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| C:\Users\comas\AppData\Local\Temp\Rar$DRa0.735\jpg\ITU official logo_blue_RGB.jpg**TDAG Working Group on WTDC Preparations****20 October 2020, Virtual** |
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| **Title:** | Draft final report of the TDAG Working Group on WTDC Preparations |

**Summary**

This document contains the final report of the TDAG Working Group on WTDC Preparations, including proposals based on its terms of reference. The report is being submitted to TDAG-20/3 for consideration and endorsement of the proposals contained therein.

The TDAG Working Group on WTDC preparations was set up by TDAG at its meeting on 2-5 June 2020. The terms of reference were approved at a subsequent extraordinary TDAG meeting on 16 June 2020.

The group has held four meetings over July, September and October 2020 and has received eight contributions from Member States and Sector Members that were presented and discussed at those meetings. The reports of the individual meetings are available as follows:

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| 16 July 2020 – [TDAG-WG-Prep/4](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-TDAG27.WP-C-0004/en) | 30 September 2020 – [TDAG-WG-Prep/18](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-TDAG27.WP-C-0018/en) |
| 7 September 2020 – [TDAG-WG-Prep/12](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-TDAG27.WP-C-0012/en) | 20 October 2020 – TDAG-WG-Prep/xx |

Throughout its meetings the group has stressed that WTDC should be an action-oriented conference, with interactive dialogues between stakeholders, aimed at developing a shared understanding of existing barriers and advancing effective, sustainable and innovative solutions for the expansion of meaningful connectivity for everyone, everywhere.

As so many have said, the COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the fundamental importance of telecommunications/ICTs in all aspects of people's lives: health, education, work and entertainment. In this sense, the preparatory process, structure and content of WTDC must be designed to ensure that no one is left behind.

The following are the recommendations made by the working group to TDAG on the matters set out in its terms of reference, based on the membership contributions submitted to the meetings of the working group.

[**Secretariat Note:** All membership proposals submitted to the meetings of the working group are provided here for review and decision by the working group at its last meeting].

**Section I: Preparatory process**

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| * **To review WTDC preliminary proposals on WTDC-21 preparatory process including responses to the BDT survey on WTDC reform that was discussed during the two TDAG web dialogues, as well as any other related member contributions to TDAG-20 virtual meeting on WTDC;**
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| * **In consultation with ITU membership and the TDAG Bureau, make recommendations for arrangements with preparatory meetings and events prior to the conference;**
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| 1. **How many IRMs should be held and when?**

1.1 Hold a two-day meeting, but possibly not back to back with TDAG. This could be a replacement of the one-day coordination meeting normally held for the six regions in conjunction with the last meeting of TDAG before a WTDC. – **Russian Federation**1.2 Hold one virtual/hybrid IRM before WTDC-21 to allow all Member States to participate (including those still under travel restrictions due to the COVID-19 pandemic). The IRM could be held in the third quarter of 2021. – **Indonesia**1.3 Hold three IRMs in 2021 – that is, one IRM after every two RPMs, with the possibility to hold additional ones if needed. The interval between each IRM and the RPMs should be at least one week. – **Lithuania**1.4 Hold four IRMs – that is, one IRM after every two RPMs, with the fourth one to be convened at least two months before WTDC to review the consolidated outcomes of the three IRMs. – **Zimbabwe**1.5 Hold up to three interregional meetings before the conference, preferably back to back with RPMs. One of the IRMs could be held right before the TDAG meeting planned in May 2021 – ***multi-country proposal from*** **Argentina, Brazil, Canada and the United States**1.6 Hold two IRMs, one in the first quarter of 2021, and the second after the round of regional preparatory meetings. The first meeting could be held virtually, depending on the situation with COVID-19. Holding too many IRMs is not necessary, especially since RTOs will need enough time to finalize their common proposals. IRMs will play a great role in helping to minimize discussions during the conference as they will try to reach agreement on some of the issues beforehand – **Egypt**1. **What should be the format of IRMs?**

2.1 The IRM could serve as a platform to help reach preliminary agreement, but any changes to the preparatory process must respect the sovereign right of any Member State to submit its own contributions to WTDC. – **Russian Federation**2.2 Sessions should be organized around the main issues that are naturally time-consuming during the conference. Upon request, interpretation in the six official languages must be guaranteed. –***multi-country proposal from*** **Argentina, Brazil, Canada and the United States**1. **What should the IRM agenda include?**

3.1 Discussion towards the list of WTDC documents (resolutions, Declaration, and so on) reflecting the preliminary proposals of RTOs; the list of coordinators of RTOs on each of the documents cited above; and identification of possible problematic documents for WTDC. – **Russian Federation**3.2 Suppression, modification, or streamlining of WTDC resolutions; structure and agenda of WTDC-21 (ideas on how the high-level track and side events would be arranged to maximize their impact for future ITU-D projects); and target invitations (ITU Member States, ITU-D Sector Members, Academia, funding entities).– **Indonesia**3.3 The agenda should be built around proposals from BDT, RPMs and RTOs and should cover topics that need coordination between different regions – **Lithuania**3.4 Discussion of any issues of common interest arising from the relevant two RPMs, issues on which the regions whose meetings preceded the IRM require support, as well as issues relating to the formulation of study group Questions, streamlining resolutions and regional priorities. – **Zimbabwe**3.5IRMs would be discussing the common proposals of the regions, with assigned focal points for each topic. – **Egypt**3.6 The TDAG Working Group on WTDC Preparations (TDAG-WG-Prep) and the TDAG Working Group on WTDC Resolutions, Declaration and Thematic Priorities (TDAG-WG-RDTP) should advise TDAG to identify main issues, such as: revision of Resolutions 1 and 2, Declaration, resolution streamlining, new study groups/Questions structure, and consolidation of regional priorities. Discussions could also include any expected changes to Resolution 31 to facilitate changes to the WTDC programme. –***multi-country proposal from* Argentina, Brazil, Canada and the United States**1. **Should attendance at IRMs be limited, and if so, how many representatives from each region should attend IRMs?**

4.1 IRMs should be limited to the coordinators nominated by RTOs. – **Russian Federation**4.2 Attendance should be fully open to Member States, allowing IRMs to become a platform where RTOs and Member States can discuss and debate their views regarding proposals for streamlining WTDC texts, drawing on the experience of the Conference Preparatory Meeting for WRC-19 and the Interregional Meeting for WTSA-20. – **Indonesia**4.3 RTOs shall decide who will represent a region at IRMs, and attendance should be limited to five representatives (maximum) per region. Representatives from other stakeholders involved in the preparations for WTDC-21 may also attend. – **Lithuania**4.4 Attendance should be limited to a maximum of ten representatives per region (to cut costs and keep meetings manageable). This number would enable regions, when appointing representatives, to use subregions or geographical representation as a determining factor, while also taking into account the need to include representatives that speak for underserved communities. Investors (including financial institutions), operators, youth and donor organizations could also have representatives in line with the new thinking on attracting stakeholders to WTDC. – **Zimbabwe**4.5 Each RTO should decide, at its discretion, the number of coordinators it chooses to have. Attendance to the meeting shall be open to the focal points assigned by each RTO. – **Egypt**4.6 It depends on how many regional focal points were designated by each RTO. Virtual formats may facilitate greater participation. – ***multi-country proposal from*** **Argentina, Brazil, Canada and the United States**1. **How will the chairmanship of IRMs be decided?**

5.1 The chairman of WTDC-21 should chair the IRMs, preferably. – **Russian Federation**5.2 The chairmanship and office bearers of the IRM should be decided during TDAG-20/3 on 23 November 2020. – **Indonesia**5.3 In the four-IRM scenario, given the link between the first three IRMs with specific regions, concerned regions should appoint the chairman of the IRM related to their regions, with vice chairmen coming from all regions. All six regions would then choose a chairman for the fourth IRM. – **Zimbabwe**5.4 By candidacies: one chairman, two vice-chairmen and one chairman per agenda session. –***multi-country proposal from*** **Argentina, Brazil, Canada and the United States.**1. **What steps should be taken to ensure proper planning and coordination between RPMs, IRMs and RTO preparatory meetings?**

6.1 The lastRTO preparatory meeting should include one or two days of interregional coordination, with the presence of other RTOs. It will be necessary to provide translation into English; send out invitations on how to access online documents defined by RTOs for interregional consideration; and provide an agenda containing items related to the input documents of other regional organizations on their preparatory activity. – **Russian Federation**6.2 Best practice (in terms of preparations) from other ITU conferences shall be incorporated into the planning and work of IRMs. – **Lithuania**6.3 With regard to coordination between RPMs and IRMs and RTOs: each region would appoint its coordinators, while the secretariat of the RTOs would be allowed to play an overall coordinating role. – **Zimbabwe**6.4 The regional preparatory process should focus on defining regional priorities/initiatives, revising or drafting time-consuming resolutions, addressing study groups and study Questions related matters and developing guidelines and text for the Declaration. –***multi-country proposal from*** **Argentina, Brazil, Canada and the United States**6.5 On the other hand, specific participants should be identified and invited to be part of the preparatory process to create cohesion and purpose to help in better understanding challenges, expectations and ideas regarding the themes of WTDC-21 and how to advance more sustainable outcomes in promoting adoption and deployment of telecommunications/ICTs. Being inclusive of a broader set of members and stakeholders in the preparatory process could also help generate more interest in the WTDC-21 itself. –***multi-country proposal from*** **Argentina, Brazil, Canada and the United States**6.6 Regional thematic seminars, in accordance with the thematic priorities of ITU-D could be organized to support the preparatory process as a whole. Such workshops, and RPMs generally, should leverage study group deliverables to support discussions and help advance ideas on new study Question topics or to improve deliverables in the next cycle. Each region should identify one or two thematic tracks to deepen its preparatory process. Regional Development Forums (RDFs) could be used as an environment to this end as well. – ***multi-country proposal from*** **Argentina, Brazil, Canada and the United States****9. How should WTDC-21 be promoted?**9.1 High-level decision-makers and world leaders could be interested in WTDC if ITU proposes programmes, initiatives and actions that address the global challenges of the time in conjunction with decisions of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA), for example, on the 2030 Agenda, health, food, climate and cybersecurity. The WTDC agenda should be made more attractive to high-level decision-makers and global leaders. – **Russian Federation**9.2 ITU-D should promote WTDC-21 during high-profile forums such as World Economic Forum 2021, Mobile World Congress 2021 and other ministerial level/senior official level meetings. – **Indonesia**9.3 Communicate to the public, clearly and loudly, the main objectives of WTDC-21, the value of participating in it and possible ways of contributing to it. Develop specific measures to promote WTDC-21 in every region to attract the best regional representation. – **Lithuania**9.4 ITU should look for opportunities to promote WTDC at events organized by other institutions such as the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the World Economic Forum (WEF), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the Broadband Commission and the European Commission. – **ESOA**9.5 At national level, regulators could dedicate any speeches delivered during key ICT events to the role of WTDC and encourage industry, academia and other stakeholders to participate in the preparations and raise awareness to their constituents. At regional level, regional meetings and conferences could incorporate a segment focused on the importance of participating in WTDC and its role in development. At the international level, major UN-related conferences could be used to promote WTDC, for example: the Global Sustainable Transport Conference, the Conference on Sustainable Development and Summits, the International Conference on Financing for Development and the World Education Forum. – **Zimbabwe**9.6 Mainly by BDT, regional telecommunication organizations and by membership in general, addressing specific invitations to partners as those mentioned above. Participation could also be increased via a strong, clear theme and solutions-based agenda to help enhance the value proposition for stakeholders. In addition, WTDC-21 can attract greater attention through incorporation of some of the interactive aspects of the programme – for example a hackathon could be organized with the private sector as part of the Youth Summit, or through tech demos. Virtual town halls, online forums and greater social media engagement could also be used to engage with constituent groups and raise awareness for the conference. ***– multi-country proposal from* Argentina, Brazil, Canada and the United States.**9.7For greater success, a strong promotional campaign of WTCD-21 must be developed and implemented, highlighting its new imprint**.** – ***multi-country proposal from*** **Argentina, Brazil, Canada and the United States****10. Which other high-profile forums can be used to raise awareness and interest on WTDC, and how should ITU go about doing this?**10.1 Regional forums such as the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) – in particular its Telecommunication and Information Working Group and its Steering Committee on Economic and Technical Cooperation – can be used to raise awareness about WTDC. ITU can share with APEC actual relevant work done, including ITU-D reports on study Questions. – **Russian Federation**10.2 Member States should promote WTDC-21 at national level, especially targeting groups that stand to benefit the most from its outcomes (youth organizations, girls and women, organizations of people with disabilities, among others) inviting them to contribute. – **Lithuania**10.3 ITU should make best efforts to bring all relevant stakeholders together, for example, by holding a session dedicated to WTDC at events organized by the most relevant private-sector stakeholders (mobile, satellite, OTTs and so on) to profile the event in front of high-level industry executives, call for greater cross-sector collaboration and drive greater engagement in WTDC. – **ESOA**10.4 Regional Regulators Associations meetings, meetings of the United Nations system, Mobile World Congress, Satellite Annual Meeting, Global, Regional and National Internet Governance Forums, NAB Show and so on. –***multi-country proposal from*** **Argentina, Brazil, Canada and the United States** |

**Section II: Conference arrangements, including content, thematic tracks, themes and stakeholders**

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| * **To develop proposals and make recommendations that might enhance the arrangements for the conference, including:**
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| **- Conference content;****- Consider the Thematic Tracks****10. Should the High-Level Segment be changed, and if so, what form should it take?**10.1 Any High-Level Segments should not take time from the work of WTDC Plenary and committees and their related groups. – **Russian Federation**10.2 Minimize side events or merge the High-Level Segment with side events in order to make WTDC more efficient, effective and focused on the development issues of telecommunications/ICTs. – **Indonesia**10.3 Merge the High-Level Segment and the side events to create panel sessions. In the current WTDC set-up, side events held during tea breaks, lunch breaks and after conference hours are not well-attended. BDT and Member States are aware of the real development issues that WTDC needs to deal with and should come up with a list of critical topics that can have an impact on development and on which panel discussions can be held during normal conference time. Speakers can include industry experts, consumers, different community representatives and policy-makers. – **Zimbabwe**  Participation of policy-makers will obviate the need for a monotonous delivery of policy statements. However, to make sure that the story of development continues to be told at WTDC, which helps BDT keep track on developments across the world, Member States and Sector Members can submit written policy statements, which are then published on the WTDC website. – **Zimbabwe**10.4 The High-Level Segment and high-level policy statements could make way for a Development Track that would incorporate senior level panels, roundtables and thematic discussions of development topics related to the implementation of the Action Plan and establishment of the new Action Plan. The thematic or development track should be separate from the administrative aspects of the conference, yet also incorporated into the work of WTDC-21, in that it would be designed to help identify challenges and priorities of the membership, and provide roadmaps towards solutions and partnerships. Ideally, these dialogues could lead to tangible actions and innovative approaches around designated themes for BDT’s future work. –***multi-country proposal from*** **Argentina, Brazil, Canada and the United States**10.5 It would thus be beneficial to identify a common topic or theme under which the activities planned for the High-Level Segment and parallel events, if any, are included. This does not mean that parallel events cannot be developed on other topics, but it does mean that a “thematic backbone” for the parallel events should be determined based on a convening or overarching theme. Such themes also should be connected to ITU-D thematic priorities and the regional priorities identified by members. ***–multi-country proposal from* Argentina, Brazil, Canada and the United States**10.6 In this sense, it may be useful if the high-level speakers from Member States and other stakeholders are engaged in helping to refine thematic panels, workshops or even in any parallel event (if agreed) to reflect their own expertise and experiences. Taking into account the historical number of speakers, it is very much likely that some of the thematic sessions may be dedicated exclusively to High-Level Segment speakers. **Priority should be given to ensuring that the High-Level Segment does not occupy the time of the conference itself, and that from day one the conference starts working on the topics of its agenda.** Thematic events should be oriented towards advancing the work of the conference. The development track also should aim to conclude after two to three days to maximize senior level participation and attendance. ***–multi-country proposal from*** **Argentina, Brazil, Canada and the United States**10.7 For organizational purposes, the deadline to register representatives to the High-Level Segment must be determined well in advance and enforced. This will allow BDT to sort out the space in which each member will speak (with the possibility of new arrangements, as appropriate). Another suggestion is to give Member States and other stakeholders the opportunity to choose in which session they will participate, with due consideration to regional and gender balance in each session. ***–multi-country proposal from*** **Argentina, Brazil, Canada and the United States**10.8 It is also possible to think about a roundtable format, where senior officials from Member States share a panel with representatives or high-level officials from other stakeholders, especially donor institutions. It would be expected that from the different deliberations, proposals for development projects would be identified, taking into account the regional priorities, in which the role of each stakeholder is determined, as well as the funding source and a future work plan. –***multi-country proposal from*** **Argentina, Brazil, Canada and the United States**10.9 The High-Level Segment can be changed to become more interactive, and involve different stakeholders. The first day of the conference can be assigned to the High-Level Segment, which could be in the form of a panel discussion that includes the high-level participants attending the conference. Topics of discussion would be decided beforehand. Policy statements may be recorded and run on screens in the conference venue as well as on the WTDC online portal. – **Egypt****12. Submit proposals for thematic tracks that can be incorporated into the conference**12.3 One proposal could be to explain the linkages between thematic priorities, ITU-D Action plan, WTDC resolutions, BDT programmes and ITU-D study group Questions. – **Russian Federation**12.4 Innovation that assists in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), demand stimulation initiatives, ICT capacity building for disadvantaged communities, implementation of ICT technical skill resource training and investment in ICT infrastructure. – **Zimbabwe****- Determination of conference theme(s);****11. What theme or themes (connected to development challenges and membership priorities) should be established for WTDC-21, and how should the theme(s) be connected to the content and structure of the conference?**11.1 The agenda of side events should have a strong connection with the study group Questions, ITU index and BDT activities. Each side event should have a clear explanation on how it contributes to the study group Questions, ITU index and/or BDT activities, preferably with outputs which can be transposed to the concrete benefit or inputs to WTDC resolutions and mandates of study group Questions.An additional side event could be held with the aim of strengthening the capacity of ITU members to express their opinions and transform them into contributions for the next ITU-D study period. – **Russian Federation**11.2 The themes for WTDC-21 should be holistic enough to encompass the focus of telecommunication development issues arising from all regions. In addition, bearing in mind the current global health crisis, the themes could be along the following lines:Alternative 1: Creating a resilient global digital economy to withstand global pandemics/crises/disasters.Alternative 2: Recovery of Global Digital Economy and Connectivity to Build Back Better. – **Indonesia**11.3 **Building Back Better: Bridging the Digital Divide** as the overall theme for WTDC-21. There is no more important contribution that WTDC can make than to bring the development agencies, ITU members and stakeholders, and financial institutions together to take stock of what is required to finally meet the challenge of ensuring affordable connectivity for all people, everywhere and to collaborate on action. ITU is uniquely placed, as the international organization dedicated to telecommunications, to be at the centre of this effort. The pandemic has made starkly clear that people without fast, affordable connectivity are at a very significant disadvantage compared to those who are well-connected. We cannot allow those left behind to get further behind; on the contrary, we need to ensure they can catch up. *–****joint proposal from the*** **United Kingdom and Lithuania**11.4 The theme should focus on promoting universal, secure, affordable connectivity and connecting the unconnected, with due consideration to the role of telecommunication/ICT connectivity in advancing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and addressing the particular needs of vulnerable sectors (indigenous populations, women, the elderly, and so on). In the light of COVID-19, the conference could focus on related experiences, challenges and opportunities and address its impact on advancing telecommunication/ICT connectivity. Stemming from this overarching theme, panels could elaborate upon certain areas such as rural infrastructure development, collaborative policy-making, digital inclusion, barriers to adoption and deployment of telecommunications/ICTs, or an exchange among donor agencies regarding ways to better attract funding and investment. –***multi-country proposal from* Argentina, Brazil, Canada and the United States****- Key stakeholders;**1. **What constituent groups should be targeted for WTDC-21?**

7.1 International financial institutions (the World Bank, regional development banks, including recent newcomers) and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Development Assistance Committee, especially on relevant discussions of financing ICT development, statistics and ITU outreach. In this regard, participation of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and of the contributors to the 2018 Survey on Donor Support to the Digital Economy in Developing Countries would be desirable. – **Russian Federation**7.2 ITU should elaborate a visibility and awareness promotion strategy in cooperation with members, who will provide proposals and participate actively in its implementation. – **Lithuania**7.3 Private-sector stakeholders balanced across major relevant industry sectors – any session or activity organized during a private sector event should be considered as a platform for the ICT sector as a whole in line with the overarching objective of promoting connectivity for all. – **ESOA**7.4 Policy-makers and regulatory authorities, as well as:* financial institutions: they play a big role in funding projects and should be part of the delegation of the Member State in which they are based;
* development and donor organizations: they assist in assessing the areas that require intervention with regard to connectivity and development issues;
* gender groups and youth: they can highlight the challenges faced by their constituents and propose innovations that can provide solutions for the development of ICTs;
* manufacturers of ICT equipment and gadgets so that they have a clear understanding of what products they need to produce to support ICT development: these entities too should participate under the banner of Member State;
* Academia: they can ensure that education requirements in ICT skills are catered for. – **Zimbabwe**

7.5 As agreed during the web dialogues, WTDC needs to attract new and more diverse participants from the private sector and potential donors. In this sense, institutions such as the World Bank, Regional Development Banks, civil society organizations, representatives from marginalized communities, UN Women, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), United Nations International Children’s Emergency Fund (UNICEF) and others may be involved in the preparatory process, as appropriate, and assume specific roles during the conference. –***multi-country proposal from*** **Argentina, Brazil, Canada and the United States****12. What high-level participants should be invited to chair and/or deliver keynote speeches on the theme(s) selected?**12.1 High-level participants from Member States, Sector Members, Academia and from international and regional financial or funding organizations. – **Indonesia**12.2 It would be important to identify a list of special guests, including a short list of "top or star guests." If the focus is on action-oriented dialogues, experts with operational/execution experience should be considered. These guests could lead specific sessions within the Conference agenda, on topics such as financing of ICT development projects, operation of development agencies and banks and methodology to access their credit lines. –***multi-country proposal from* Argentina, Brazil, Canada and the United States** |

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| * **To report to the next meeting of TDAG.**
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| TDAG is invited to consider this report and to endorse the recommendations set out therein.  |

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