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| **Agenda item: PL** | **Document C23-ADD/6-E** |
| **2 October 2023** |
| **Original: Russian** |
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| Contribution from the Russian Federation | |
| DATES AND DURATION OF THE 2024, 2025 AND 2026 SESSIONS OF THE COUNCIL, THE CLUSTERS OF COUNCIL WORKING GROUPS AND EXPERT GROUPS FOR THE SAME PERIOD AND THE TELECOMMUNICATION STANDARDIZATION ADVISORY GROUP MEETING IN JANUARY 2024 | |
| **Purpose**  The Administration of the Russian Federation invites the ITU Council to examine the comments on the ITU Secretary-General’s proposed dates and duration of the 2024, 2025 and 2026 sessions of the Council and of clusters of Council working groups and expert groups for the same period and the Telecommunication Standardization Advisory Group meeting in January 2024, and to approve recommendations to the Secretary-General in that regard.  **Action required by the Council**  The Council is invited to consider the proposals contained in this contribution and adopt the corresponding recommendations to the Secretary-General.  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  **References**  *Report by the Secretary-General on Council improvement (Document* [*С23/32*](https://www.itu.int/md/S23-CL-C-0032/en)*) Report by the Secretary-General on proposed dates and duration of the 2024, 2025 and 2026 sessions of the Council along with the proposed dates of clusters of Council working groups and expert groups for the same period (Document* [*С23/2*](https://www.itu.int/md/S23-CL-C-0002/en)*) Document* [*С23-ADD/2*](https://www.itu.int/dms_pub/itu-s/md/23/c23add/c/S23-C23ADD-C-0002!!MSW-E.docx) *to the 2023 additional session of the Council* | |

# 1 General

During the 2023 regular session of the ITU Council, the secretariat proposed to consider shortening the duration of the 2024, 2025 and 2026 sessions of the Council and holding every year one cluster of Council working groups and expert groups (CWGs and EGs) in a virtual format.[[1]](#footnote-1)

These proposals prompted lively debate, which did not lead to consensus on whether it was appropriate to decide to shorten the duration of the three forthcoming sessions of the Council or to hold one CWG and EG cluster virtually.

Document [C23-ADD/2](https://www.itu.int/dms_pub/itu-s/md/23/c23add/c/S23-C23ADD-C-0002!!MSW-E.docx) to the 2023 additional session of the Council contains the secretariat’s updated proposed dates and duration of the 2024, 2025 and 2026 sessions of the Council along with the proposed dates and formats of CWG and EG clusters for the same period.

The Russian Federation welcomes the secretariat’s proposal to hold the 2024, 2025 and 2026 sessions of the Council over nine days and on dates which have taken into account major religious periods and the availability of the International Conference Centre Geneva (CICG) during the demolition and early construction phase of the headquarters premises project.

Document [C23-ADD/2](https://www.itu.int/dms_pub/itu-s/md/23/c23add/c/S23-C23ADD-C-0002!!MSW-E.docx) to the 2023 additional session of the ITU Council, published on 18 September 2023, contains a proposal to hold a working group cluster from 22 January to 2 February 2024, while [Collective Letter 3](https://www.itu.int/dms_pub/itu-t/md/22/tsag/col/T22-TSAG-COL-0003!!MSW-E.docx) of the Telecommunication Standardization Bureau (TSB), dated 22 September 2023, established the dates of the Telecommunication Standardization Advisory Group (TSAG) meeting as 22-26 January 2024.

# 2 Rationale

2.1 Given the intense nature of discussions surrounding the secretariat’s proposal to shorten the duration of Council sessions and hold one CWG and EG cluster virtually and the divergent views of those participating in the debate during the 2023 summer session of the Council, as well as the fact that any such decision would affect all Member States of the Union, it would be appropriate to carry out consultations on the need for and appropriateness of such a decision on a broader, more transparent basis, involving all ITU Member States and in accordance with No. 28 of Article 3 of the ITU Constitution, rather than with the limited number of Council Member States.

2.2 An analysis of Document [C23-ADD/2](https://www.itu.int/dms_pub/itu-s/md/23/c23add/c/S23-C23ADD-C-0002!!MSW-E.docx) shows that the proposed dates for the CWG cluster in January 2024 overlap with those of the TSAG meeting.

This demonstrates a continuing trend of holding CWG meetings and Sector advisory group meetings in parallel. The Plenipotentiary Conference brought attention to this practice in *decides* 13 of Decision 11 (Rev. Bucharest, 2022) by deciding that meetings of CWGs shall not be held during major conferences and assemblies of the Union, or during meetings of the Sector advisory groups. Thus, the proposal to hold the CWG cluster from 22 January to 2 February 2024 runs counter to Decision 11 (Rev. Bucharest, 2022) of the Plenipotentiary Conference.

# 3 Proposal

In view of the above, the Russian Federation proposes that the Council:

1) if a decision affecting all Member States of the Union needs to be taken, carry out consultations on the need for and appropriateness of such a decision on a broader, more transparent basis, involving all ITU Member States and in accordance with No. 28 of Article 3 of the Constitution, rather than with the limited number of Council Member States;

2) recommend that the Secretary-General consult with TSB in order to avoid any overlap of dates for the CWG and TSAG meetings.

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1. The Secretary-General's report on Council improvement (Document [С23/32](https://www.itu.int/md/S23-CL-C-0002/en)) in the section on the proposed steps towards a results-focused Council, states, *inter alia*, “With an enhanced preparatory process and a more focused agenda, the secretariat would suggest consideration be given to reducing the duration of the Council (e.g. six days)”, including a reference to Document [C23/2](https://www.itu.int/md/S23-CL-C-0002/en).

   The Secretary-General's report on the proposed dates and duration of the 2024, 2025 and 2026 sessions of the Council along with the proposed dates of clusters of Council working groups and expert groups for the same period (Document [C23/2](https://www.itu.int/md/S23-CL-C-0002/en)) recommends progressively reducing the duration of forthcoming ordinary Council sessions, and every year organizing one of the clusters of Council working groups and expert groups (CWGs and EGs) to be held in a virtual format. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)