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Radiocommunication Bureau (BR)

Administrative Circular   19 April 2021
CA/256

To Administrations of Member States of the ITU and Radiocommunication Sector Members

Subject: **Summary of conclusions of the twenty-eighth Radiocommunication Advisory Group meeting**

The Radiocommunication Advisory Group (RAG) met for the twenty-eighth time from 29 March to 1 April 2021.

Based on the discussions at the RAG meeting, it is important for Administrations to be aware that RAG recognized that promoting gender equality implies not only aiming at a more balanced distribution between men and women, but that it is also about the qualitative aspects, ensuring that valuable knowledge and experience provided by both men and women are used to promote progress in all domains of the ITU-R Radiocommunication Sector.

To this extent, and in order to achieve gender equality, equity and parity in the work of the ITU-R, the RAG encourages Administrations, Sector Members and the six regional telecommunications organizations (APT, ASMG, ATU, CEPT, CITEL and RCC), to actively work towards ensuring the participation of women in ITU-R meetings at all levels and to nominate and support women for leadership roles.

Additionally, the work of RAG CG-1 will continue including the development of a possible new ITU-R Resolution "Promoting Gender Equality, Equity and Parity in the ITU Radiocommunication Sector" for consideration by RAG and subsequent submission to RA-23. Toward that goal, Administrations and Sector Members are encouraged to participate in this work throughout the course of the study period leading to the RA-23.

The summary of conclusions of the meeting is contained in the attachment to this letter.

Additional information about this meeting may be found on the RAG website at www.itu.int/ITU-R/go/RAG.

Mario Maniewicz
Director

Attachments: 1

ATTACHMENT

**SUMMARY OF CONCLUSIONS OF THE
TWENTY-EIGHTH RADIOCOMMUNICATION ADVISORY GROUP MEETING**

(Source: Doc. RAG20/TEMP/4Rev.3)

Agenda Item	Subject / Document(s)	Conclusions
1	Opening remarks	The meeting was officially opened by the Chairman, Mr. Daniel Obam (Kenya).
		In his opening remarks, the Chairman of the RAG appreciated the participation of the Secretary General, and all three Directors, noting that it is an indication of a closer collaboration between the Sectors. Moreover, Mr. Obam was pleased to see all the participants after this difficult year, and he noted the improvement in virtual platforms since the last RAG meeting.
		The ITU Secretary-general delivered his opening remarks. He highlighted that the ITU has endeavored to keep business open virtually, and has made tremendous improvements to online tools and platforms. He also applauded the implementation of the Gender Declaration and work of the RAG Correspondence Group on Gender towards improving the participation of women in leadership roles in the ITU-R.
		The BR Director observed that the ITU had passed the one-year mark of teleworking, and yet the Radiocommunication Bureau has continued to meet its publication deadlines, update its systems and databases, process terrestrial and satellite filings and support numerous virtual events with record participation. Director Maniewicz thanked the leadership of the ITU-R Study Groups and Working Parties, and all ITU-R Members for their resilience and flexibility in these challenging circumstances.
		The TSB Director welcomed the participants and thanked the meeting for the invitation to address the RAG. He acknowledged the increased cooperation between the ITU-R and the ITU-T and the work of the TSB in preparation towards the World Telecommunication Standardization Assembly.

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		The BDT Director stressed the continued partnership and collaboration between the Bureaux, and mentioned several projects where the BDT relies on the support of the BR, such as the GIGA project (connectivity of schools), PRIDA Africa, RRS, WTDC-Res 9, I-CODI, Youth task force. She also thanked the BR for the Network of Women and mentioned the creation of a similar programme for the ITU-D.
2	Approval of the agenda RAG Document(s): ADM/2	The draft agenda in Doc. RAG21/ADM/2 was adopted without changes.
3	Council Issues RAG21/26 (§2), 26 Corr.1(§2.3), 26-Add.2	RAG noted the information provided on Cost recovery for satellite network fillings. Taking into account that Budget matters are under jurisdiction of the ITU Council, the RAG noted the information provided about the budget for 2020-2021 and draft budget for 2022-2023 periods. The Director clarified for the RAG participants that the BR has worked diligently on filling its previously vacant posts and does not anticipate having the same level of savings as in prior years. With regards to anticipated revenues from publications, the Director explained that the budget for publications is following the normal cycle, with more publications during the first 2 years following a Conference than the last 2 years. With regard to the requested review and update to C14/INF/4, which is to be provided to the Council Working Group on Languages, the RAG endorsed the proposed update provided in the Annex to RAG21/26 and also endorsed the addition of a line for "Webpages", as shown in the Annex 1 to this document, to be added to the table to reflect what is now the standard practice across the sectors. Regarding the requested advice from the RAG to the Director with respect to his contribution to the work of the Experts Group on International Telecommunication Regulations (EG-ITR), the RAG advised the Director that he may decide, as appropriate, what he contributes to the Experts Group on the ITRs. The RAG noted with agreement and appreciation the views expressed in RAG21/33, which was submitted by the delegation of China. RAG also appreciated the update provided by the ITU's IS Department on the several ITU Virtual Platforms used in ITU meetings and events, including the capabilities and features of each platform and the importance of having more than one solution to ensure business continuity.

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		Some Administrations mentioned the benefit of having a common platform in the ITU for consistency and the need to consider how these platforms will continue facilitating our work post-pandemic.
		RAG requested the BR Director to convey RAG21/doc 33 to the Focus Group on ITU Remote Participation Platforms with the ITU's Intersectoral Coordination Taskforce, and to present further information about remote platforms in the next RAG meeting.
4	Implementation of WRC-19 Decisions RAG Document(s): 26	RAG noted the report on the financial implications of WRC-19 decisions and that funding for all of the software development projects was secured using BR's foreseen 2020 budget implementation surplus that has resulted from the cancellation of missions and physical ITU-R meetings. RAG also noted that funding to cover the WRC-19's estimate of the costs for the preparation of certain items on the agenda of the WRC23 should be secured based on additional information to be provided by the BR as described below. RAG noted that the budget requirements for the preparations of those specific items on the WRC23 Agenda will need to be revised in the future when the date for returning to physical meetings is known. It was also recognized that these are complex agenda items, that some SGs/WPs have established many correspondence groups to address their aspects of these items, and that system characteristics for the related studies are due mid-2021. Therefore, better estimates can be made in the future based on many factors, including the currently unforeseeable date when ITU-R will return to holding physical meetings. RAG requested the BR Director to present information to the next RAG meeting about the actuals costs for the activities already carried out and the estimates for future activities. RAG noted with appreciation the information provided on the Implementation of WRC-19 decisions relating to terrestrial services, space services and other actions to implement WRC-19 decisions.
5	WRC-23 agenda, dates and venue, and related preparations RAG Document(s): 26 + Corr.2	RAG noted with appreciation the report on the preparations for WRC-23. The RAG noted that the Council 2021 will update Resolution 1399 to set the precise date of the WRC23 and appreciated the invitation of the government of the United Arab Emirates to host the conference. The RAG expressed its appreciation for the efforts of the BR, the Director, the Deputy to the Director, the Heads of Department and the entire BR staff for their tireless and valuable works, beyond the call for duty.

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		RAG noted the challenges of completing the technical studies for the WRC-23 during this period when it is not possible to hold physical meeting. Taking into account the agreed period for WRC-23 in the 4th quarter of 2023, the BR Director was invited to identify possible options of improving the ITU-R preparatory studies in case virtual meetings would have to continue next year.
6	Study Group Activities RAG Document(s) 26, 26-Add.1, 28	RAG noted the report of the ITU-R Study Groups Department found in RAG21/doc 26 Add. 1 RAG expressed its appreciation for the excellent support and professionalism of the BR Study Groups Department, in particular the counsellors of the SGs, and for efforts of the BR Space and Terrestrial Services Departments for their technical contributions, including valuable contributions on statistics, in particular those relating the WRC23 agenda items, and to the related work in the ITU-R Study Groups. RAG discussed some measures to encourage the smooth operation of ITU-R meetings, particularly in virtual format. One such example was to post the agendas of the Working Groups as ADM documents, to the extent practicable. RAG supported the request to encourage the ITU-R Study Group Chairs and Working Party Chairs, using existing mechanisms, to provide summaries of their Study Group's or Working Party's recent accomplishments to the relevant ITU-D Study Groups. RAG advised the Director to review the possibility of further enhancing the existing guidelines to improve how online meetings are conducted. RAG noted that the General Rules of Conferences, Assemblies and Meetings of the Union apply to the ITU-R meetings and that the strict application of these rules are required to facilitate achieving progress. RAG requested the BR to keep the webpages of the Study Groups up to date. RAG noted RAG21/28 on Liaison Statements and, after some discussion highlighting the advantages and drawbacks of the proposal, decided to not to make modifications to the guidelines with respect to the approval of liaison statements by Working Parties.

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7	Intersectoral Activities RAG Document(s): 25, 34	RAG noted the Liaison Statement provided in RAG21/25 with thanks and considered that the issue raised in this document has already been dealt with in relevant Working Parties. RAG noted the Liaison Statement provided in RAG21/34 and thanked Mr. Fabio Bigi for the report and for the work in the ISCG. With respect to the updating of the mapping tables contained in Attachment 2 to RAG21/34, RAG proposes that the actual inter-sector mapping should continue to be performed by the BDT, BR and TSB. RAG also noted the confirmation from Mr. Buonomo that the mapping table in RAG21/34 is reviewed regularly by the BR Study Group Department and is currently up to date. RAG invites the ISCG to consider the proposals made during the RAG meeting, including harmonizing the guidelines on how to indicate the main achievements/deliverables by the ITU-R and ITU-T Sectors to be addressed to ITU-D in support of their activities, in particular on the topics which are of particular interest for developing countries. RAG noted that there were registration problems to the 12 March 2021 ISCG meeting. The meeting was informed that the ITU General Secretariat is creating an ISCG webpage and registration process to facilitate broader participation in ISCG meetings. RAG also welcomed the invitation from the ISCG for RAG members to participate in its next meeting to be held on 1st September 2021, and to register to the ISCG-group mailing list here. RAG recalled that its representatives are the Vice chairs from Cameroon and Mexico. RAG underscored the importance of intersectoral coordination and the need to continue supporting the activities of ISCG.
8	Draft Operational Plan (BR section) RAG Document(s): 26, 27	RAG noted the draft rolling Operational Plan of the ITU-R for the period 2022-2025. RAG noted the comments of the Director that it is a consolidated document for the Union and that includes a specific part for the ITU-R. RAG advised the Director to consider, to the extent practicable, using indicators determined on the basis of data obtained from open sources (e.g. databases and documents of ITU, UN agencies and other authoritative sources).

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9	BR Information System RAG Document(s): 26, 29	RAG noted the presentation on terrestrial software and tools and other software and tools. RAG thanked the Director, particularly Mr. Bachar Abou-Chanab, and all the BR staff involved in the development of these software tools. RAG encouraged the Director to continue updating all these tools, taking into account the RR and Rules of Procedure (RoP) in force, as well as the needs and feedback of users. As for the Radio Regulations tools, RAG noted that, when practicable, BR staff attending regional meetings can present the tools and seek feedback for further improvements. RAG noted that the Director explained that these tools are developed to facilitate all members, particularly developing countries, access to radio spectrum resources in conformity with the radio regulations. RAG encourages developing countries, in particular, to use the tools and provide feedback to the BR. Finally, RAG noted the need to release these tools in the other languages of the Union. RAG noted the presentation on software developments related to space services and thanked the Director and BR Space Application Software Division for the tools developed to implement Res. 907 and 908. RAG thanked the Administration of Japan for their generous contribution and for making available an expert to implement Res. 908. RAG requests the Director to continue this work and to keep all functionalities in the new tools. Moreover, RAG advised the Director to seek feedback from Administrations and Study Groups and learn how these tools can facilitate their work. Lastly, RAG asked the Director to provide a briefing to the next RAG on the use of data analytics tools in the BR. RAG noted with appreciation the information and proposals presented in RAG21/29 from Japan. The RAG concurs with the Director in recognizing and expressing appreciation to Japan for their contribution to the work of the BR for many years, both financially and with subject matter experts. He believes the resultants improvements in BR tools helps both developed and developing countries, which has been the focus of the BR. RAG asked the BR to take into consideration the proposals from Japan in RAG21/29, while considering the workload, priorities, resources, availability of staff and the needs of developing countries. RAG also noted that members have expressed the ongoing need for software tools that can be used while offline, as well as tools that are fully web-based.
10	Report of RAG CG-1 on Gender	RAG noted the report of activities of the CG on the Implementation of WRC-19 Gender Declaration, RAG21/30 and the attached proposed LS. It was agreed, in addition to the text below, to provide the BR Director with some

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	RAG Document(s): 30	draft text for his consideration for inclusion in the Circular Letter on the outcome of the RAG 2021 meeting, taking into account the discussions in this subject on RAG's 28th meeting, as well as other information available in ITU website on this matter. RAG invites all Study Groups and Working Parties Chairs to continue to support, to the extent practicable, gender equality, equity and parity by encouraging women to be appointed to leadership positions within the Working Parties and Rapporteur groups including as Chairmen, Vice Chairmen and Rapporteurs.
11	TOR of RAG CG-2 on Possible Revisions of Resolutions ITU-R 1-8 and 15-6 *RAG Document(s): 31*	RAG agreed on the Terms of Reference of the RAG Correspondence Group 2 on possible revisions of Resolutions ITU-R 1-8 (RAG CG-2) as shown in the Annex 2 to this document.
12	Outreach *RAG Document(s): 26*	RAG thanked the BR for the work on Outreach and for the actions taken to support countries, particularly in supporting countries in applying Resolution 559, and requested the BR to continue with the good work. The RAG noted the request to the BR to provide an easier access to the MS Word version of the 2020-edition of the Radio Regulations, in addition to the versions already referred to in the ITU-R SGs/WPs webpages. The Director indicated that it should be possible to do after consultation with the General Secretariat. During the earlier presentation of Section 5 of RAG21/26, participants were informed of the availability of the preliminary version of the CPI tool for WRC-23 (available on the CPM webpage), which enable selecting and retrieving RR texts in a proper MS Word document template and format that may be used for the preparation of contributions to study groups and proposals to WRC-23. The RAG invited the Director to continue efforts on the use of all ITU official languages on equal footing paying special attention to the BR Webpages. It also acknowledged the challenges expressed by the Director in harmonizing the webpages and welcomed Members help in achieving harmonization.

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13	Date of next meeting	RAG 2022 will be held on the first half of 2022.
14	Any other business	Chairmen and Vice Chairmen of Study Groups and Working Parties are encouraged to participate in the RAG meetings.

ANNEXES:

ANNEX 1:   Update to C14/INF/4

ANNEX 2:   Terms of Reference of the RAG Correspondence Group 2 on possible revisions of Resolutions ITU-R 1-8 (RAG CG-2)

ANNEX 1

ITU-R	Languages						Remarks
	E	A	C	S	F	R	
1. Radiocommunication Assembly							
Interpretation	x	x	x	x	x	x	
Contributions	x	x	x	x	x	x	
1000 series	x	x	x	x	x	x	
Agendas	x	x	x	x	x	x	
Information documents	x	x	x	x	x	x	Depends on contents
Lists of participants	x						
Resolutions	x	x	x	x	x	x	
Webpage	x	x	x	x	x	x	
2 WRC							
Interpretation	x	x	x	x	x	x	
Agenda of the conference	x	x	x	x	x	x	
Reports/contributions/proposals	x	x	x	x	x	x	
Working/temporary documents	x	x	x	x	x	x	
Daily agendas	x	x	x	x	x	x	
Administrative documents	x	x	x	x	x	x	
Information documents	x	x	x	x	x	x	Depends on contents
List of participants	x						
Minutes	x	x	x	x	x	x	
Provisional Final Acts	x	x	x	x	x	x	
Webpage	x	x	x	x	x	x	
3. WRC information sessions [1]							
Interpretation	x	x	x	x	x	x	
4a. RAG							
Interpretation	x	x	x	x	x	x	
Contributions	x	x	x	x	x	x	
Temporary documents	x						
RAG summary of conclusions	x	x	x	x	x	x	
Webpage	x	x	x	x	x	x	
4b. Study groups							
Interpretation	x	x	x	x	x	x	
All document types	x						
Webpage	x	x	x	x	x	x	
5. RRB							
Interpretation	x	x	x	x	x	x	Depends on composition of the Board
All document types	x	x	x	x	x	x	
Webpage	x	x	x	x	x	x	
6. World radiocommunication seminars							
Interpretation	x	x	x	x	x	x	Plenary sessions only
Documents	x	x	x	x	x	x	

[1] Res. 72 (Rev. WRC-07).

ITU-R	Languages						Remarks
	E	**A**	**C**	**S**	**F**	**R**	
Presentations	x						
Webpage	x	x	x	x	x	x	
7. Publications							
Approved Recommendations	x	x	x	x	x	x	
ITU-R Reports	x	x	x	x	x	x	Depends on contents
Handbooks	x	x	x	x	x	x	Depends on contents
Opinions	x	x	x	x	x	x	
Radio Regulations	x	x	x	x	x	x	
BR-IFIC	x	x	x	x	x	x	
Preface to IFL	x	x	x	x	x	x	
Rules of Procedure	x	x	x	x	x	x	
Final Acts (definitive)	x	x	x	x	x	x	
HFBC schedule	x			x	x		
Maritime Manual	x	x	x	x	x	x	
Service publications (maritime)	x	x	x	x	x	x	
Lists	x	x	x	x	x	x	
8. Administrative documents							
Circulars	x	x	x	x	x	x	Except circulars concerning working parties/task groups (E only)
Annexes	x	x	x	x	x	x	Depends on contents
Promotional material and website	x	x	x	x	x	x	Depends on contents
General information to delegates	x	x	x	x	x	x	Depends on contents

ANNEX 2

Terms of Reference of the RAG Correspondence Group 2 on possible revisions of Resolutions ITU-R 1-8 (RAG CG-2)

Introduction

In accordance with §§ A1.4.1 to A1.4.4 of Resolution ITU-R 1-8, Radiocommunication Assembly 2019 in RA19/84 "invited the RAG to identify possible modifications to Resolution ITU-R 1 with respect to approval procedures when a text is relevant to the topics of multiple SGs" and "to review the maximum term of office for Chairmen of Radiocommunication Working Parties". Based on proposals from the Member States and Sector Members and in consultation with the Study Group Chairmen, the RAG Correspondence Group 2 (RAG CG-2) is invited to provide possible revisions of Resolution ITU-R 1-8 and Resolution ITU-R 15-6 with the following Terms of Reference:

1. Possible revision of Resolution ITU-R 1-8 with respect to Section A2.6.2.1.3:
    1. the adoption and approval procedures when a text is relevant to the topics of multiple SGs and to the circulation of objections received during the approval process;
    2. the need, if any, for revisions to ITU-R working methods for the adoption and approval of recommendations of interest to multiple ITU-R Study Groups;
    3. the need of fixing, if identified, any omissions, and/or contradictions of the existing texts.
2. The Correspondence group is also invited to consider the possibility of transferring relevant part of Resolution ITU-R 15-6 to Resolution ITU-R 1-8, the appropriateness of establishing maximum term of office for ITU-R Working Party Chairmen, and suggests the deletion of Resolution ITU-R 15-6. And report to the next meeting of RAG to decide on this matter. Taking into account discussions held in RAG 28th meeting.

The RAG CG-2 shall commence work at RAG-21 and submit the outcome of its work for consideration by the RAG-22 meeting, taking into account the information provided in Section 3.1.1 of Doc. RAG20/1Rev.1 (Report To The Twenty-Seventh Meeting of The Radiocommunication Advisory Group – Revision 1 - Director, Radiocommunication Bureau), and any other proposals relevant under the above Terms of Reference submitted to RAG Correspondence Group 2.

The work of the RAG CG-2 should be performed, as much as possible, by correspondence in accordance with § A1.3.2.7 of Resolution ITU-R 1-8.

The Chairman of the RAG Correspondence Group 2 on Possible Revisions of Resolutions ITU-R 1-8 (RAG CG-2) is Amy Sanders (E-mail: asanders@ntia.gov).

The Vice-Chairman of the RAG Correspondence Group 2 on Possible Revisions of Resolutions ITU-R 1-8 (RAG CG-2) is Alexandre Vassiliev (E-mail: alexandre.vassiliev@mail.ru).

The group needs to present its report 45 days prior to the next meeting of RAG in 2022.

Other relevant information for the work of this Correspondence Group will be provided on the RAG webpage.

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