Radiocommunication Bureau (BR)

Circular Letter   2 April 2024
CA/273

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

Subject: **Summary of conclusions of the thirty-first Radiocommunication Advisory Group
                meeting**

The Radiocommunication Advisory Group (RAG) met for the thirty-first time from 25 to 27 March 2024.

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 https://www.itu.int/rag/.

Mario Maniewicz
Director

Attachment: 1

ATTACHMENT

**SUMMARY OF CONCLUSIONS OF THE
THIRTY-FIRST RADIOCOMMUNICATION ADVISORY GROUP MEETING**

(Source: Doc. RAG/TEMP/1(Rev.2) & (Corr.1))

Agenda Item	Subject / Document(s)	Conclusions
1	Opening remarks	The meeting was opened by the Chair of the RAG, Mr Mohammed Aljanoobi (Saudi Arabia).
		In her welcoming remarks, the ITU Secretary-General commended the entire ITU-R community (and the BR Director in particular) not just for the overall remarkable achievements at the RA-23 and WRC-23, but especially for how they were achieved. She noted that the WRC and RA delivered outcomes at a moment when humanity was facing some of its greatest challenges: from the climate crisis to the persistent digital divide where a third of humanity remains offline.
		The BR Director welcomed delegates to the first RAG meeting in the new study cycle of ITU-R study group activities and global preparations for WRC-27. He emphasized that the RAG's advice to him and the Bureau will be key for supporting the working of the study groups. This is especially true as increasing demands on the radiofrequency spectrum makes the management and the work of the ITU-R of importance to the global community. He is looking forward to the results of the consequential actions that the RA-23 called upon the RAG to undertake. He also reaffirmed that the principal goals of the RAG are, *inter alia*, to review priorities, programmes, operations, financial matters, and strategies related to Radiocommunication Assemblies, Study Groups and the preparation of radiocommunication conferences.
		The TSB Director welcomed delegates and shared with them that the new Resolution on Artificial Intelligence (AI) adopted last week by the UN General Assembly is an important step forward for international cooperation to ensure that AI remains a force for good. The Resolution takes note of the ITU's leadership of the AI for Good platform and encourages the development of governance frameworks and technical standards. He also shared that the ITU-T is preparing for the World Telecommunication Standardization Assembly (WTSA) in India in October – the first WTSA in Asia – and that the demands on ITU standardization work continue to evolve very rapidly. WTSA will help ensure that we remain well positioned to meet these demands. The spirit of collaboration and consensus that powers ITU's work is exactly the spirit needed to achieve that.

Agenda Item	Subject / Document(s)	Conclusions
		In his opening remarks, the Chair of the RAG eloquently underscored *"the pressing need for collaborative action on the global stage to uphold the efficient management of spectrum resources. Central to this endeavour is the collective effort to operate within the framework established by the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) and in close partnership with the esteemed counterparts across the diverse landscape of the Radiocommunication Sector.* *The significance of this collaborative approach extends to the manifold bodies within the Radiocommunication Sector, including Study Groups and Working Parties, each contributing uniquely to the intricate tapestry of spectrum management. Among these entities, the work of the RAG stands out prominently, recognized as the cornerstone of our collective efforts. Through the deliberative processes of the RAG, experts and stakeholders converge to offer invaluable insights and recommendations, serving to guide the Director of the Radiocommunication Bureau and their dedicated team in navigating the complexities of spectrum governance.* *The RAG serves as a nexus of expertise and innovation, facilitating dialogue and cooperation among diverse stakeholders with the shared goal of advancing spectrum management practices. As we embark on this collaborative journey, let us heed the Chair's call to action, reaffirming our commitment to effective spectrum management and embracing the principles of inclusivity, transparency, and excellence. Together, let us forge a path forward that ensures the equitable distribution and utilization of spectrum resources, thereby fostering connectivity and innovation on a global scale."*
2	Approval of the agenda ADM/1	The draft agenda in Doc. RAG/ADM/1(Rev.1) was adopted without changes.
3	Appointment of the Vice-Chairs of RAG 15, 4	The RAG noted contribution RAG/15 from the Russian Federation. The RAG considered the list of nominees for Vice-Chair of the RAG, which is presented in Doc. RAG/4. From the list of candidates contained in Annex 1, nine candidates (from United Arab Emirates, Brazil, Egypt, Kenya, Armenia, Korea (Rep. of), Nigeria, Mexico and China) were appointed in accordance with Resolution 208 (Rev. Bucharest, 2022) of the Plenipotentiary Conference. Objections were raised with respect to two candidates (from Italy and the United States) as well as to the candidate of the Russian Federation. In this situation, the course of action described in Chapter II of the General Rules of Conferences, Assemblies and Meetings of the Union was applied and candidates from Italy and the United States were confirmed. The list of Vice-Chairs of the RAG is provided in Annex 1. The statement from the Administration of the Russian Federation is provided in Annex 4.

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4	Report to the 31st meeting of the Radiocommunication Advisory Group 1(Rev.1), 1(Corr.1)	The RAG appreciated the introduction of the Director's Report to the meeting as contained in RAG/1(Rev.1).
5	Council-23 related Issues 1(Rev.1) (§§ 2.2.3 and 2.2.4), 5	The RAG took note of the information from the Chief of the BR Space Services Department about the issues on the processing of satellite fillings. The RAG noted that the Expert Group on Decision 482 held its first meeting in January 2024 which will hold its second meeting at a later stage in 2024 and will consider detailed information provided to it by the BR regarding the activities associated with processing satellite network fillings. The RAG noted that the group will continue to meet and that its outcomes will not be available in time for its interim report to be submitted to the Council 2024 meeting. The RAG took note of the BR Budget for 2024-2027, which was presented by the Chief, Financial Resource Management Department, as mentioned in Section 2.2.3 of the Director's Report). The RAG noted that the budget was approved prior to the WRC-23 and does not include resources for implementing the results of WRC-23. The RAG believes that implementation of the results of WRC-23 should be the highest priority of the Union and endorses the BR request for the funding as presented in the Report of the Budget Control Committee of the WRC-23 (Doc. WRC-23/460 (Rev.1)). The RAG considered the draft BR Operational Plan for 2025-2028, which was shown in Doc. RAG/5 and presented by Mr Jean-Paul Lovato (Head, Budget and Financial Analyses Division). The RAG noted that the ITU has changed the way that information is provided based on the feedback received from the 30th meeting of the RAG. The RAG considered the material in Section 2.2.4 of the Director's Report on the use of the six official languages of the Union on an equal footing, which was further detailed by Ms Negar Takesh (Deputy-Chief, Conference & Publications Department). The RAG appreciated the progress made toward providing information on the ITU and ITU-R webpages in the six languages of the Union. The RAG noted the increased use of automatic translation of BR webpages as presented in Doc. RAG/1(Rev.1) (Add.2) and further requested that Director report to future RAG meetings indicators on the status of the use of the six official languages in ITU-R.

Agenda Item	Subject / Document(s)	Conclusions
6	Results of RA-23 and WRC-23 and consequential actions 1(Rev.1) (§ 3), 8 and 10	The RAG noted the results of the RA-23 and WRC-23 and consequential actions stemming from those events. The RAG considered the contributions from the USA (Doc. RAG/8) and Russian Federation (Doc. RAG/10), both of which proposed the creation of a RAG correspondence group in response to the following conclusion from the 4th Plenary meeting of RA-23: *"While considering the contributions proposing modifications to Resolution ITU-R 2-8 during the RA-23, it was agreed that it is necessary to verify the efficiency of the CPM Process. A few issues were identified that may be helpful to assess in the future. Some views were expressed that it may be useful to review the mandate of the second session of the CPM and its duration. One of the possible proposed approaches is to task the CPM Management Team to prepare the final CPM Report based on draft CPM texts submitted by the responsible groups and use the second session as an opportunity to exchange views among regional groups taking due course not to duplicate the role of ITU Inter-regional Workshops on WRC-23 Preparation. This approach would increase the time available for studies by the responsible groups and would reduce the financial resources required by both the ITU and the participating members. Other views were in favour of maintaining the current situation."* Having considered the contributions on this topic, the RAG decided that it would be beneficial to focus first on the activities and organization of the second session of the CPM, in order to identify areas for procedural improvements in finalizing the CPM Report. The RAG, therefore, agreed to establish a Correspondence Group that would work between this and the 32nd meeting of the RAG with the Terms of Reference presented in Annex 2 of this Summary of Conclusions. It was noted that proposals relevant to these Terms of Reference should be considered diligently. It is anticipated that, having considered the report of the correspondence activity, the 32nd meeting of the RAG will reauthorize this CG with revised Terms of Reference taking into account the results of its work at that time.

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7	Study Group activities 1(Rev.1) (Add.1)	The RAG noted the report of the ITU-R Study Groups Department (SGD) found in Doc. RAG/1(Rev.1)(Add.1) and expressed its appreciation for the excellent work of the BR in planning and conducting ITU-R meetings and particularly the RA-23, WRC-23 and CPM27-1. During the 2024 RAG meeting, the issue of the necessity for updating the ITU Satellite Handbook was raised. The RAG invited ITU-R SG 4 and other relevant ITU-R Study Groups to review the situation and take appropriate action, taking into account that the work of the Study Groups is contribution driven. The RAG noted that the Guidelines for the Working Methods of the of the Radiocommunication Assembly, the Radiocommunication Study Groups and related groups is being updated by the BR to take into account the most recent revisions incorporated in Resolution ITU-R 1-9. After some comments made, the RAG noted the draft revisions to the Guidelines have been considered for information only, at this stage. The BR Director invited suggestions from administrations, from study group chairs, from any other concerned parties in order to improve these Guidelines. The RAG encouraged administrations to review these guidelines and provide to the Director any proposed improvements to them. The RAG considered comments and suggestions relating to the scheduling and venues of ITU-R meetings. The RAG advised the BR Director to address concerns about possible difficulties and challenges with meetings already planned and to mitigate them (for example, including remote participation), to the extent practicable, also taking into account to the extent possible the prevailing circumstances and constraints. RAG also recommended that its future meetings provide an opportunity for each of the ITU-R Study Group Chairs to give a 10-minute presentation on the status of the work in their Study Groups and any challenges they face. RAG was informed that recently there have been some difficulties with some mobile user equipment accessing the Zoom platform for Study Groups meetings. RAG encourages the IS Department to investigate this difficulty and provide technical support, as required.
8	RA/WRC-27 preparation 1(Rev.1) (§ 5)	The RAG took note with appreciation the report on the preparations for WRC-27.

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9	Inter-Sectoral Activities 2, 3, 6, 7, 11 and INF/2	The RAG noted the two Liaison Statements (Docs. RAG/2 and RAG/3) from TSAG, the information document RAG/INF/2 presented by the RAG Coordinator on the themes of Accessibility and Sustainability, and the contribution from the Russian Federation (Doc. RAG/11) on the theme of Sustainable Digital Transformation (SDT). The RAG also considered the report of the Chair of the Inter Sector Coordination Group (ISCG) (Doc. RAG/6) which, *inter alia*, provided information on SDT activities across the Union. The RAG is of the view that SDT is a matter of intersectoral interest that should be included in the mandate of the ISCG. The RAG also requested the BR Director to collect information on ITU-R Study Groups' SDT activities and provide a consolidated report to the next RAG meeting. The RAG noted with appreciation the material in RAG/INF/2 which informed the meeting of the SDT work in ITU-R Study Group 6. RAG approved the Reply Liaison Statement presented in Annex 3 of this report and thanked the TSAG rapporteurs (Mr Sharafat and Mr Gemma) and the RAG Coordinator on Accessibility and Sustainability (Mr Quested) for their work in this area. The RAG considered the two documents from the Inter-Sectoral Coordination Group (Docs. RAG/6 and RAG/7) along with the contribution from the Russian Federation (Doc. RAG/11) on the participation of RAG in cross-sectoral activities. The RAG noted with thanks the report of the Chair of the ISCG on the work of that group. The RAG called upon the administrations and the ISCG to continue to assist in avoiding overlap between the work of the different Sectors. The RAG was informed that the next meeting of the ISCG will be held on 21st May 2024 and appointed its two Vice-Chairs Mr Tarcisio Aurélio BAKAUS (Brazil) and Mr Wako GABABO (Kenya) to represent the Sector at the ISCG during this cycle. The RAG also reappointed Mr Andy Quested (EBU) to continue in his role as RAG Coordinator on Accessibility and Sustainability.

Agenda Item	Subject / Document(s)	Conclusions
10	BR information System 1(Rev.1) (§ 7), 9 and 13	The RAG expressed its great appreciation for the work that has been done by the BR in the development and advancement of information systems for both terrestrial and space services. The RAG also thanked the BR for giving delegates to the RA-23/WRC-23 free access to the Radio Navigation and Article **5** Table of Frequency Allocation software tools that were tremendously useful for their work at the conference. RAG considered the contribution from Brazil (Doc. RAG/9) requesting to increase the number of free user login from one to ten for the BR International Frequency Information Circular (BRIFIC) online platform. While this proposal was favorably considered, however, it was concluded that this matter was in the purview of the ITU Council because of its possible financial implications. It was also noted that the administrations require the information published in the BRIFIC in order for them to comply with the Radio Regulations and, therefore, they believe that this information should be made available to them for free. The RAG took note of the proposals from Japan, which were contained in Doc. RAG/13, for specific enhancements to the eCommunications and eSubmissions software platforms. The proposals for integration of the eSubmission and eCommunication systems and for the development of online applications of BR Space Software were supported by several administrations. RAG further acknowledged and expressed its sincere gratitude to the administration of Japan for the significant and sustained contributions it has made since 2017 towards the implementation of Resolution **908**. RAG also expressed its appreciation for their continued financial and staff support towards the continuation of this project in the context of Resolution **55**, which was adopted by the WRC-23. The BR Director joined in thanking Japan for its longstanding support for the development of BR information systems for both terrestrial and space services and for their encouragement to other administrations to do the same.
11	Outreach 1(Rev.1) (§ 8), 12	The RAG thanked the BR for the effort in capacity building through world and regional radiocommunication seminars. The RAG noted that these seminars are conducted by BR experts and include hands-on training and encourages the BR to continue to expand to the extent practicable these activities that are significant and benefit to the membership. The RAG considered favourably the contribution Doc. RAG/12 on the need for organizing seminars, workshops or training events on regulatory and technical aspects of constellation systems for non-GSO communications. In addition to revising the RRS and WRS programmes to specifically address technical and regulatory matters related to non-GSO satellite constellations, ITU was encouraged to consider other approaches for information dissemination, including *inter alia*, Workshops associated with the relevant ITU-R Study Group meetings. RAG also recommended holding jointly coordinated ITU-R/ITU-D events on this very important matter.

Agenda Item	Subject / Document(s)	Conclusions
12	Other issues [14](#)	The RAG received a contribution under Doc. RAG/14 relating to the development of a comprehensive course of action (e.g., guidelines or handbook) which would identify best practices, harmonize administrative and technical procedures and regulatory requirements to promote consistency and coherence in spectrum management practices for aeronautical and maritime services across different regions and administrations that adhere to established treaties, regulations, procedures, and standards. In this regard, the RAG advised the BR to study the various ways and means to promote further collaboration with the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) and the International Maritime Organization (IMO) with the aim to effectively address the concerns expressed in Doc. RAG/14, as appropriate. RAG also took into account that such consolidated course of action (e.g., guidelines or handbook) could be developed through various means, including *inter alia*, work carried out by ITU-R Study Group 5. RAG encourages administrations to consider expressing their support for this initiative to ICAO, IMO and ITU-R Study Group 5 directly.
13	Date of next meeting	14-17 April 2025

Annex 1: List of Vice Chairs of the RAG
Annex 2: Terms of Reference of the RAG Correspondence Group on Improving the Conference Preparatory Meeting (CPM) Process
Annex 3: Reply Liaison Statement to TSAG
Annex 4: Statement from the Administration of the Russian Federation

ANNEX 1

2024 – 2027 VICE-CHAIRS FOR RAG

Vice-Chairs of the Radiocommunication Advisory Group (RAG)

Name	Country/Org.
Eng. S. Al Balooshi	United Arab Emirates
Mr T.A. Bakaus	Brazil
Dr M.A. El-Bashary	Egypt
Mr W. Gababo	Kenya
Mr S. Harutunyan	Armenia
Dr L.L. La Franceschina	Italy
Dr J. Lim	Korea (Rep. of)
Eng. A. Oshadami	Nigeria
Dr B. Patten	United States
Mr T.R. Vieyra Mejía	Mexico
Mr Y. Xie	China

ANNEX 2

Draft Terms of Reference of the RAG Correspondence Group
on Improving the Conference Preparatory Meeting (CPM) Process

The Radiocommunication Advisory Group (RAG) Correspondence Group (CG) is tasked with exploring potential improvements to the Conference Preparatory Meeting (CPM) process with the following terms of reference:

–   Conduct a thorough review of the second session of the CPM, in order to identify areas for procedural improvements of preparing the CPM Report.

The CG shall begin its work directly after the 31st Meeting of the RAG and aims to submit a comprehensive report by the 32nd meeting of the RAG. Work should primarily be conducted through correspondence, adhering to sections § A1.3.2.9 and § A.1.3.2.10 of Resolution ITU-R 1-9 for efficiency and inclusiveness.

The CG is chaired by Mr Fahad ALGHAMDI (e-mail: fabghamdi@citc.gov.sa), who will coordinate the activities and ensure timely communication and submission of the group's report 45 days prior to the 32nd meeting of the RAG.

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

ANNEX 3

Radiocommunication Study Groups

Document RAG/TEMP/4

27 March 2024

English only

Radiocommunication Advisory Group (RAG)

REPLY LIAISON STATEMENT TO TSAG

Activities and studies on sustainable digital transformation

The RAG thanks TSAG for the information concerning the activities of the rapporteur group on sustainable digital transformation (RG-DT). During its 31st meeting, the RAG agreed that the Intersector Coordination Group (ISCG) is best placed for the exchange information on this topic. The RAG looks forward to continued collaboration on this topic within the framework of ISCG.

Status: For information

Contact: Mr Andy Quested (EBU) **E-mail**: andy.quested@outlook.com

ANNEX 4

Statement by the Russian Federation at the RAG-31 meeting regarding
Agenda item 3 - Appointment of RAG vice-chairmen

With regard to the results of the consideration of Agenda item 3 of the RAG-31 meeting - "Appointment of vice-chairmen of the RAG," the Russian Federation expresses its categorical disagreement with the procedure for the appointment of some candidates nominated by the ITU Member-States.

The Russian Federation draws attention to the fact that the procedure for the appointment of chairmen and vice-chairmen of advisory groups, study groups and other ITU Sectors groups is defined and prescribed in Annex 1 of Resolution 208 (PP-22, Rev. Bucharest, 2022).

The participants of the meeting were drawn into politically motivated discussions that were outside the scope of the mandate of the Union and as a result of this activity the above mentioned procedure was ignored and instead of it an legally unjustified procedure to appoint some candidates was applied. The absence in ITU basic texts of the procedure for the appointment of vice-chairmen of advisory groups, study groups and other Sector groups other than in Annex 1 of Resolution 208 (PP-22, Rev. Bucharest, 2022) was confirmed during RAG-31 meeting by the ITU Legal Advisor .

In spite of the absence of any objections regarding compliance of all candidates for the posts of vice-chairmen to Resolution 208 (PP-22, Rev. Bucharest, 2022), three candidates were selected for voting based on their nationality, as well as their affiliation with a country considered by some delegations as being in armed conflict. The results of voting reviled that all three selected candidates nominated by Italy, United States and Russian Federation were objected by 3 or more voting ITU Member-States presented at the RAG-31 meeting. Despite voting results the Chairman of the RAG-31 meeting announced the decision that candidates from Italy and the United States are appointed to the posts of RAG vice-chairmen but the candidate from the Russian Federation is not appointed.

This decision violates the ITU-R Resolution 52-1, according to which any decisions taken by the RAG shall not raise objections from any of the Member States of the Union (see *resolves* 2 of ITU-R Resolution 52-1). Moreover segregation of candidates based on their nationality, as well as an affiliation with any country contradicts the Article 2 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (Resolution 217 A (III) of the UN General Assembly, 12/10/1948).

In this regard, the Russian Federation does not recognize the decision of the RAG-31 on agenda item 3 and does not consider candidates for whom consensus was not reached to be appointed to the posts of vice-chairmen, and will make every efforts to restore the appointment of vice-chairmen of the RAG in accordance with the provisions of ITU-R Resolution 52-1 and Resolution 208 PP-22 (PP-22, Rev. Bucharest, 2022).

The Russian Federation reserves the right to raise question of responsibility of the ITU for the breach of the rights of its Member States as well as norms and principles of the international law.

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