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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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| ITU-D Policy and Regulatory Programme | |
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| **Summary:**  The document provides an overview of the main activities carried out under the ITU-D policy and regulatory programme in 2018, including the Global Symposium for Regulators (GSR), the Regional Economic Dialogues, the Global ICT Regulatory Outlook Report, analytical reports on 5G, Artificial Intelligence and digital identity, the econometric study on the impact of broadband, digitization and ICT regulation, various thematic online portals as well as a range of direct assistance activities.  **Action required:**  TDAG is invited to note this document and provide guidance as deemed appropriate. | |

# Background

ITU Membership at both the World Telecommunication Development Conferences (WTDC-14 and WTDC-17) and the Plenipotentiary Conferences (PP-14 and PP-18) recognized that national telecommunication/ICT policies and regulations should be recognized and understood so as to allow the development of global markets which can support the harmonious development of telecommunication services. This is also one of the goals of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, namely Goal 9: “to build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation”.

As ITU, ITU-D in particular, is a UN specialized agency in telecommunications/ICTs, BDT has been proactive with delivering concrete objectives, strategies, and actions in the converged ICT eco-system to foster an enabling policy and regulatory environment for ICT/telecommunications development.

# Objectives and Strategies

In accordance with WTDC-14 and WTDC-17, the main objectives of the ITU-D policy and regulatory programme are to provide assistance to Membership in the form of products, services and tools to strengthen their capacity to enhance telecommunications/ICT policy, legal and regulatory frameworks conducive to the development of ICT/telecommunications.

Output 3.1 of the Buenos Aires Action Plan (BaAP) specifies some expectations on how to deliver on the objective of WTDC-17, namely through products and services on telecommunication/ICT policy and regulation such as assessment studies and other publications, and other platforms to exchange information.

# Key Actions and Results

In 2018, BDT conducted several key actions to foster inclusive dialogues with the wider ICT community and across the sectors, and to achieve broad partnerships. BDT also provided up-to-date regulatory and policy data, research and analysis and developed tools for an effective policy, legal and regulatory environment for the ICT sector.

# Knowledge Exchange products and strategic dialogues to promote enabling ICT/telecommunications environment for digital transformation

BDT convened global and regional forums to discuss global trends in regulation for Sector Members and other national and international stakeholders, through organizing the Global Symposium for Regulators (GSR) as well as strategic dialogues on policy, legal, regulatory, and economic and financial issues and market developments.

The 18th edition of the Global Symposium for Regulators (GSR) was held from 9 to 12 July in Geneva under the theme of “New Regulatory Frontiers”. The GSR attracted over 600 participants including government ministers, heads of ICT national regulatory authorities and industry executives from more than 125 countries. GSR also provided a platform for knowledge exchange between regional regulatory associations and private sector Chief Executive Officers. During GSR, participants agreed that governments, the private sector as well as all stakeholders in the digital economy should seek synergies and leverage their strengths and resources toward achieving sustainable digital development for all. The event culminated with the adoption by ICT Regulators of a set of best practice guidelines on new regulatory frontiers to achieve digital transformation.

The 19th edition of GSR will be held from 9 to 12 July 2019 in Port Vila, Vanuatu, hosted by Telecommunications, Radiocommunications and Broadcasting Regulator (TRBR) and the Government of Vanuatu.

The Regional Economic Dialogues (REDs) are high-level forums dedicated to the discussion of economic regulation and finance. In 2018, two REDs were organized, the first in Africa (Burkina Faso, 8-12 October) and second in the Americas (Mexico, 4-6 September), to examine the economic implications of future technologies (Internet of Things (IoT) and Machine-2-Machine (M2M), Cloud Computing, Big Data and Block chain) and their application in the each region. These Dialogues also examined existing and emerging opportunities and challenges and explored opportunities for creating an enabling environment for ICT competitiveness and growth in the regions.

To improve the synergy between ITU-D Study Groups and the strategic dialogues, BDT also organized Experts’ Knowledge Exchange meetings back to back with the REDs, which included inputs from international experts involved in the work of ITU-D Study Group 1 Question 4/1 (Economic policies and methods of determining the costs of services related to national telecommunication/ICT networks) and Question 6/1 (Consumer information, protection and rights: Laws, regulation, economic bases, consumer networks).

BDT continued to raise awareness and build capacity through various training sessions, workshops, seminars, and conferences focusing on ICT development, broadband infrastructure, applications and services, 5G, International Mobile Roaming (IMR), cost modelling and pricing, infrastructure development, policy and regulatory collaboration in the area of digital financial services and digital financial inclusion, and digital economy. Several training sessions on costing and pricing approaches for digital communication services were organized (Africa, Arab States and Asia-Pacific). In 2018, these workshops provided practical hands-on knowledge for regulators and sector members on evolving costing, financing and regulatory pricing methodologies and approaches for digital services including Over the Top services (OTTs).

BDT carried out direct assistance to several countries in coordination with the Regional Offices on specific regulatory and economic issues, including Bangladesh, Bolivia, China, Comoros, Ecuador, Egypt, India, Mexico, Mongolia, Nicaragua Pakistan, Panama, Paraguay and Sudan.

Based on these outcomes, BDT is in the process of developing further research and analysis, content material and training programmes to assist Member States in developing their regulatory and policy capacity and knowledge to accelerate digital transformation.

# Data, research and analysis on enabling ICT/telecommunications policy and regulatory environment

BDT continued to provide high-quality data, research, analyses, and tools (GSR discussion papers, publications, databases) to support membership in implementing and reviewing strategies, policies, and legal and regulatory frameworks as well as in moving towards evidence-based decision-making. Publications included, among others, ITU Reports on:

* 2018 Global ICT Regulatory Outlook Report;
* Setting the stage for 5G: Opportunities and challenges;
* The economic contribution of broadband, digitization and ICT regulation;
* Regulatory challenges and opportunities in the new ICT ecosystem;
* Digital identity in the ICT ecosystem: an overview;
* The Artificial Intelligence (AI) Development Series, divided in 4 discussion papers for GSR: a) Introductory module; b) Setting the Stage for AI Governance: Interfaces, Infrastructures, and Institutions for Policymakers and Regulators; c) AI, ethics and society; and d) AI, IoT and security aspects;
* A series of country studies on the use of ICTs and the digital ecosystem in selected countries in the Americas Region were prepared for Ecuador, Nicaragua, Panamá, Bolivia, Paraguay.

BDT continued to track regulatory and market trends in the ICT sector with the ITU Regulatory and the ITU Tariff Policies surveys, which results are annually updated in the ITU ICTEye platform and the ICT Regulatory Tracker.

BDT has also been developing new knowledge exchange tools and platforms (such as Portals on International Mobile Roaming (IMR) Resources, the Digital Ecosystem, Infrastructure Development, Quality of Service, and a Regional Regulatory Associations Portal) to enable inclusive dialogue and enhanced cooperation and to raise national and regional awareness about the importance of an enabling environment.



# Ways Forward

BDT will strengthen activities as below among others:

* Continue to build capacity on policy, regulation and market issues and evidence-based decision making through national and regional capacity building workshops;
* Develop new tools, research and analysis, and provide data to support members in defining, elaborating, implementing and reviewing transparent, coherent and forward-looking strategies, policy, legal and regulatory frameworks as well as in moving towards evidence-based decision-making;
* Optimize existing platforms for data analysis, such as the ICTEye and ICT Regulatory Tracker;
* Develop and implement new regulatory projects and initiatives for BDT and membership;
* Improve the use of electronic communication and outreach in activities to assist in evidence-based decision making and strategies, policy, legal and regulatory frameworks as well as in moving towards evidence-based decision-making.

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