



General Secretariat (SG)

Geneva, 15 April 2021

Ref: **DM-21/1010**
Contact: Ms Béatrice Pluchon
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To Member States of ITU Council

Subject: **Consultation by correspondence on the change of dates of the World Telecommunication Development Conference 2021 (WTDC-21)**

Dear Madam/Sir,

Further to the invitation of the Government of Ethiopia to host the next World Telecommunication Development Conference (WTDC-21) in Addis Ababa and the approval of the majority of Member States ([CL-19/45](#)), the dates for WTDC-21 were fixed at 8-19 November 2021, and the invitation to the event was issued ([CL-20/52](#)).

Preparations by the Host Country and membership are well underway. However, given the current sanitary situation, it is unknown whether travel restrictions will be lifted by November and if all Member States will be able to participate on equal footing. Considering this uncertainty, the Host Country has studied various possibilities of holding the conference differently (hybrid, virtual, etc.) and brought the results of these studies forward in a contribution to the Inter-Regional Meeting (IRM) on 11 March 2021. Based on these studies and discussions at the IRM, the Secretary-General has received a letter from the Host Country proposing to postpone the WTDC-21 to 6-15 June 2022.

In accordance with No. 42 of the Convention, the Council shall determine the precise place and exact dates of a WTDC with the concurrence of a majority of the Member States. Any changes to these decisions are also subject to the same process.

Consequently, and in accordance with Rule 3.2 of the Council's Rules of Procedure on consultations and decisions between sessions, and No. 42 of the ITU Convention, I hereby invite Member States of the Council to reply to the consultation using the online tool*, or using the template in [Annex 1](#) by e-mail to memberstates@itu.int, **not later than 7 May 2021**. The agreement of the Council on the matter will then be subject to the concurrence of the majority of the Member States of ITU (as per No 47 of the Convention). The secretariat remains at your disposal if needed.

I look forward to receiving your reply.

Yours faithfully,

(signed)

Dr Elsayed Azzouz
Chair of the Council

***Online tool:** Each Council Member State wishing to use the online tool is invited to provide, via memberstates@itu.int, the **name and email address of one (1) focal point** who will be entitled to respond. An email with a unique ID and password will be issued by ITU to the identified focal point so to allow him/her to complete the consultation. Please note that the [online tool](#) is in English only.

Annexes: 2

[Annex 1](#) – Consultation on the change of dates of the World Telecommunication Development Conference 2021 (WTDC-21)

[Annex 2](#) – Letter from the Government of Ethiopia

ANNEX 1

Consultation on the change of dates of WTDC-21

Name of the Member State of the Council:

We agree to the change of dates of WTDC-21 to 6-15 June 2022:

Yes

No

Abstention

Councillors are kindly invited to send the reply via the [online tool](#), or alternatively by e-mail to memberstates@itu.int **not later than 7 May 2021.**

ANNEX 2



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Ministry of Innovation and Technology



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Ref.No. ሀ/2/96/7272-4027/13
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Date 12 APR 2021

To: Mr. Houlin Zhao

**International Telecommunications Union, Secretary-General
Geneva, Switzerland**

**Subject: - Request for Postponing World Telecommunications Development
Conference 2021 (WTDC-21)**

Dear Secretary General

The Government of Ethiopia is honored and excited to host the World Telecommunications Development Conference, in Addis Ababa. We received the decision of the Member States for Ethiopia to be the host of WTDC-21 with high enthusiasm. Following the Member States decision back in October 2019, preparations for WTDC-21 have been underway over the past year.

We have assembled a national steering committee from different stakeholders which will make critical decisions, create intragovernmental collaborations and facilitate high stakeholder engagement in the preparation process. We have also established ten different sub-committees that will carry out the day today preparations for WTDC. In the process we have also engaged the private IT industry to create a wholesome preparatory process.

Preparations are well underway as we get closer to the conference to make WTDC-21 successful, that will set critical strategies and objectives for the development of telecommunication and provide the next direction and guidance to the Telecommunication Development Sector worldwide while having a truly Ethiopian and African experience.

However, as you may well know COVID-19 has continued to be a challenge for the globe. In recent months we have witnessing the numbers of COVID-19 surging globally and some countries





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Date 12 APR 2021

have been hit with second and third waved of this pandemic. Some measures such as travel restrictions have been enforced by countries to prevent the virus from further spread.

Even though more vaccinations are being distributed and some improvements are expected globally in the coming months, we believe COVID-19 will remain a key challenge to host WTDC-21 physically as initially planned.

After careful internal and external consultations with key stakeholders, and bearing in mind that ITU Member States have expressed during the first inter-regional preparatory meeting (IRM-1) the wish that a decision be made regarding the hosting of WTDC-21 at least six months before the planned conference dates, the government of Ethiopia would like to propose rescheduling WTDC-21 to be held in Addis Ababa from the 6th to 15th of June 2022, and request you to consult ITU’s membership on the postponement of WTDC-21 as soon as possible.

I would like to reassure you of our utmost commitment to host WTDC-21 and seize this opportunity to renew our highest regard to the International Telecommunications Union.

With Best Regards


Ahmed In Mohammed (PhD)
State Minister



Copy To: -

- H.E the Minister’s Office

