunis Agenda, and WSIS Action Line C7 (20 (c)). It includes disaster relief, direct assistance to countries, regional events, contributions to outside organized events, ITU-D Study Group Question 22/2, as well as the Global Forum on Effective Use of Telecommunications/ICT for Disaster Management: Saving Lives. As of the beginning of 2007, the ITU Deputy Secretary-General chairs an Inter-Sectoral Emergency Telecommunications Team (IETT) with representatives from ITU-R, ITU-T and ITU-D. From an operational point of view, the ITU-D representative coordinates the work of the other two sectors but each sector remains responsible for activities falling within its mandate.

2.1.7   Document WG-WSIS-12-7: Follow-up on the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) within ITU-R: Situation and Progress Report was presented by BR providing an overview of the activities within ITU-R, with regard to C2, C5 and C6 Action Lines.

2.1.8   Document WG-WSIS-12-15: UN Secretary-General's Report on the implementation of WSIS inputs from ITU was presented by Mr. H. Zhao, Chairman of WSIS Task Force, for information purposes only.

2.1.9   Document WG-WSIS-12-10: Information on cluster of WSIS-related events was presented by the General Secretariat, for information purposes only, in accordance with the request of the 11th Meeting of WG-WSIS.

2.1.10 Document WG-WSIS-12-11: ITU Focal Points for WSIS Action Lines was presented by the General Secretariat, for information purposes only, in accordance with the request of the 11th Meeting of WG-WSIS.

2.1.11 Document WG-WSIS-13/3: Meeting Report of WSIS Action Line C5 was presented by the General Secretariat. It contained a summary of the presentations and discussions that took place during the two days of the meeting (22-23 May 2008) and also provided a high level overview of the six sessions and presentations by the speakers, panellists and moderators. It also highlighted some proposals aimed at making progress towards the goals of WSIS Action Line C5.

2.1.12 Document WG-WSIS-13/5: World Telecommunication and Information Society Day was presented by the General Secretariat. The celebration took place in Cairo during ITU Telecom Africa and the ITU World Telecommunication and Information Society Award was presented to three eminent laureates: Mme Suzanne Mubarak, First Lady of Egypt; the Daisy Consortium- Digital Accessible Information System and Mrs. Andrea Sacks a well known international advocate for accessibility issues. The ceremony was an opportunity to demonstrate assistive technologies and for ITU to highlight its projects and activities. The theme for next year WTISD is "Protection of children in cyberspace". It will be submitted to Council-08 for approval.

2.1.13 Document WG-WSIS-13/6: Third Consultation Meeting of WSIS Action Line Facilitators (23 May 2008) was presented by the General Secretariat. The meeting was jointly chaired by Mr. H. Zhao, ITU Deputy Secretary-General, Mrs. Miriam Nisbet, Director, Information Society Division, UNESCO and Mrs. Radhika Lal, from UNDP. The meeting aimed at exchanging information among Facilitators and other stakeholders on the Action Line (AL) Facilitation, improving the reporting modalities and identifying ways to improve the Action Line Facilitation process.

2.1.14 Document WG-WSIS-13/7: Draft Report of the Open Consultation Meeting on the 2009 Cluster of WSIS related events (15 September 2008) was presented by the General Secretariat. The meeting aimed at reporting on the activities and results since May 2007 and identifying ways to improve the Action Line Facilitation Process. During the discussion there was an agreement on a number of points including:

- The next Cluster of WSIS-related events will take place in May 2009 in Geneva;

- The need to concentrate the Cluster in one week;

- The name of the Cluster should be changed;

- An open web platform on reporting should also be set up.

It was further decided to continue the discussion in an open consultation meeting to be held on 15 September 2008.

2.1.15 Document WG-WSIS-13/8: Contributions made by ITU during the WSIS cluster of events (13-23 May 2008, Geneva, Switzerland) was presented by the General Secretariat for information purposes only.

2.1.16 Document WG-WSIS-13/10: ITU's activities in the context of WSIS implementation was presented by the General Secretariat. The WG-WSIS requested the WSIS Task Force to merge the various Sectoral reports into this concise, composite report. This would provide a better overview of ITU's activities on WSIS implementation and follow-up, and the results achieved so far. Section 2 of this document provides an overview of activities undertaken by ITU in 2007 and the first semester of 2008 in the context of WSIS implementation. Section 3 highlights the implementation of other WSIS outcomes.

2.1.17 As the Facilitator of the Action Line C2 and within its mandate, ITU continues to carry out several activities related to information and communication infrastructure development and following a WSIS Action Line C2 Plan of Action, consisting of the following six components:

1. promotion of national ICT strategies;

2. harmonization of the ICT policies in different regions;

3. development of regional and large-scale national initiatives;

4. launch of a global thematic ICT infrastructure initiatives;

5. development of a virtual financing platform and

6. deployment of tools for ICT development assessment.

Due to the extensive synergy effects between Action Lines C2 and C6, as well as, following the request of UNDP, ITU accepted to take a leading role in the facilitation of WSIS Action Line C6 for one year as of May 2008. It is a matter for Council's consideration if ITU should continue to play the leading role of the facilitator for WSIS Action Line C6 in the future.

3.   Update on Stocktaking

3.1   BDT reported on the progress of WSIS Stocktaking since its creation in October 2004. In order to expand the functionality and interactivity of this publicly-available tool, several improvements were made during 2007 and 2008. The database architecture was adjusted in order to accelerate responsiveness of the search interface. All existing hyperlinks (URLs) were reviewed and updated. The level of interactivity has been improved by allowing stakeholders to directly update their entries. Finally, all WSIS stakeholders have now the possibility of installing the stocktaking database web-interface directly onto their own website. Upon the request of the United Nations Group on Information Society (UNGIS) the customized interface has been prepared in order to provide the overview of the UNGIS members activities related to

the WSIS. For the time being the WSIS Stocktaking team is working closely with Microsoft in order to enable visualization of the Stocktaking data in the Global View.

3.2   In May 2008 the Report on WSIS Stocktaking 2008 was published. The aim of this report was to update stakeholders on activities undertaken by governments and other organizations with regard to the achievement of WSIS objectives and targets in the period from the end of 2005 to mid 2008. The report was a continuation of the WSIS Stocktaking Report series, which was officially launched at the Summit in November 2005.

3.3   In addition, following the ITU initiative launched in 2007 and aimed at highlighting progress on WSIS implementation at the national level, reflecting the status of development of the ICT-strategies worldwide, ITU has prepared an update of the information, in particular focusing on 51 African countries. In addition, for the needs of this exercise a new portal has been prepared and launched in May 2008. The portal is available here.

4.   Proposals to ITU relating to international public policy issues pertaining to the Internet and the management of Internet resources, including domain names and addresses (Resolution 102)

4.1   At the 12th Meeting of WG-WSIS, the French Delegation presented its contribution on the "Creation of an ITU group on Internet matters" (WG-WSIS-12-9). It was proposed that a dedicated group on Internet issues be created within ITU or within WG-WSIS; this group would help to coordinate ITU activities relating to Internet issues, within its mandate, and could enhance ITU's efficiency in rationalizing its activities and interacting with other organizations. It could also attract, in a more efficient way, all stakeholders interested in these issues.

4.2   After considering all the opinions, it was agreed that Mr. Benoit Blary, (France) would chair the ad-hoc sub-group. The ad-hoc sub-group met on 25 January 2008 from 14.00 to 16.00 hours and on 28 January 2008 from 9.00 to 11. 00 hours and on 26 September 2008 from 9.00 to 12.00 hours.

4.3   The outcomes of the discussions within the ad-hoc sub-group are the following:

4.3.1   Discussions on Internet Governance Forum meetings:

4.3.1.1 After discussions conducted amongst the ad-hoc sub-group and in line with the comments made, the following points on the possible role of ITU in the Internet Governance Forum were proposed to be submitted to the Council for consideration:

- ITU is mandated to play its role in Internet matters and in the overall coordination of activities in different areas, pursuant to the relevant Plenipotentiary Conference Resolutions (e.g. 71, 101, 102, 130, 133, 140) and 2007 Council Resolution 1282.

- In order to ensure, pursuant to the decisions of the Council, a more active presence in initiatives, conferences and projects related to Internet Policy and Governance, ITU should consider the following proposed objectives:

    i.   Actively and visibly promote relevant activities already implemented by ITU;

    ii.   To pursue necessary activities for the implementation of Resolution 102 (Antalya 2006).

- Specific proposals to achieve these objectives could include:

    i.   Ensure that the submission of contributions relating to the activities carried out by ITU in 2008 and to the participation of ITU at the 3rd meeting of IGF to be held in Hyderabad, India, in December 2008, are recognized;

    ii.   ITU should organize Open Forums and Thematic Workshops, in collaboration and partnership with other relevant entities that could make tangible contributions that would strengthen ITU's role in the 3rd IGF Forum;

    iii.   Follow-up on activities, pursuant to Resolution 133 (Antalya, 2006) on Internationalized Domain Names (IDN).

4.3.2   Discussions on the role of ITU with regard to Internet-related issues:

4.3.2.1 The ad-hoc sub-group discussed the role of ITU in implementing WSIS outcomes according to Resolution 140 (Antalya, 2006) and especially the participation of ITU in the process of enhanced cooperation defined in paragraph 71 of the Tunis Agenda for the Information Society.

4.4   WG-WSIS considered and agreed upon these proposals.

5.   Ad-hoc sub-group

5.1   The WG-WSIS decided that the ad-hoc sub-group continues its work, to discuss, in accordance with Resolution 102 and Council Resolution 1282, ITU's role in Internet related issues as well as in the IGF meetings. In this regard, membership was requested to send in contributions. The contributions sent by Member States and Sector Members will be posted on WG-WSIS website.

6.   Draft Roadmap for ITU's activities in the implementation of WSIS up to 2015

6.1   Document WG-WSIS-13/4: A second "Draft Roadmap for ITU's activities in the implementation of WSIS up to 2015" was presented by the General Secretariat. The document which contains a framework for the development of a Roadmap for ITU's activities in the implementation of WSIS up to 2015 was revised with comments and proposals from the 12th WG-WSIS meeting. It was jointly prepared by the General Secretariat and the three Bureaus (BR, TSB and BDT), under the coordination of the Chairman of WSIS Task Force.

6.2   The Roadmap is articulated in three main parts, detailing foreseen ITU activities in the WSIS implementation. Each part corresponds to a specific timeframe, in order to review the work done and the results obtained.

6.3   Although 2015 is the WSIS target date for the achievement of the objectives of the Plan of Action, ITU believes that by bringing forward the WSIS C2 target date to 2012, this will facilitate the achievement of the other WSIS Action Lines as well as the MDGs by 2015. This strategy of the ITU Secretary-General was strongly endorsed by African Ministers at the Ministerial meeting of the Connect Africa Summit in Kigali, 2007. The final review of the ITU outcomes relating the implementation of WSIS will take place in PP-2014.

6.4   Therefore, the period 2008-2014 will be divided into the periods listed below, corresponding to the activities that ITU will undertake:

- Short-term activities (2008 – 2009)
- Medium-term activities (2010 – 2011)
- Long-term activities (2012 – 2014)

6.5   The Group highly appreciated the documents referred to in the input contribution to the 12th and 13th Meeting of WG-WSIS as "*Draft Roadmap*" for ITU's activities in the Implementation of WSIS up to 2014". The meeting while appreciating this document considered that it is a useful compilation of ITU activities in various sectors which would contribute to the achievements of the objectives of the Action Lines mentioned in this report.

6.6   Some comments and proposals made by the WG-WSIS were as follows:

- It was agreed that the Roadmap referred in 2007 Council Resolution 1282 should be a living and dynamic document and should be updated regularly especially after ITU institutional events and WSIS related events;

- Initiatives such as, Connect the World, Global Cybersecurity Agenda should be included in the Roadmap;

- A reference for Action Line C2 target date 2012 should be included in the time frame of the Roadmap;

- ITU should set the objectives and establish targets that could be measured for those Action Lines where ITU is the Facilitator. To this effect, it is proposed to start from WSIS Action Line C2 with associated indicators and measurable index. See Resolution 8 (Rev. Doha, 2006) and Resolution 131 (Antalya, 2006).

- To strengthen cooperation with the other bodies of the United Nations family, within the framework of UNGIS, as called for in the Tunis Agenda, the ITU Secretary-General is requested to recommend to the other Action Line Facilitators to prepare a similar Roadmap with defined objectives for their relevant Action Lines and to encourage UNGIS to develop a global roadmap for the implementation of WSIS outcomes up to 2015 according to 2007 Council Resolution 1282;

- It was supported by the Group the idea that Action Lines should not be replaced by themes, as it was discussed during the Open Consultation Meeting on 15 September 2008. It was also concluded that the process of cluster of meetings requires improvement in efficiency and productivity.

- The successful organization of Action Line C2 and C5 meetings by ITU during the WSIS cluster of events could serve as an example of good practice.

7. Proposals to Council that may be necessary for adapting ITU to its role in building the information society (Res. 140)

7.1   Given the lack of written contributions, membership was invited to send in its contributions to strategy@itu.int. In this regard, a reflector was created and is available at: www.itu.int/wg-wsis for this purpose.

7.2   Based on the information presented and the discussions held during the two meetings the following comments were made:

- Increase the visibility and role played by ITU where ITU is the Facilitator or Co-Facilitator by raising its profile in regard to the WSIS Stakeholder community;

- ITU will act as a catalyst in reaching the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) by 2015, providing the basic groundwork for the international community. In fact, the strategy proposed by the ITU Secretary-General to bring forward ICT connectivity goals to 2012 will enable the achievement of the broader Millennium Development Goals;

- ITU has been asked to be Facilitator of WSIS Action Line C6, due to the increasing role played by ITU in WSIS implementation, which was recognized and highly appreciated by the WSIS stakeholders.

7.3   The Group supported the activities carried out by the Secretary-General in his function of representative of the Union aimed at enhancing international cooperation in the implementation of WSIS Outcomes.

7.4   The Group took note that the outcomes of Council Working Groups on "Security Definitions & Terminology: Use in ICTs", and "Terminology: Use in the Constitution and Convention" are important in the development of proposals for Council that may be necessary for adapting ITU to its role in building the Information Society and requested the Council Working Groups to inform Council WG-WSIS about the progress made in their activities according the 2007 Council Resolution 1282.

8.   Conclusion

8.1   A "Draft report of the WG-WSIS" was discussed. In the course of the debate, the final version of the document was agreed on by the meeting. The report is available on the website: www.itu.int/wg-wsis.

8.2   On behalf of the WG-WSIS, I would like to give special thanks to Dr. A. Kushtuev (Russian Federation), who chaired the 13th meeting of WG-WSIS in the morning of 25 September 2008 on my behalf and to Mr. B. Blary, who chaired the ad-hoc sub-groups at various stages during the work of the WG-WSIS, and whose work has contributed to this report. I would also like to extend my personal thanks to all the ITU Member States and Sector Members who made contributions and participated in the work of the WG-WSIS, to the elected officials and to the General Secretariat for the efficient assistance provided during meetings.

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