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| **Council 2022 Geneva, 21-31 March 2022** |  |
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| **Agenda item: PL 2.1** | **Document C22/10-E** |
| **23 November 2021** |
| **Original: English** |
| Report by the Secretary-General | |
| Hiring of an independent external management consultant for ITU Telecom events and recommendations: follow up | |

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| Summary  At the Virtual consultation of councillors in June 2021, documents C21/10 and C21/79 were discussed. The meeting agreed to defer the decision on the issue to the 2022 session of the Council.  Action required  The Council is required to decide on the hiring of a consultancy for the second phase.  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  References  [*C20/10*](https://www.itu.int/md/S20-CL-C-0010/en)*,* [*C21/10*](https://www.itu.int/md/S21-CL-C-0010/en)*,* [*C21/79*](https://www.itu.int/md/S21-CL-C-0079/en)*,* [*C21/91*](https://www.itu.int/md/S21-CL-C-0091/en) |

1 At the Virtual consultation of councillors in June 2021 (C21\VCC-1), documents [C21/10](https://www.itu.int/md/S21-CL-C-0010/en), “Hiring of independent external management consultant for ITU Telecom events and recommendations”, and [C21/79](https://www.itu.int/md/S21-CL-C-0079/en), “Contribution from Japan: Strategic and Financial Assessment for ITU Telecom Events”, were both discussed. The outcome of this discussion was summarized in document [C21/91](https://www.itu.int/md/S21-CL-C-0091/en) as follows:

***7 Report on the hiring of an independent external management consultancy, including recommendations and various strategies (Documents*** [***C21/10***](https://www.itu.int/md/S21-CL-C-0010/en) ***and*** [***C21/79***](https://www.itu.int/md/S21-CL-C-0079/en)***)***

*7.1 The representative of Dalberg reviewed the main elements of the report submitted to VCC-2 (Document C20/10), in which Dalberg had presented an assessment of ITU Telecom events and various options for the way forward, notably the organization of “Digital for Good” exhibition and forum sessions as part of an annual global ITU-level event that incorporated WSIS forums and/or the AI for Good Global Summit. The events of the past twelve months had reinforced interest in such an event, further investigation of which would constitute Phase 2 of the external consultancy.*

*7.2 The councillor from Japan, introducing Document C21/79, said that it proposed a series of steps aimed at addressing the need to ensure the profitability of large-scale events in the light of the COVID-19 pandemic.*

*7.3 Two councillors endorsed the approach laid out in Document C21/79, given the urgent need to reform ITU Telecom events, avoid further deficits and assess the situation in the light of the new, post-COVID “normal”.*

*7.4 Two other councillors said that the Council should consider all the options outlined in the Dalberg report and that Member States should have the opportunity to submit other options.*

*7.5 Several councillors observed that Document C21/10 contained no information on the cost or financing of Phase 2 of the consultancy, or on the methodology or time-frame for its implementation. Given that ITU Telecom exhibitions appeared to have been superseded by other events and that stakeholders had a limited capacity to participate, they suggested that the Council defer its decision to its 2022 session and that Phase 2 of the consultancy be aligned with the normalization of international travel.*

*7.6 One councillor, observing that the AI for Good Global Summit and WSIS forums were successful events in which many large international, private-sector and civil-society organizations participated, said that the views of those organizations should be obtained as well. It was not in the Union’s interest to undermine them by introducing a new model of event.*

*7.7 The Secretary-General pointed out that the AI for Good Global Summit did not have the same participants as ITU Telecom exhibitions and that the WSIS forums were United Nations events.*

*7.8 The councillor from Spain said that her administration stood willing to share financial information pertaining to the organization of the 2021 Mobile World Congress, which would be held in Barcelona from 28 June to 1 July.*

*7.9 The Chief of the Financial Resources Management Department said that, under the terms of resolves 4 of Resolution 11 (Rev. Dubai, 2018), the hiring of the independent external management consultancy for Phase 1 had been covered by the Exhibition Working Capital Fund (EWCF). Should the Council decide to go ahead with Phase 2, it would have to authorize the Secretary-General to draw the necessary funds from the EWCF; neither the ITU nor the ITU Telecom secretariat budget contained allocations for Phase 2. It was further stipulated in Resolution 11 (Rev. Dubai, 2018) that the EWCF had to have a minimum reserve of CHF 5 million. Although ITU Telecom 2020 had not taken place, the costs of the ITU Telecom secretariat had been covered by the EWCF, which showed a balance of CHF 6.6 million as at 31 December 2020. Should ITU Telecom 2021 also not take place physically, the resulting deficit would be charged to the EWCF.*

*7.10 The representative of Dalberg agreed that the current global landscape of IT-related events was increasingly competitive and that it would be unwise to undermine existing successful events or add to the financial burden of organizers. The aim was, on the contrary, to engage with stakeholders and events so as to produce an integrated and coordinated portfolio of events. Dalberg had not yet been asked to provide either a methodology or a time-frame for Phase 2, but stood ready to do so. It was also willing to adapt its proposal in the light of the needs and concerns of Member States and to consider all three options outlined in its report or indeed any other options formulated by Member States.*

*7.11 The councillors* ***thanked*** *Dalberg for its presentation and work,* ***noted*** *Documents C21/10 and C21/79, and* ***agreed*** *to defer the decision on the issue to the 2022 session of the Council.*

2 The Council is therefore invited to take a decision on the hiring of a consultancy for the second phase.

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