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| **Telecommunication Development Advisory Group (TDAG)**  **24th Meeting, Geneva, 3-5 April 2019** | C:\Users\comas\AppData\Local\Temp\Rar$DRa0.735\jpg\ITU official logo_blue_RGB.jpg |
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| Director, Telecommunication Development Bureau | |
| REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FORUMS | |
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| **Summary:**  This document provides background information on the status of the preparations for the Regional Development Forums to be held in 2019, while taking into account the outcomes of the Plenipotentiary Conference on Regional Presence.  **Action required:**  TDAG is invited to note this document and provide guidance as deemed appropriate.  **References:**  WTDC Buenos Aires Action Plan; WTDC Resolution 1 (Rev. Buenos Aires, 2017);Resolution 17 (Rev. Buenos Aires, 2017); Resolution 21 (Rev. Buenos Aires, 2017); Resolution 30 (Rev. Buenos Aires, 2017); Resolution 71 (Buenos Aires, 2017); Plenipotentiary Resolution 25 (Rev. Dubai 2018 | |

1. **Background**

The Plenipotentiary Conference 2018 strengthened the role of regional offices, instructuing to ensure that all planned activities of three Sectors and the General Secretariat in the regions are consolidated into the parts of the operational plans relating to regions and implemented under the coordination of the Regional Offices. Moreover PP-18 also instructed to ensure that the annual operational plans of the Regional Offices are based on input from the respective regions prior to implementation.

Taking into account that WTDC-17 resolved to strengthen the platforms for regional coordination, including the Regional Development Forums (RDFs), with the aim of strengthening of the regional presence as an extension of ITU as whole, and ensuring that the activities of BR and TSB are effectively incorporated in the actions of Regional Offices, a series of RDFs have been scheduled in 2019.

1. **RDFs beyond PP-18**

Building upon PP-18 and WTDC-17 outcomes, RDFs should provide the opportunity for dialogue between Regional Offices and decision-makers of ITU Member States and Sector Members on the activities carried out at the regional level, so that they can play a part in the implementation of the ITU Strategic Plan, Programmes, Projects and the Regional Initiaitves set out in Resolution 17 (Rev. Buenos Aires, 2017) of WTDC. RDFs serve as a platform for assessing strategic orientations that may have an impact on Regional Offices work plan incorporating regional actions of all three Sectors and the General Secretariat.

In this context, these Forums will report on the implementation of regional activities of ITU carried out in 2018, including implementation of the Regional Initiatives approved by WTDC-17 and related projects. They will provide all stakeholders with an opportunity to discuss 2019 action plans for the respective region, to announce commitments and to exchange experiences and best practices. It will also address Study Groups, Membership, Partnerships, ITU Centres of Excellence, as well as regional contributions to the implementation of WSIS Action Lines and SDGs.

RDFs will provide an excellent opportunity for the regional representatives (Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen) to CWGs, TDAG, TSAG and RAG as well as Study Groups to engage with ITU membership and other stakeholders at the regional level, in order to continue building synergies between actions undertaken at the regional and global level.

RDFs are open to all stakeholders willing to strengthen cooperation and partnerships among telecommunication/ICT policy-makers, regulators, industry, academia, regional and international development agencies and organizations on specific regional telecommunication and ICT matters.

RDFs will also aim at engaging respective UN Regional Economic Commissions and UN Regional Development Groups, as well as UN agencies and other relevant regional organizations, especially in the field of telecommunications/ICTs.

The agendas and duration of RDFs may vary from region to region, depending on the regional particularities.

The draft 2019 schedule of RDFs is provided below:

* RDF Africa: 20-21 May 2019, Lusaka, Zambia;
* RDF Americas: 30 September 2019, Asuncion, Paraguay (back to back with CITEL’S PCC.I, to be held from 1 to 4 October);
* RDF Arab States: 19 March 2019, Beirut, Lebanon (back to back with the UNESCWA Regional Forum on WSIS and SDGs to be held on 20-21 March 2019);
* RDF Asia-Pacific: 29-30 July 2019 (place to be confirmed);
* RDF CIS: 2-3 October 2019, Bishkek, Kyrgyz Republic;
* RDF Europe: 6 May 2019, Rome, Italy (back to back with CEPT’s ComITU meeting, to be held from 7 to 9 May).

1. **Conclusions**

RDFs are intended to play an important role in strengthening coordination with stakeholders at the regional level. They provide an opportunity for stakeholders discuss the totality of the ITU activities (three Sectors and General Secretariat) for the respective region.

Their format and function have evolved based on the membership’s guidance as provided recently by Resolution 25 of PP-18. In this context, TDAG is invited to provide guidance as appropriate to ensure that RDFs provide best possible value to the Development Sector, while contributing to the implementation of the WSIS Action Lines and achievement of Sustainable Development Goals.

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