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| **Council Working Group forStrategic and Financial Plans 2024-2027Third meeting – 21 and 22 February 2022** |  |
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| AFRICAN COMMON PROPOSAL TO THE THIRD COUNCIL WORKING GROUP ON STRATEGIC AND FINANCIAL PLANS (CWG-SFP) MEETING |
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1. **Introduction**

The African Telecommunication Union (ATU) Members have been engaging and working towards drafting a regional common proposal of the draft ITU-D component of the strategic plan. Time and efforts have been spent to develop a complete and a comprehensive [document](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-TDAG27.SOP-C-0014/en), which was sent to the attention of TDAG-WG-SOP (**Document TDAG-WG-SOP/14)** in its meeting of the 4th October 2021 and also have been engaged since the first meeting of CWG-SFP process.

We acknowledge with good note, the proposal made by the ITU secretariat, based on ITU’s Membership and Dalberg’s inputs, towards enhancing the ITU’s strategic framework, built upon, the principles developed in the first meeting of CWG-SFP. We believe that the 2024-2027-time frame is a very important in achieving, reviewing and following-up, various UN agendas, we therefore see, adapting the strategic plan accordingly, is timely relevant. We are pleased to provide this contribution to this very important process of our Union.

1. **Comments on Section 2.5 of the Secretariat’s input to annex 1 to resolution 71 draft ITU strategic plan for 2024-2027**

We suggest to further **enhance** the proposed targets for Goal 1: Universal connectivity – by 2030, and further enhance the proposed targets for Goal 2: Sustainable digital transformation – by 2030. It is also suggested that the current proposed targets for Goal 2 are relevant to be included, as targets for Goal 1.

Proposed targets, can be as follows;

**Goal 1: Universal connectivity – by 2030:**

1.1: Affordable broadband services for all

1.1.1: below 2% of monthly per capita minimum wage;

1.2 Secure digital infrastructures;

1.2.1: Cyber security index (GCI) (target to be developed);

1.2.2: Proportion of cyber-attacks repelled by actions initiated by CERTS/CSIRTS/CIRTS (target to be developed);

1.3 resilient digital infrastructures;

1.4 Broadband services for all

1.4.1: Universal fixed broadband coverage of at Least 2Mbps/user;

1.5 broadband connectivity for education and other social and economic areas

1.5.1: broadband access for every adult/youth (% of connected/Country)

1.5.2: Broadband access for all schools /Universities

1.5.3: Broadband access for all health Centers (% of connected/ Country)

1.5.4: broadband access to MSMEs (% of connected/ Country)

1.6 All digital gaps to be bridged (in particular, countries, gender, age, urban/rural)

**Goal 2: Sustainable digital transformation – by 2030**

2.1: Digital transformation strategy and its related policy and regulatory frameworks;

2.2: Build Innovation and Entrepreneurship ecosystem in digital area;

2.3: Promote digital finance and services;

2.4: Adoption of digital technologies including emerging technologies;2.6 Promote the use of digital applications and services (e-health, e-Gov, etc..);

2.5: Develop Digital skills for all;

2.6: Encourage investments and develop financing mechanisms;

2.7: improve cyber security preparedness of countries, with key capabilities: presence of strategy, national computer incident/emergency response teams and legislation

1. **Comments on Section 2.6 Thematic priority of the Secretariat’s input to annex 1 to resolution 71 draft ITU strategic plan for 2024-2027**
2. **Enabling environment**

We suggest including enabling innovation in telecommunications/ICT under this thematic priority. The ITU needs to play a key role in the development of an environment that is conducive to innovation, where new and emerging technologies contribute in the implementation of the WSIS outcomes and the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development, particularly at country level.

1. **Cybersecurity**

Cybersecurity program is at the heart of the transition to a digital society. It is a key pillar in ensuring a trusted and secure digital economy, giving confidence to all participants and allowing businesses to prosper and thrive. It already has well-established goals, indicators and outcomes that require continuous measurement unlike other ‘enablers’.

It builds on Objective 2 of the Buenos Aires Action Plan adopted at the 2017 World Telecommunication Development Conference, and related ITU conferences and Assemblies resolutions.

As we have expressed during the 2nd meeting of CWG-SFP, that this thematic priority needs to be as, standalone. We believe that considering the digital transformation as a strategic goalwould be greatly rational to be followed by a standalone thematic priority on cybersecurity.

Moreover, considering the ITU as the leading UN organization when it comes to ICTs, the sole facilitator of the WSIS Action Line C5 on building confidence and security in the use of ICTs, the revised guidelines on the Global Cybersecurity Agenda (GCA) and the significant development of cybersecurity at the UN, where the ITU needs to contribute in a way or in another to the UN processes, are valid arguments, in keeping cybersecurity as a standalone thematic priority.

On §35, we suggest that the focus of the work the thematic priority on cybersecurity need to be within the ITU’s Global Cybersecurity Agenda (GCA), and its associated 5 pillars, namely**;** legal, technical, organizational, capacity building, cooperation.

Recognizing the cybersecurity as one of three priority topics or goals and as a key element of the United Nations Secretary General’s digital roadmap, in which ITU is fully committed, reaffirms the relevance to consider the cybersecurity as a standalone thematic priority.

1. **Comments about enablers, on Section 2.8 of the Secretariat’s input to annex 1 to resolution 71 draft ITU strategic plan for 2024-2027**

We have indicated through our comments on the questionnaire elaborated by the ITU secretariat regarding the ITU Strategic Plan, that reflecting the Regional presence in the strategic plan is key in bringing clarity, focus, results-oriented strategic plan.

We think that, there should be much emphasis on more substantive details and strategic aspects in §64 of section 2.8 related to the regional presence. We would further recommend to setup, per-regional office strategic planning, this can be translated further, in clear and concise Operational plans, where further emphasis need to be put upon LDCs, LLDCs, SIDS, countries with specific needs taking into consideration, the existing development patterns and characteristics of the African Region. This can also consider the actual proposed WTDC regional initiatives to be considered in the strategic planning of the regional presence.

1. **Comments on input to annex 2 to resolution 71: Situational Analysis**

Regarding the developments since the ITU 2018 plenipotentiary conference, we would like to include development related to the UN Digital cooperation Agenda and its associated roadmap, UN Our Common Agenda, in which we believe that they contain several areas where ITU could engaged in, but also, it opens up a range of opportunities for joint partnerships with different organizations. This can be reflected also in the SWOT analysis as an opportunity.

We also suggest the following aspects to be reflected in the “**Weakness**” part of the SWOT analysis:

1. Unclear mandate of regional and zone offices leading to inefficient service delivery to members and a value proposition for stakeholders.

We also suggest the following aspects to be reflected in the “**Threats**” part of the SWOT analysis:

1. The ability to compete and remain relevant at the international and regional levels is of great concern;
2. Other UN organizations are stepping up their engagement on digital cooperation and ICT;
3. issues, where they can deploy capabilities that could exceed ITU's capabilities at the regional level;
4. The current Telecom events business model is not financially viable and the event's value proposition shows clear signs of weakness;
5. Low UN-wide engagement, coordination and collaboration in joint strategic planning.

Othe key issues highlighted :

* Ensure reliable and well-defined Measurements of targets/indicators.
* The operational plan for each regional office and that countries agree on it, participate in the implementation, and having strong KPIs to measure the outcomes, which can be a control measure on the budget.

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