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| **Plenipotentiary Conference (PP-22) Bucharest, 26 September – 14 October 2022** |  |
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| PLENARY MEETING | **Addendum 9 to Document 44-E** |
|  | **8 August 2022** |
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| Member States of the European Conference of Postal and Telecommunications Administrations (CEPT) | |
| ECP 9 - REVISION TO RESOLUTION 167: | |
| Strengthening and developing ITU capabilities for electronic meetings and means to advance the work of the Union | |
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MOD EUR/44A9/1

RESOLUTION 167 (Rev. bucharest, 2022)

Strengthening and developing ITU capabilities for electronic meetings and means to advance the work of the Union

The Plenipotentiary Conference of the International Telecommunication Union (Bucharest, 2022),

considering

*a)* the thematic priority of an enabling environment in the ITU Telecommunication Development Sector (ITU-D) in the ITU strategic plan for 2024-2027 which seeks a policy and regulatory environment that is conducive to sustainable telecommunication/ICT development that encourages innovation, investment in infrastructure and ICTs, and that increases adoption of telecommunications/ICTs to reduce the digital divide and promote a more inclusive and equal society;

*b)* the rapid technological change in the field of telecommunications and the associated policy, regulatory and infrastructure adaptations required at the national, regional and global levels;

*c)* the consequent need for the widest possible engagement of the ITU membership from around the world to address these matters in the work of the Union;

*d)* that developments in technologies and facilities for the holding of electronic meetings and the further development of electronic working methods (EWM) will enable more open, faster and easier collaboration between participants in the activities of ITU;

*e)* in accordance with the ITU’s Constitution, Convention and General Rules, ITU events and meetings, that occur with face to face participation by the Union's membership, can utilise all of the Union’s rules to take a decision which may, or may not, include voting,

recalling

*a)* Resolution 66 (Rev. Bucharest, 2022) of this conference, on documents and publications of the Union, regarding the electronic availability of documents;

*b)* Resolution 175 (Rev. Bucharest, 2022) of this conference, on telecommunication/ICT accessibility for persons with disabilities, including age‑related disabilities, which resolves to take account of persons with disabilities and persons with specific needs,

recognizing

*a)* that it has been necessary for all ITU meetings to have taken place using Electronic Working Methods (EWM) during the COVID-19 pandemic;

*b)* the considerable development and enhancements in EWM introduced by ITU in the recent period to cope with the subsequence increase in the number of EWM meetings and the number of participants involved;

*c)* that electronic participation has been producing significant benefits for the Union's membership, by reducing travel costs, and has facilitated wider participation particularly from developing countries;

*d)* that there are three types of general meetings that can take place in the ITU: i) physical meetings where most participants attend physically and can take decisions but are supported by remote participants who cannot take part in decision making; ii) virtual meetings where all participants attend virtually and can currently take decisions by consensus and iii) hybrid meetings where some participants attend the meeting physically and others attending virtually on an equal footing;

*e)* that numerous ITU meetings are already available as audio and video webcasts and that use of videoconferencing, audio conference calls, real-time captioning and web-based collaboration tools for electronic participation in certain types of meetings have been advanced in meetings of the Sectors and the General Secretariat;

*f)* the budgetary difficulty that delegates from many countries, and in particular developing countries, have in travelling to participate in face‑to-face ITU meetings;

*g)* that the regional offices are an extension of ITU as a whole and, therefore, EWM will serve to build up the effectiveness of the Union's activities, including project implementation;

*h)* that the expected role of the regional offices is essential in order to fully comply with the basic mandates of the Union and, to this end, it is necessary that these offices be able to rely on electronic meetings with Member States which being accessed over the web are more affordable,

recognizing further

*a)* the annual reports by the Secretary-General to the ITU Council on the implementation of this resolution;

*b)* the report from the 2022 session of the Council to this conference;

*c)* the financial, legal, procedural and technical difficulties of providing remote participation to all, particularly with respect to:

– the difference in time zones among regions and in relation to Geneva, and particularly with the Americas and Asia-Pacific regions;

– the costs of infrastructure, broadband, equipment, software applications, and staff, especially in developing countries;

– the rights and legal status of remote participants and chairmen in the different general types of meetings;

– the limitation in terms of formal procedures available to remote participants in comparison with physically present participants;

– the limitations of the EWM in the face of increased participation;

– the telecommunication infrastructure limitations in some countries due to unstable or inadequate connections;

– increased accessibility for people with disabilities and specific needs,

noting

*a)* that the existence of different types of electronic meetings, with well-documented rules and procedures, will help ITU in widening the involvement of potential stakeholders, both member and non-member experts, particularly from developing countries, who are unable to participate in face‑to-face meetings;

*b)* that EWM has made important contributions to facilitating the work of Sector groups, such as rapporteur groups, and of Council working groups, and that work, such as the development of texts, has been progressed in various parts of the Union through electronic communications;

*c)* that different modes of participation are suitable for different types of meetings;

*d)* that managing electronic meetings from the regional offices can facilitate regional coordination, in order to promote greater participation by Member States in the work of the study groups of the three Sectors;

*e)* that there needs to be a coordinated and harmonized approach to the technology used,

emphasizing

*a)* that there is a need for procedures across the different general types of meetings to ensure fair and equitable participation by all;

*b)* that electronic meetings can contribute to bridging the digital divide;

*c)* that the implementation of different general types of meetings is beneficial to ITU's role in leading coordination on ICTs and climate change, and on accessibility,

resolves

1 that ITU should continue to develop its facilities and capabilities for remote participation by electronic means in appropriate meetings of the Union, including working groups created by the Council;

2 that ITU develops a High-Level Framework for the management and governance of virtual and hybrid electronic meetings supported by the detailed procedures, rules and guidelines for its application;

3 that the Union continue to develop EWM, within budget availability, for the participation of persons with disabilities and persons with specific needs, which may include, *inter alia*, captioning for the hearing-impaired, audioconferencing for the visually impaired, and webconferencing for persons with restricted mobility, as well as solutions and facilities to address other similar challenges;

4 that the Union further study the impact of remote participation on existing rules of procedure;

5 that ITU should provide facilities and capabilities for EWM at ITU meetings, workshops and training courses, particularly to assist developing countries that have bandwidth limitations and other constraints;

6 to encourage e‑participation of developing countries in meetings, workshops and training by providing simplified facilities and guidelines, and by waiving, within the appropriations that the Council is empowered to authorize, any expenses for those participants, other than the local call or Internet connectivity charges,

instructs the Secretary-General, in consultation and collaboration with the Directors of the three Bureaux

1 to take account of the High-Level Framework for the management and governance of electronic meetings and the detailed procedures, rules and guidelines, including the appropriate governance and management for, virtual and hybrid meetings as elaborated by Council and the Sector Advisory Groups taking into account their legal, technical, security and financial implications;

2 to ensure that their implementation is technology neutral to the greatest extent possible, and cost effective, in order to allow as broad participation as possible, satisfying the necessary security requirements;

3 to identify and review the costs and benefits of the action items on a regular basis;

4 to involve the advisory groups in the further evaluation of the use of electronic meetings, including the legal aspects;

5 to report to the Council on an ongoing basis on the developments made with regard to electronic meetings, in order to assess progress in their use within ITU;

6 to report to the Council on the feasibility of extending the use of languages in electronic meetings,

instructs the Secretary-General

to share information about developments and progress made with regard to electronic meetings with the United Nations and other specialized agencies, for their consideration,

instructs the Directors of the Bureaux

to develop, in consultation with the Sector advisory groups, detailed procedures, rules and guidelines for the management of and participation in virtual and hybrid meetings taking into account the specific requirements based on their Sector’s working methods and rules,

instructs the ITU Council

1 to develop a High-Level Framework for the management and governance of virtual and hybrid electronic meetings taking into account the guidance in Annex 1;

2 to consider the financial requirements to implement this resolution and allocate the necessary financial resources, within the limits of the resources available and consistent with the financial and strategic plans;

3 to Report to the Plenipotentiary Conference 2026 on the implementation of this Resolution.

ANNEX 1 TO RESOLUTION 167 (Rev. Bucharest, 2022)

Guidelines for the elaboration of High-Level Framework for the management and governance of virtual and hybrid electronic meetings

The Framework to be developed should set out the high-level requirements for the management and guidance of virtual and hybrid meeting which will apply to each Sector and should include, *inter alia*:

* Adequate notice of meetings with a clear statement whether a particular meeting is physical, virtual or hybrid.
* Clarity on the rights of members who participate remotely in a particular meeting, in particular, if they are able to engage in decision-making.
* Virtual participants being able to have the opportunity to engage in offline discussions.
* Practical measures to support equitable opportunities for participation by all administrations.
* Flexibility in the length and timing of meetings bearing in mind the time zones of participants.
* That chairs of meetings are fully supported, so they can effectively manage remote participation fairly.
* All participants are given the same opportunity to engage in meetings including those with disabilities and specific needs.
* Where feasible, that ITU interpretation services are provided.

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