|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Council 2022 Geneva, 21-31 March 2022** |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |
| **Agenda item: PL 2.7** | **Revision 1 to**  **Document C22/30-E** |
| **16 March 2022** |
| **Original: English** |
| Report by the Secretary-General | |
| WTDC PREPARATIONS AND AGENDA | |

|  |
| --- |
| Summary  This document covers the preparations so far for the organization of the World Telecommunication Development Conference (WTDC) that is scheduled to take place in Kigali, Rwanda, from 6 to 16 June 2022. The document also includes a draft agenda for the Conference for the Council’s approval.  Action required  The Council is invited to **note** the report on the preparations of WTDC, and to **approve** the attached draft agenda in Annex.  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  References  [CL-19/33](https://www.itu.int/md/S19-SG-CIR-0033/), [CL-19/45](https://www.itu.int/md/S19-SG-CIR-0045/), Council document [21/76](https://www.itu.int/md/S21-CL-C-0076/en), [21/23](https://www.itu.int/md/S21-SG-CIR-0023/en) |

1. **Background**
   1. No. 141 of the ITU Constitution stipulates that there shall be a World Telecommunication Development Conference (WTDC) between two Plenipotentiary Conferences.
   2. Resolution 77 (Rev. Dubai, 2018) resolved to hold the WTDC in the last quarter of 2021.
   3. WTDC Resolution 31 (Rev. Buenos Aires, 2017) expressed the firm convictionthat the coordination of preparations at regional level for the six regions of the ITU Telecommunication Development Sector (ITU-D) are of great benefit to Member States.
2. **Place, duration, dates, and venue for WTDC**
   1. At its 2019 session, the ITU Council noted with appreciation the official invitation from the Government of Ethiopia to host WTDC in Addis Ababa, from 8 to 19 November 2021, and approved the precise place and exact dates.
   2. By circular letter [CL-19/33](https://www.itu.int/md/S19-SG-CIR-0033/) of 22 July 2019, ITU Member States were invited to confirm, in writing, their agreement with the precise place and exact dates of WTDC by 30 September 2019.
   3. By circular letter [CL-19/45](https://www.itu.int/md/S19-SG-CIR-0045/) of 3 October 2019, ITU Member States were informed that the consultation carried out as outlined above had received the agreement of the required majority of ITU Member States, in accordance with Nos. 42 and 213 of the ITU Convention.
   4. It was envisaged that a Youth Summit be held on 6 and 7 November 2021, just prior to WTDC, also in Addis Ababa.
   5. On 12 April 2021, the Ethiopian Administration wrote to the Secretary-General (see Council document [21/76](https://www.itu.int/md/S21-CL-C-0076/en)) noting that due to the current sanitary situation with the COVID-19 pandemic, it was unknown whether travel restrictions would be lifted by November and if all Member States would be able to participate on equal footing. Considering this uncertainty, Ethiopia proposed to postpone the WTDC to 6-15 June 2022, and requested that the Secretary-General consult ITU’s membership on the postponement as soon as possible.
   6. A consultation of ITU Member States was launched on 15 April 2021 via letter [DM-21/1010](https://www.itu.int/md/S21-DM-CIR-01010/en), 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, on the request by Ethiopia to postpone the World Telecommunication Development Conference 2021, to 6 -15 June 2022. At the deadline of 7 May 2021, the Council Member States supported changing the dates for the next WTDC, as may be seen in letter [DM-21/1012](https://www.itu.int/md/S21-DM-CIR-01012/en), which shows the results of the consultation.
   7. Further to the consultation of Council Member States and pursuant to No. 46 of the ITU Convention, all Member States of ITU having the right to vote were consulted by the Secretary-General via circular letter [CL-21/19](mailto:Annex%201%20of%20circular%20letter%20CL-21/19), of 14 May 2021, on the postponement of WTDC to 6-15 June 2022. All ITU Member States agreed to the said postponement, as shown in circular letter [CL-21/23](https://www.itu.int/md/S21-SG-CIR-0023/en), of 24 June 2021, which contains the results of the consultation.
   8. Further to a national state of emergency declared by the Ethiopian Government on 2 November 2021, and based on the advice of the ITU Secretary-General and ITU’s Chief of Security, the Chair of the Council issued a letter to all Council Member States on 6 December 2021 ([DM-21/1025](https://www.itu.int/dms_pub/itu-s/md/21/dm/cir/S21-DM-CIR-01025!!PDF-E.pdf)) informing them that it had become necessary and urgent to examine options for the next WTDC while bearing in mind the expectation of membership that this conference will take place in the Africa Region.
   9. On 21 January 2022, Member States of the Council held an informal consultation meeting to discuss the preparations for the upcoming WTDC, WTSA and Council. After discussion on the issues raised in the circular letter [DM-21/1025](https://www.itu.int/md/S21-DM-CIR-01025/en) dated 6 December 2021, the Councillors were in agreement that hosting the WTDC in Addis Ababa, Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, was no longer a feasible option. United in their wish to maintain the conference in Africa, if possible, the meeting sought proposals for an alternate venue from African Member States. Following this request, the Councillor from Rwanda informed the meeting of Rwanda’s willingness to host the conference in Kigali, which received unanimous support from the meeting.
   10. On 30 January 2022, the Secretary-General received an official invitation from the Government of Rwanda to hold the next WTDC in the city of Kigali from 6 to 16 June 2022, immediately preceded by the Youth Summit starting on 2 June 2022.
   11. In accordance with No. 42 of the Convention, a consultation of Council Member States was consequently carried out, by letter [DM-22/1000](https://www.itu.int/md/S22-DM-CIR-01000/en) of 2 February 2022, and a majority of the Council Member States supported changing the place and dates for the next WTDC to Kigali, Rwanda, from 6 to 16 June 2022.
   12. Further to the decision of Council Member States, a consultation of all Member States was carried out by circular letter [CL-22/4](https://www.itu.int/md/S22-SG-CIR-0004/en) of 9 February 2022, in response to which a majority of Member States supported the change of place and dates, as indicated in circular letter [CL-22/6](https://www.itu.int/md/S22-SG-CIR-0006/en), of 21 February 2022.
   13. Further to the agreement of Member States to the newly proposed venue for the WTDC, and given the short time available until the Conference, a site visit to Rwanda by an ITU team is being planned to take place as soon as possible. The site visit will include visits to the proposed venues for the Conference and the Youth Summit, and to the proposed hotels for delegates and ITU officials. Meetings will also be held between the ITU team and Host Country counterparts to ensure all arrangements are made for the successful hosting of the conference.
3. **Preparations for the Conference**

3.1 Discussions on the Conference preparatory process and the development of impact-oriented outcomes began in a brainstorming session during [TDAG-19](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Conferences/TDAG/Pages/TDAG24/default.aspx). These discussions have been further informed through a [membership-wide survey](https://itu-d.limequery.com/365362?newtest=Y&lang=en), as well as two [TDAG web dialogues](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Conferences/TDAG/Pages/TDAG25/default.aspx). Consultations continued up to the TDAG meeting in June 2020, which decided to create three working groups, the following two of which are directly linked to WTDC:

a) The TDAG Working Group on WTDC Preparations (TDAG-WG-Prep), which has its terms of reference on the [TDAG-WG-Prep webpage](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Conferences/TDAG/Pages/TDAG_WG_WTDC_Prep.aspx). This group picked up from the above-mentioned web dialogues, worked until TDAG-20/3 and submitted its [proposals](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-TDAG27-C-0005/en) to this meeting, for endorsement. The endorsed recommendations may be summarized as follows:

* Holding two or three Inter-Regional Meetings (IRMs) to facilitate a platform for membership to come to a common position on key issues to be discussed at WTDC;
* Determination of the conference theme: “Connecting the unconnected to achieve Sustainable Development”;
* Holding a partnership segment within the Conference, that will merge the former high-level segment and side-events, based on the ITU-D thematic priorities and that will be open to key non-member stakeholders.

b) The TDAG Working Group on WTDC Resolutions, Declaration and Thematic Priorities (TDAG-WG-RDTP). The work of this group will continue until TDAG-21/2. The terms of reference and other information about the work of this group may be found on the [TDAG-WG-RDTP website](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Conferences/TDAG/Pages/TDAG_WG_WTDC.aspx).

TDAG convened an extraordinary meeting on [23 November 2020 (TDAG-20/3)](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-TDAG27-C-0007/en) at which the proposals from these working groups were endorsed and adopted.

1. **Preparatory process**

4.1 As per Resolution 31 (Rev. Buenos Aires, 2017), six **Regional Preparatory Meetings (RPMs)** were organized in each of the six regions, as follows:

| **Region** | **Dates** | **Virtual host country** | **Output documents** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| RPM-EUR | 18-19 January 2021 (virtual) | Virtual host country: Czech Republic | [Report](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-RPMEUR-C-0034/en) |
| RPM-ASP | 9-10 March 2021 (virtual) | -- | [Report](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-RPMASP-C-0015/en) |
| RPM-AFR | 29-30 March 2021 (virtual) | Virtual host country: Burkina Faso | [Report](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-RPMAFR-C-0026/en) |
| RPM-ARB | 7-8 April 2021 (virtual) | -- | [Report](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-RPMARB-C-0015/en) |
| RPM-CIS | 21-22 April 2021 (virtual) | -- | [Report](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-RPMCIS-C-0037/en) |
| RPM-AMS | 26-27 April 2021 (virtual) | Virtual host country: Peru | [Report](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-RPMAMS-C-0014/en) |

The RPMs engaged the membership in each region in the WTDC process, to encourage regional coordination before the conference. RPMs also sought to identify regional topics of interest and challenges that need to be addressed to foster the development of telecommunications/ICTs, and help Member States and Sector Members set common priorities.

4.2 At each of the six RPMs, each region launched the initiatives the **Network of Women** and the regional **Generation Connect** groups:

a) The [Network of Women (NoW)](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Conferences/WTDC/WTDC21/NoW/Pages/default.aspx) is an initiative that encourages gender balance in the activities leading up to WTDC.

b) [Generation Connect](https://www.itu.int/generationconnect/generation-connect/) is the overarching initiative of the ITU Youth Strategy on the journey to WTDC and the WTDC Generation Connect Global Youth Summit.

4.3 An **RPM Coordination Meeting** was held virtually on 24 May 2021 to examine the reports of the six RPMs, and submitted a [consolidated report to TDAG](https://www.itu.int/md/meetingdoc.asp?lang=en&parent=D18-TDAG28-C-0005), in accordance with WTDC Resolution 31.

4.4 Based on the proposals of the TDAG-WG-Prep, TDAG 20/3 scheduled three **Inter-Regional Meetings (IRMs)** to prepare for WTDC:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| [IRM-1](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Conferences/WTDC/WTDC21/Pages/IRM/IRM-1.aspx) | 11 March 2021 (virtual) |
| [IRM-2](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Conferences/WTDC/WTDC21/Pages/IRM/IRM-2.aspx) | 13-14 December 2021 (virtual) |
| [IRM-3](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Conferences/WTDC/WTDC21/Pages/IRM/IRM-3.aspx) | 10-11 March 2022 (physical in ITU headquarters) |

IRMs are open to all ITU-D membership. Member States are encouraged to include in their delegations, representatives from regulators, policy-makers, civil society, academia, Internet technical community, youth, gender equality organizations, and others.

IRM agendas are built around key discussions taking place during RPMs, and may include proposals from Member States, Sector Members, Regional Telecommunication Organizations (RTOs), BDT and other stakeholders. Discussions focus on key topics that require coordination and consensus between the different regions.

Following TDAG’s recommendations, the Chairman-designate of WTDC was appointed to chair IRM-1, and six vice-chairmen were appointed, one nominated by each of the respective RTOs. Each RTO was also invited to identify the representative(s) of their choice to speak on behalf of their region.

Following the concerns regarding the venue, IRM-2 was chaired by the Chair of TDAG, Roxanne McElvane Webber. Based on Rwanda having been selected as the Host Country for WTDC, they will be asked to propose a Chair designate for WTDC and that person will, subject to the approval of delegates to IRM-3, assume the chairmanship for IRM-3.

4.5 The draft agenda for the conference was agreed by TDAG at its session on 8-12 November 2021 ([document TDAG-21/2/13(Rev.1)](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-TDAG29-C-0013/en)) and is being submitted to the present session of Council for approval.

**5. Road to Addis Digital Development Series**

5.1 The **Road to Addis** **Digital Development** series was launched in November 2020 to build momentum towards WTDC and to provide an inclusive platform for all stakeholders to advance the call for universal, meaningful connectivity. It was designed with three goals in mind:

a) Build momentum and awareness towards WTDC,

b) Engage key stakeholders and communities, and

c) Provide an inclusive platform to discuss some of the key themes that will be addressed at the WTDC.

The first chapter of the Road to Addis series, which ran from November 2020 to September 2021, was focused on the six enablers of connectivity for sustainable development and built an inclusive and action-oriented series to shape the digital development agenda with the active participation of governments, private sector, policy makers, UN system representatives, youth, as well as representatives from minorities, academia, civil society, and marginalized communities. The Road to Addis events that took place are listed below:

* [Road to Addis, kick-off event, 9 November 2020](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Conferences/WTDC/WTDC21/Pages/RoadToAddis/Road-To-Addis-11-2020.aspx)
* [Road to Addis, partnerships, 2 February 2021](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Conferences/WTDC/WTDC21/R2A/Pages/Partner2Connect.aspx)
* [Road to Addis, inclusion, 18 March 2021](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Conferences/WTDC/WTDC21/R2A/Pages/Connect2Include.aspx)
* [Road to Addis, financing, 28 April 2021](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Conferences/WTDC/WTDC21/R2A/Pages/Finance2Connect.aspx)
* [Road to Addis, leadership, 22 June 2021](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Conferences/WTDC/WTDC21/R2A/Pages/Lead2Connect.aspx)
* [Road to Addis, innovation, 21 July 2021](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Conferences/WTDC/WTDC21/R2A/Pages/Innovate2Connect.aspx)
* [Road to Addis, youth, 12 August 2021](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Conferences/WTDC/WTDC21/R2A/Pages/Youth2Connect.aspx)
* [Road to Addis, Partner2Connect, 20 September 2021](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Conferences/WTDC/WTDC21/R2A/Pages/R2A-Partner2Connect.aspx)

**6. Partner2Connect Digital Coalition**

6.1 Building on the outcomes of the [Road to Addis Digital Development Series](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Conferences/WTDC/WTDC21/R2A/Pages/default.aspx), in alignment with the WSIS Action Lines and the SDGs, in close cooperation with the [Office of the Secretary-General’s Envoy on Technology](https://www.un.org/techenvoy/content/about), and in line with the [UN Secretary-General’s Roadmap for Digital Cooperation](https://itu.int/itu-d/sites/partner2connect/), on 20 September 2021, ITU launched the Partner2Connect Digital Coalition (P2C). The Coalition is a multistakeholder alliance to foster meaningful connectivity and digital transformation globally, with a focus on but not limited to hardest- to-connect communities in Least Developed Countries (LDCs), Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDCs) and Small Island Developing States (SIDS).

6.2 P2C will serve as a leadership level platform to engage all stakeholders to mobilize and announce new resources, partnerships, and commitments to achieve universal and meaningful connectivity; it will also support the implementation of the United Nations Secretary-General’s Roadmap for Digital Cooperation and the UN Secretary General’s report, “[Our Common Agenda](https://www.un.org/en/content/common-agenda-report/)” through four Focus Areas:

ACCESS: Connecting people everywhere

ADOPTION: Empowering communities

VALUE CREATION: Building digital ecosystems

ACCELERATE: Incentivizing investments

6.3 The ITU Partner2Connect Digital Development Roundtable, scheduled to take place on 7-9 June 2022, during WTDC, will offer ITU-D Members and other stakeholders an opportunity to engage in high-level discussions around the challenges and opportunities related to digital development, make concrete pledges, and forge new partnerships. Specifically high-level attendees are invited to make policy statements in plenary sessions, ideally in the form of pledges that will advance progress to achieving the Partner2Connect Focus Areas. The Roundtable may include activities such as panel sessions and small group discussions. The panels and group discussion will either include or be chaired/moderated by high-level participants from membership and ITU. In addition to this, other high-level participants may wish to record video messages that will be played during the coffee breaks in meeting rooms and in the screens dotted around the conference venue.

6.4 With the organization of the Partner2Connect Digital Development Roundtable, the following results are expected:

* Substantial pledges to bridge the digital divide, including financial, programmatic, policy, and advocacy pledges;
* Follow-up after the WTDC, including periodic reporting on commitments made by members of the coalition and impact made.

Additional information is to be found in documents: [TDAG-21/19](https://www.itu.int/md/meetingdoc.asp?lang=en&parent=D18-TDAG28-C-0019) and [TDAG-21/2/15](https://www.itu.int/md/meetingdoc.asp?lang=en&parent=D18-TDAG29-C-0015).

ANNEX

Draft WTDC agenda

**I. Report on the implementation of the Buenos Aires Action Plan**

1. Update on global digital transformation and reporting on the implementation of the WTDC-17 Buenos Aires Action Plan (including the Regional Initiatives), contribution to the implementation of the WSIS Plan of Action and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

2. Report of the Telecommunication Development Advisory Group

3. Report of Study Groups

4. Report on the implementation of outcomes of other ITU Conferences, Assemblies and meetings related to ITU-D work:

a. Plenipotentiary Conference (PP-18)

b. Radiocommunication Assembly (RA-19)/World Radiocommunication Conference (WRC-19)

c. World Telecommunication Standardization Assembly (WTSA-20)

**II. ITU-D work plan for 2022-2025**

5. Outcomes of Regional Preparatory Meetings for WTDC

6. ITU-D contribution to the ITU Strategic Plan for 2024-2027

7. ITU-D Thematic Priorities

8. ITU-D Action Plan for 2022-2025

9. WTDC Declaration

10. Telecommunication Development Advisory Group

a. Authorization for the Telecommunication Development Advisory Group to act between world telecommunication development conferences (Resolution 24, Rev. Dubai, 2014)

b. Structure and working methods

11. Study Groups

a. Study Questions

b. Structure and working methods

12. Resolutions and recommendations

**III. Partner to Connect Digital Coalition (P2C) – non statutory**

13. P2C Digital Coalition

14. Any other business

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_