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**United States of America**

United States Views on the Draft of the Final Report on the Review of the International Telecommunication Regulations (ITRs)

**Introduction**

The United States would like to congratulate the Chairman of the Expert Group on the ITRs (EG-ITRs) for the draft final report on the review of the ITRs. We believe the draft report properly and succinctly reflects the views expressed by Member States and Sector Members in their contributions and meeting discussions in a format that is accessible and useful to all. In addition, the draft report is consistent with the Council Resolution 1379.

In this contribution, the United States would like to reiterate its views on the review of the ITRs. Even though pursuant to the Plenipotentiary Resolution 146 (Busan) and Council Resolution 1379 the scope of EG-ITRs is limited to the review the ITRs, many have already expressed their views possibly revising the 2012 ITRs. The United States would like to express its views on the perils of convening a World Conference on International Telecommunications (WCIT) to revise the 2012 ITRs.

**Discussions**

**United States Position on the ITRs**: The United States continues to believe that the ITRs are no longer applicable or relevant to the vast majority of international communications traffic. The ITRs were essential to the provision and operation of international telecommunication services in the monopoly era. However, this monopolistic environment has disappeared in most countries, along with the rationale for a treaty addressing its potential effects on international telecommunications services.

The existence of two versions of the ITRs has not created any legal or practical conflicts. The United States is not aware of any situation where the existence of two versions of the ITRs has interfered with the provision and operation of international telecommunications services and there has been no demonstration of such conflicts in the contributions submitted to this group. Moreover, most countries that signed the 2012 ITRs have not followed up with formal ratification; as of June 2017, only nine of the 89 countries that are signatory to the ITRs have ratified the treaty.

The United States expressed several serious concerns about the scope and applicability of the 2012 ITRs during the 2012 WCIT. In particular, we noted our concern that some of the provisions are outside the stated purpose and scope of the ITRs as articulated in Article 1 of both the 1988 and 2012 ITRs. The United States continues to have these concerns.

**Future WCIT:** Consistent with the relevant Plenipotentiary and the Council Resolutions, the United States is of the view that only the 2018 Plenipotentiary Conference in Dubai should decide whether to convene a WCIT. The United States is of the view that a future WCIT is riddled with perils and would divert valuable ITU resources away from the implementation of the ITU’s core mission of developing international telecommunications. Moreover, another WCIT may not reach consensus on the issues and may potentially result in a third set of ITRs. We also believe that treaty instruments like the ITRs should include provisions that can stand the test of time. In a rapidly changing and constantly evolving telecommunications environment, any attempt to revise the ITRs with narrow provisions to reflect “new trends” would render it obsolete as soon as the regulations are adopted. Instead of spending collective energy on a future WCIT, the United States believes that the Union should work constructively to address the digital divide and work toward fulfilling the 2030 development goals.