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| **Council 2018Geneva, 17-27 April 2018** |  |
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| **Agenda item: PL 1.10** | **Document C18/63-E** |
| **8 March 2018** |
| **Original: English** |
| Report by the Secretary-General |
| ITU’s Gender PARITY Strategy  |

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| SummaryThe UN Chief Executive Board has requested all UN specialized agencies to prepare their gender parity strategy in order to implement the UN system-wide parity strategy launched by the UN Secretary-General in September 2017. This document includes ITU’s strategy comprised of a series of proposed recommendations for implementation. Action requiredThe Council is invited **to endorse** the gender parity strategy.\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_References[System-wide Strategy on Gender Parity](https://www.un.int/sites/www.un.int/files/Permanent%20Missions/delegate/17-00102b_gender_strategy_report_13_sept_2017.pdf)  |

1. **Introduction**

UN Secretary-General António Guterres addressed gender parity in his first UN Executive Committee meeting in January 2017 and then formally launched the System-wide Strategy on Gender Parity[[1]](#footnote-1) in September 2017. As a whole, the UN is some 17 years behind in reaching parity. Despite numerous policies, reports and recommendations, implementation has been hampered primarily by a lack of sustained political will and accountability, absence of accompanying measures and enabling conditions, and resistance from key stakeholders. There is an inverse relationship across the system between seniority and women’s representation: the higher the grade, the larger the gap in gender parity, and the rate of change has also been much too slow.

A priority from the beginning of his mandate, UN Secretary-General Guterres has stressed gender parity as an operational imperative required to strengthen and modernize the UN. Fundamentally a right, gender parity is increasingly necessary to the UN’s efficiency, impact and credibility. Greater diversity is directly correlated in both public and private sectors with significant gains in operational effectiveness and efficiency.

In a communication dated 27 December 2017, the Chiefs Executive Board (CEB) requested ITU to submit its gender parity strategy and implementation plan to the HLCM Secretariat.

At its meeting in January 2018, the Council Working on Financial and Human Resources (CWG-FHR) requested to present ITU’s Gender Parity Strategy to delegates at Council 2018, in response to the UN System-wide gender parity strategy.

1. **Targets**

The UN system-wide strategy stipulates that targets apply initially only to international staff levels P1 and above with fixed-term, continuous, and permanent appointments. Data monitoring however, shall include G staff. A simple transcription of OHRM’s methodology and template,[[2]](#footnote-2) without any consideration to the actual situation of ITU’s workforce would result in the following parity targets:

UG – base from 2016: 0% women; 100% men; elected officials

D2 – base from 2016: 1 or 25% women; 3 or 75% men; parity by 2022

D1 – base from 2016: 1 or 6% women; 16 or 94% men; parity by 2027

P5 – base from 2016: 19 or 27% women; 51 or 73% men; parity by 2021

P4 – base from 2016: 42 or 38% women; 68 or 62% men; parity by 2019

P3 – base from 2016: 50 or 42% women; 68 or 58% men; parity by 2018

P2 – base from 2016: 29 or 53% women; 26 or 47% men; parity by 2017

P1 – base from 2016: 4 or 67% women; 2 or 33% men; parity by 2020

1. **Context**

As a specialized technical agency with less than 670 staff, ITU has limited turnover and thus limited opportunities to meet the OHRM-established targets. Further, the new mandatory age of separation (MAS) has extended retirement age to 65 years. While some staff may opt to retire beforehand, this is an unknown factor is establishing the number of available posts in the coming years.

ITU statistics show that, based solely on the assumption that all vacant positions would be filled by women candidates for positions P3 to D2 and male for position at P2 and P1, parity would be achieved as follows:

D2 – 2023

D1 – 2025

P5 – 2026

P4 – 2024

P3 – 2027

P2 – 2027

These revised calculations do not take into account the following factors, which could impact on the parity to be reached and/or kept: internal movements in the workforce; confirmation of positions into the budget; confirmation of levels of grade of vacated positions; interaction with other factor relevant to diversity targets, such as geographical distribution,[[3]](#footnote-3) governance and legal and administrative framework to be adjusted for the implementation of the proposed strategy and related measures (see Annex 2 to this document).

Recognizing the challenges in reaching gender parity may be more significant than for larger UN entities, the following strategies are intended to maximize all opportunities to improve ITU’s gender balance across all levels of staff.

**Recommendations:**

1. **Leadership and Accountability**

**While the rate of progress in much of the UN system has been slow, rapid change is possible. Evidence from a number of entities demonstrates that rapid transformation can be achieved when underpinned by dedication from senior leadership and accountability measures.**

4.1. As per article 61 in ITU’s Human Resource Strategy (C09/56), the Secretary-General holds responsibility for achieving geographic and gender balance.

4.2. ITU’s Secretary-General is an International Gender Champion and has made public commitments towards gender equality. All elected officials and directors are encouraged to make their own public gender equality commitments and make specific, concrete and ambitious commitments to enhance gender equality and parity within their divisions.

4.3. Gender parity will be a mandatory goal assessed in performance appraisals.

4.4 Hiring managers will be requested to personally acknowledge and sign off on departmental parity statistics and the implications of their selection prior to a final decision of a candidate. In the case of recommending a candidate that hinders ITU in achieving its gender parity, a memo must be prepared by the hiring manager for Secretary-General that may ultimately be used in ITU’s reporting to CEB.

4.5 Senior and hiring managers are held accountable for meeting targets. Evaluation will be integral part of the performance evaluation process. Core and Functional Competencies – i.e. organizational commitment, successful management and leadership, have gender indicators against which ITU staff members and managers will be assessed through the appraisal exercise. Those indicators will be regularly reviewed and reinforced, as necessary.

1. **Recruitment, Retention, Progression and Talent Management**

**Gender biases can lead to unintentional discrimination in selection processes. Such biases can influence the evaluation of curricula vitae, assessments of interview performance, letters of recommendation, as well as in-job performance assessment. Ensuring that larger numbers of qualified women reach each stage of the application process, as well as having gender balanced assessment panels, will help ensure that women are evaluated more accurately. Further, temporary special measures**[[4]](#footnote-4) **have long been recognized as critical to levelling the playing field and overcoming inherent gender biases in recruitment. It will not be possible to meet the parity targets without special measures; where adopted they have yielded real results.**

5.1. The Human Resources Management Department (HRMD) will provide accurate updates on parity targets to all participants in a selection process, from the hiring managers to members of the Appointment and Promotion Board (APB), as well as to decision making authorities.

5.2 HRMD shall ensure gender bias training for hiring managers and all participants in selection processes (members of panels of preselection, APB members, members of interview panels, etc.)

5.3. HRMD will provide hiring managers and HR focal points with guidance on approach for drafting or updating job descriptions in view of the preparation upcoming vacancies, including the definition of competencies required.

5.4. HRMD will ensure that the composition of panels composed for participating in the selection process will be balanced. Existing regulatory constraints, such as the minimum level of grade imposed by Staff Regulation for the composition of APBs may have to be reviewed for enabling the implementation of that measure. That may also include to review potential of women selection panel members from other agencies when sufficient women colleagues within ITU not available to reach 50% of the selection panel.

5.5. Hiring managers are required to recommend 50% women and 50% men candidates for selection for all job openings at all levels, including senior appointments. Where this is not possible, written justification in form of memo is required.

5.6. Special measures will apply both to recruitment and also to workforce management (including succession planning, reduction of staff, etc.) through the introduction in the regulatory framework of a diversity criteria, in addition to the existing ones (types of contracts, seniority in service, performance, family obligations, etc.).

5.7. Where entities are not on track for their targets, a second tier of stronger special measures should be instituted. This should include requiring senior managers who do not meet their targets in the previous year to submit written reasons why, a plan for rectifying the situation, and bi-annual reporting until targets are met.

5.8 The above mentioned recommended actions could call for revisions to Annex 2 to PP Resolution 48 as suggested in annex 3 of this document.

1. **Creating an Enabling Environment**

**Inclusivity and equality can only be attained in a working environment that prizes diversity and flexibility, provides equal opportunities, recognizes that staff are also family and community members, and ensures a safe environment in which to work.**

6.1. All staff members are made aware of and held accountable for following the standards of conduct for international civil service.

6.2. Policies for the prevention of harassment and abuse of authority, ethics, conflict resolution and protection against retaliation are in place and implemented.

6.3. Safe ways are available to staff members, including in regional offices, to confidentially report harassment, sexual harassment, or abuse of authority without fear of retaliation.

6.4. Allegations of misconduct are followed up and/or investigated and their outcomes tracked.

6.5. Flexible work arrangements and family-friendly policies are in place and implemented to ensure options that facilitate work life balance.

6.6. Data is collected and reported on all requests for and authorizations of family-friendly and flexible work arrangement policies. Data shall include the highest level of disaggregation (sex, level, location, level, division, etc.)

**Annex 1: UN OHRM Calculation of Targets to Reaching Parity - ITU**

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| *Grade as per staff member's appointment at 31 December 2016* | *Total number of women as at 31 December 2016 at the corresponding level* | *Total number of men as at 31 December 2016 at the corresponding level*  | *Total Staff = Column 2 (Women) + Column 3 (Men)*  | *% Women= Column 2 (Women) / Column 4 (Total Staff)* | *It compares the %Women to Parity (50%. Gap to Parity = 50% - Column 5 (% Women)* | **Annual Targets: % Women staff as at 31 December** |
| **Level** | **Women** | **Men** | **Total Staff** | **% Women** | **Gap to Parity** | **2017** | **2018** | **2019** | **2020** | **2021** | **2022** | **2023** | **2024** | **2025** | **2026** | **2027** | **2028** |
| USG | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0% | 50% | 4% | 8% | 12% | 16% | 20% | 24% | 28% | 32% | 36% | 40% | 44% | 48% |
| ASG | 0 | 4 | 4 | 0% | 50% | 4% | 8% | 12% | 16% | 20% | 24% | 28% | 32% | 36% | 40% | 44% | 48% |
| D-2 | 1 | 3 | 4 | 25% | 25% | 29% | 33% | 37% | 41% | 45% | 49% | 50% | 50% | 50% | 50% | 50% | 50% |
| D-1 | 1 | 16 | 17 | 6% | 44% | 10% | 14% | 18% | 22% | 26% | 30% | 34% | 38% | 42% | 46% | 50% | 50% |
| P-5 | 19 | 51 | 70 | 27% | 23% | 31% | 35% | 39% | 43% | 47% | 50% | 50% | 50% | 50% | 50% | 50% | 50% |
| P-4 | 42 | 68 | 110 | 38% | 12% | 42% | 46% | 50% | 50% | 50% | 50% | 50% | 50% | 50% | 50% | 50% | 50% |
| P-3 | 50 | 68 | 118 | 42% | 8% | 46% | 50% | 50% | 50% | 50% | 50% | 50% | 50% | 50% | 50% | 50% | 50% |
| P-2 | 29 | 26 | 55 | 53% | 3% | 50% | 50% | 50% | 50% | 50% | 50% | 50% | 50% | 50% | 50% | 50% | 50% |
| P-1 | 4 | 2 | 6 | 67% | 17% | 63% | 59% | 55% | 51% | 50% | 50% | 50% | 50% | 50% | 50% | 50% | 50% |

**Annex 2: Existing regulatory framework**

As mentioned in the body of the document, governance and legal and administrative framework may have to be adjusted for allowing the implementation of the proposed strategy and related measures, in particular in the area of recruitment.

The basic principle for recruitment at ITU, establishing the qualifications and competence criteria as the fundamental and paramount consideration, are contained in the ITU basic texts, as follows:

**ITU Constitution**

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| 154 | 2 The paramount consideration in the recruitment of staff and in the determination of the conditions of service shall be the necessity of securing for the Union the highest standards of efficiency, competence and integrity. Due regard shall be paid to the importance of recruiting the staff on as wide a geographical basis as possible. |

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RESOLUTION 48 (Rev. BUSAN, 2014)

Human resources management and development

The Plenipotentiary Conference of the International Telecommunication Union (Busan, 2014),

[…]

resolves

[…]

7 that, when filling vacant posts by international recruitment, in choosing between candidates who meet the qualification requirements for a post, preference shall be given to candidates from regions of the world which are under-represented in the staffing of the Union, taking into account the balance between female and male staff mandated by the United Nations common system;

[…]

instructs the Council

4 to follow with the greatest attention the question of recruitment and to adopt, within existing resources and consistent with the United Nations common system, the measures it deems necessary to secure an adequate number of qualified candidates for Union posts, particularly taking account of *considering* *b),* *c)* and *h)* above.

**Annex 2 of Resolution 48 (Rev. Busan, 2014)**

Facilitating the recruitment of women at ITU

1. Within existing budgetary constraints~~,~~ ITU should advertise vacancy notices as widely as possible to encourage employment applications from qualified and competent women.
2. ITU Member States are encouraged to put forward qualified female candidates, wherever possible.
3. Vacancy notices should encourage the submission of applications from women.
4. ITU recruitment procedures should be amended to ensure that, if the number of applications so allows, at every screening level, a minimum target of 33 per cent of all candidates moving forward to the next level are women.
5. Unless there are no qualified female candidates, every short-list of candidates presented to the Secretary-General for appointment must include one women.

**Staff Regulations and Staff Rules applicable to appointed staff**

CHAPTER IV RECRUITMENT, APPOINTMENT, TRANSFER AND PROMOTION PRINCIPLES

Regulation 4.1 Appointment, transfer and promotion principles

 The paramount consideration in the appointment, transfer or promotion of staff and in the determination of the conditions of service shall be the necessity of securing for the Union the highest standards of efficiency, competence and integrity.

**Annex 3: Suggested revisions to Annex 2 of Resolution 48 (Rev. Busan, 2014)**

Facilitating the recruitment of women at ITU

1. ITU should advertise vacancy notices as widely as possible to encourage employment applications from women.
2. ITU Member States are encouraged to put forward qualified female candidates.
3. Vacancy notices should encourage the submission of applications from women.
4. ITU recruitment procedures should be amended to ensure that, if the number of applications so allows, at every screening level, 50 per cent of all candidates moving forward to the next level are women.
5. In grade levels where gender balance targets are not met, the hiring manager shall prepare a memo justifying the proposal of a candidate that does not improve ITU’s gender representation.

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1. See <https://www.un.org/gender> and direct link to the [System-wide Strategy on Gender Parity](https://www.un.int/sites/www.un.int/files/Permanent%20Missions/delegate/17-00102b_gender_strategy_report_13_sept_2017.pdf) [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. See Annex 1: Calculation and Targets to Reaching Parity. Note also that the OHRM calculates targets based on 2016 data. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. The UN system-wide parity strategy (page 8) highlights that implementation should also further geographic diversity, particularly from underrepresented groups, and the twin goals of parity and diversity should be mutually reinforcing rather than exclusive. The UN Secretary-General has highlighted that while these two goals should be addressed together, geographic representation cannot be used as an excuse not to achieve gender parity. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. CEDAW requires the UN to take ‘all appropriate measures, including legislation, to ensure the full development and advancement of women’ (Article 3). This includes temporary special measures to accelerate ‘de facto equality between men and women [which] shall not be considered discrimination as defined in the present Convention, but shall in no way entail as a consequence the maintenance of unequal or separate standards; these measures shall be discontinued when the objective of equality of opportunity and treatment have been achieved’ (Article 4.1). [↑](#footnote-ref-4)