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| **Council 2020 Geneva, 9-19 June 2020** |  |
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| **Agenda item: PL 2.9** | **Document C20/5-E** |
| **3 March 2020** |
| **Original: English** |
| Report by the Secretary-General | |
| PREPARATIONS FOR the World Telecommunication/ICT Policy Forum (WTPF-21) | |

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| Summary  Resolution 2 (Rev. Dubai, 2018) *resolves* to hold WTPF preferably back-to-back with the WSIS Forum 2021, taking account of the need to ensure adequate preparation by Member States. This document provides an update on the current status of the preparatory process for WTPF-21.  Action required  The Council is instructed to **note** the Report.  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  References  Document [C13/64(Rev1)](https://www.itu.int/md/S13-CL-C-0064/en);[Resolution 2 (Rev. Dubai, 2018)](https://www.itu.int/en/council/Documents/basic-texts/RES-002-E.pdf); [Council Decision 611](https://www.itu.int/md/S19-CL-C-0128/en); [C19/119](https://www.itu.int/md/S19-CL-C-0119/en) |

1. The ITU World Telecommunication/ICT Policy Forum (WTPF) was established by the 1994 Kyoto Plenipotentiary Conference and is covered by the provisions of [Resolution 2 (Rev. Dubai, 2018)](https://www.itu.int/en/council/Documents/basic-texts/RES-002-E.pdf). WTPF was successfully convened in 1996, 1998, 2001, 2009, and 2013. The report on WTPF-13 is available in document [C13/64(Rev.1)](https://www.itu.int/md/S13-CL-C-0064/en).

2. The purpose of WTPF is to provide a venue for exchanging views and information and thereby creating a shared vision among policy-makers worldwide on the issues arising from the emergence of new telecommunication/ICT services and technologies, and to consider any other policy issue in telecommunications/ICTs which would benefit from a global exchange of views, in addition to the adoption of opinions reflecting common viewpoints.

3. WTPF should continue to give special attention to the interests and needs of the developing countries[[1]](#footnote-1), where modern technologies and services can contribute significantly to telecommunication infrastructure development.

4. WTPF shall not produce prescriptive regulatory outcomes; however, it shall prepare reports and adopt opinions by consensus for consideration by Member States, Sector Members, and relevant ITU meetings.

5. WTPF shall be open to all Member States and Sector Members; however, if appropriate, by decision of a majority of the representatives of Member States, a special session may be held for Member States only.

6. In accordance with Resolution 2 (Rev. Dubai 2018), by [Decision 611 (Council 2019)](https://www.itu.int/md/S19-CL-C-0128/en), the 2019 session of ITU Council decided to convene the sixth WTPF in Geneva, Switzerland, for a duration of three days, preferablyback to back with the WSIS Forum 2021 (WTPF-21). It was further agreed at this 2019 Council session that the approach taken for WTPF-13 would be replicated for WTPF-21, namely by having the WSIS Forum 2021 and WTPF-21 overlap possibly by two days so as to limit additional costs and make the most of the presence of high-level participants. Accordingly, WSIS Forum 2021 will be held from 16 May (Sunday) to 20 May 2021 (Thursday), and WTPF-21 will be organized from 19 May (Wednesday) to 21 May 2021 (Friday).

7. By [Decision 611](https://www.itu.int/md/S19-CL-C-0128/en) (Council 2019), ITU Council decided that the theme for WTPF-21 is as follows:

“*Policies for mobilizing new and emerging telecommunications/ICTs for sustainable development:*

The WTPF-21 would discuss how new and emerging digital technologies and trends are enablers of the global transition to the digital economy. Themes for consideration include AI, IoT, 5G, Big Data, OTTs etc. In this regard, the WTPF-21 will focus on opportunities, challenges and policies to foster sustainable development.”

8. Discussions at WTPF-21 shall be based solely on a single report by the ITU Secretary-General, and contributions from participants based on that report, prepared in accordance with a procedure adopted by the Council and based on the proposals of Member States and Sector Members, and on the views of Associates, Academia and stakeholders, and WTPF shall not consider drafts of any new Opinions that were not presented during the preparatory period foreseen for drawing up the Secretary-General’s report prior to the Forum ([Resolution 2 (Rev. Dubai, 2018)](https://www.itu.int/en/council/Documents/basic-texts/RES-002-E.pdf)). This report by the Secretary-General (“Report”) outlines a potential scope for discussions and presents some of the policy issues under consideration among different stakeholder groups on mobilizing new and emerging digital technologies and trends for sustainable development.

9. In accordance with [Decision 611 (Council 2019)](https://www.itu.int/md/S19-CL-C-0128/en), the ITU Secretary-General has convened an Informal Experts Group (IEG), each of whom is active in preparing for WTPF-21 in this regard. Member States, Sector Members, Associates, and Academia of ITU, as well as the State of Palestine and Organizations which have the right to attend ITU Conferences and meetings as observers, were invited to nominate their experts. The List of IEG members is available at: <https://www.itu.int/en/wtpf-21/Documents/IEG-WTPF-21-nominated-experts.pdf>.

10. Council 2019 confirmed Mr. Fabio Bigi, Italy, as the chairman of the IEG.

11. The preparatory process is guided by the timetable set out as Annex 2 in [Decision 611 (Council 2019)](https://www.itu.int/md/S19-CL-C-0128/en) as reflected in Table 1 below[[2]](#footnote-2).

**Table 1: Timetable for the elaboration of the ITU Secretary-General’s Report**

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| **1 August, 2019** | A First Draft outline of the report by the Secretary-General shall be posted online for comments |
| **21 August, 2019** | Deadline for receipt of comments on the First Draft  Deadline for nominations for a balanced group of experts to advise the Secretary-General on further elaboration of the report and of draft opinions associated with it |
| **1st IEG Meeting  (23, 24 September 2019)** | First meeting of the group of experts to discuss the First Draft of the report by the Secretary-General and the comments received |
| **1 November, 2019** | The Second Draft of the report by the Secretary-General will be posted online, incorporating discussions from the 1st IEG meeting  This draft will also be made available online for open public consultations |
| **23 December, 2019** | Deadline for receipt of comments on the Second Draft, and for contribution on broad outlines for possible draft opinions  Deadline for inputs from the open public consultations |
| **2nd IEG Meeting (10,11 February 2020)** | Second meeting of the group of experts to discuss the Second Draft of the report by the Secretary-General and the comments received, including from the open public consultation |
| **1 April, 2020** | The Third Draft of the report by the Secretary-General will be posted online, incorporating discussions from the 2nd IEG meeting and including outlines of draft Opinions  This draft will also be made available online for open public consultations |
| **15 June, 2020** | Deadline for receipt of comments on the Third Draft, and for contribution on possible draft Opinions  Deadline for inputs from the open public consultations |
| **3rd IEG Meeting (September 2020 during the CWG cluster)** | Third meeting of the group of experts to discuss the Third Draft of the report by the Secretary-General and the comments received, including from the open public consultation |
| **1 November, 2020** | The Fourth Draft of the report by the Secretary-General will be posted online, including the draft Opinions, and incorporating discussions from the 3rd IEG meeting |
| **23 December, 2020** | Deadline for receipt of comments on the Fourth Draft |
| **4th IEG Meeting (February 2021 during the CWG cluster)** | Fourth meeting of the group of experts to discuss the Fourth Draft of the report by the Secretary-General, including the draft Opinions, and the comments received |
| **15 March, 2021** | The final report of the Secretary-General to WTPF will be posted online, including the draft Opinions |
| **Mid-May, 2021 (back to back with WSIS Forum 2021)** | Sixth World Telecommunication/Information and Communication Technology Policy Forum |

12. The IEG has held two meetings: on 23-24 September 2019 and 10-11 February 2020. The IEG has gathered 143 nominated experts. The list is available at <https://www.itu.int/en/wtpf-21/Documents/IEG-WTPF-21-nominated-experts.pdf>

13. All documents related to the preparatory process are available on the IEG website: <https://www.itu.int/en/wtpf-21/Pages/ieg-wtpf-21.aspx>. These include the various drafts of the Secretary-General’s Report to WTPF-21, contributions received from IEG members (including possible draft Opinions) and the feedback received from the online open public consultation process.

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1. These include the least developed countries, small island developing states, landlocked developing countries and countries with economies in transition [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. The portion highlighted in grey indicates the current status of the preparatory process. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)