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| PROPOSAL OF A NEW RESOLUTION ON PROMOTING ESTABLISHMENT OF INTERNATIONAL TERRESTRIAL CABLE TRANSIT CONVENTION AND SUPPORTING DEVELOPMENT OF TRANS-MULTI-COUNTRY TERRESTRIAL CABLE NETWORKS | | |
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| **Summary:**  Currently, the neighboring countries worldwide have all basically built their cross-border terrestrial fiber cables, but only to meet the bilateral demands for communication between themselves. This is mainly due to the absence of international convention on terrestrial cables transit and relevant settlement agreements. Recently, ITU-T Study Group 3 has set up a Question to work on charging standards and rules for trans-multi-country terrestrial cable transit.  **Action required:**  TDAG is invited to consider this document and take the required action.  **References:**  N/A | | |

## Introduction

Currently, the neighboring countries worldwide have all basically built their cross-border terrestrial fiber cables, but only to meet the bilateral demands for communication between themselves. This is mainly due to the absence of international convention on terrestrial cables transit and relevant settlement agreements. Recently, ITU-T Study Group 3 has set up a Question to work on charging standards and rules for trans-multi-country terrestrial cable transit.

To promote establishment of international terrestrial cable transit convention and support development of trans-multi-country terrestrial cable networks can fully vitalize the resources of national backbone network extensively distributed worldwide, form smooth international terrestrial information channels across the continents where a large number of countries reside, like Asia, Europe, Africa and South America, substantially improve countries’ capability of accessing international Internet, in particular those land-locked and least developed countries, cut broadband access costs and comprehensively optimize and upgrade the global communications network facilities so as to make substantial contribution to Connect 2020 Agenda and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

## Proposal

It is proposed that ITU-D should establish a new resolution and coordinate with ITU-T to call upon the ICT authorities and operators of different countries to jointly promote establishment of an international terrestrial cable transit convention and support development of trans-multi-country terrestrial cable networks.

RESOLUTION XX (Buenos Aires, 2017)

Promoting Establishment of International Terrestrial Cable Transit Convention and Supporting Development of Trans-multi-country Terrestrial Cable Networks

The World Telecommunication Development Conference (WTDC) (Buenos Aires, 2017),

recalling

a) Resolution 71 of the Plenipotentiary Conference about Strategic Plan 2016-2019 (2014, Busan), in particular the analysis of digital divide in Section 2.2.2.1, the ITU-D analysis in Section 3.3 and the ITU’s Strategic Plan 2016-2019;

b) Resolution 200 of the Plenipotentiary Conference about “Connect 2020” Agenda to promote global telecommunication/ICT development (2014, Busan), in particular those overall goals and specific targets of growth and inclusiveness;

c) “to greatly increase the ICT uptake and strive for Internet access service for everyone at an affordable price by 2020” taken by UN’s 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development as one of its goals;

d) The Joint Declaration at Extraordinary Meeting of UN Broadband Commission for Sustainable Development (2016, Davos) about joint work on Internet access for 1.5 billion people before 2020;

recognizing

a) that Internet constitutes the public infrastructure of strategic significance to economic and social development while Internet access is the cornerstone for driving effective investments, promoting information consumption, ensuring cyber-information security and advancing fairness and sustainable development;

b) that more efforts to grow Internet population– one of the goals is an increase of 1.5 billion Internet users by 2020 – has become a global consensus and been highlighted in many global initiatives in recent years;

c) that the digital divide between developed countries and developing countries is widening and developing countries, in particular those land-locked ones, have low a level of International Internet access, which has become a prominent bottleneck to their ICT development.

further recognizing

a) that currently only 5% of global Internet traffic is carried by terrestrial cables, whose potential is yet to be tapped;

b) that terrestrial cables are only well used between adjacent countries, while once a third country is involved, these resources often fail to be effectively used, thus causing a huge waste;

c) that the terrestrial cable is characterized by low construction cost, fast failure recovery and routing variety;

d)that the resources needed to develop trans-multi-country terrestrial cable networks are abundant and the cost is low: by connecting the existing domestic national backbone cable networks with trans-border terrestrial cables, we can easily form a large-capacity international terrestrial transmission network that covers various regions, continents and even the whole world, and significantly increase the capacity of the current trans-country information transmission channels, in particular benefiting the land-locked countries;

e) that due to lack of an international terrestrial cable transit convention and relevant settlement agreements, trans-multi-country terrestrial cable networking is encountered by various policy and economic barriers, which leads to failure in forming the above-mentioned ideal international network of terrestrial cables;

taking into account

a) that transportation sectors such as road and aviation also faced similar problems and their experience in forming transit agreements through multilateral negotiation is inspiring to the telecom sector.

b) that ITU-T Study Group 3 has set up a Question to work on charging standards and rules of trans-multi-country terrestrial cable transit;

considering

that in light of their different mandates and priorities, ITU-T and ITU-D should strengthen inter-sectoral coordination and work together to promote establishment of international terrestrial cable transit convention. The core mission of ITU-D is to foster international cooperation and solidarity in the delivery of technical assistance and in the creation, development and improvement of telecommunication/ICT equipment and networks in developing countries. ITU-D is required to discharge the Union’s dual responsibility as a UN specialized agency and also as an executing agency for implementing projects under the UN development system or other funding arrangements;

resolves to invite Member States

to take all appropriate measures to promote establishment and implementation of the international terrestrial cable transit convention.

reaffirms

that to promote establishment of the international terrestrial cable transit convention and build trans-multi-country terrestrial cable networks constitutes an important way of establishing global terrestrial cable channels, promoting international Internet development, substantially improving the capability of landlocked countries to access international Internet, and increasing the number of Internet users. It is of epoch-making meaning to the attainment of ITU’s “Connect 2020” Agenda and the UN’s Sustainable Development Goals;

urges regulators

to provide policy support to the development of trans-multi-country terrestrial cables, coordinate progress in operational policy and actively cooperate with other member states in relevant projects.

urges service providers

to negotiate and enter into multilateral business agreement in establishing trans-multi-country terrestrial cable network. In the agreement, various factors involved in all parties’ effort to promote the work should be fully considered, including business demand, resource allocation, cooperation model and operational mechanism.

instructs the Director of the Telecommunication Development Bureau

1. to promote the study on how international terrestrial cables can enhance the current international communications facilities and research on regions already enjoying trans-multi-country terrestrial cable connection to analyse and evaluate its impact on optimizing and upgrading the international communication network and sum up good practice and experience.

2. to continue improving and updating the ITU interactive terrestrial transmission map, which serves as a basis and reference for the establishment of trans-multi-country terrestrial cables.

3. to strengthen liaison and coordination with ITU-T to explore applications of standards and rules regarding trans-multi-country terrestrial cables in practical cases and promote them worldwide.

4. to coordinate in projects and technical assistance activities so as to encourage and promote the establishment and development of global interconnected terrestrial cable network.

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