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|  | **Document EG-ITRs-1/3** |
| **18 September 2023** |
| **English only** |
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| Contribution from Hill | |
| PROPOSAL FOR WORKING METHODS AND WORK PLAN OF EG-ITRS | |
| **Purpose**  Discussion  **Action required**  The document is submitted to EG-ITRs **for discussion**.  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  **Reference**  [**EG-ITRs-1/1 : Draft Agenda**](https://www.itu.int/md/S23-EGITRS1-C-0001/en) | |

**Background**

1. Items 3 and 4 of the Draft Agenda of the first meeting of the ITR-EG are:

3. Discussion on working methods and terms of reference of EG-ITRs, based on PP Res. 146 (Rev. Dubai, 2022) and Council Res. 1379 (Mod. 2023), based on the contributions received

4. Discussion of the work plan of EG-ITRs, taking into account the contributions received

2. This contribution proposes working methods and a work plan for the EG-ITR, based on its Terms of Reference.

3. Council Resolution 1379 (modified 2023) “*resolves that that an Expert Group on the International Telecommunication Regulations (EG-ITRs), open to the ITU Member States and Sector Members, be reconvened to continue consideration of issues relating to the ITRs, including their review, with the Terms of Reference shown in Annex 1 of this resolution*” [[1]](#footnote-1).

4. The term review is defined as follows in various dictionaries:

Cambridge: to think or talk about something again, in order to make changes to it or to make a decision about it[[2]](#footnote-2)

Webster-Merriam: to go over or examine critically or deliberately[[3]](#footnote-3)

Collins: If you review a situation or system, you consider it carefully to see what is wrong with it or how it could be improved[[4]](#footnote-4)

Britannica: to look at or examine (something) carefully especially before making a decision or judgment[[5]](#footnote-5)

5. The authoritative French version of the cited Council Resolution uses the term “examen”. That has a similar connotation to the definitions of “review” cited above. For example, Larousse defines the verb “*examiner*” as “*étudier attentivement, minutieusement quelque chose*”[[6]](#footnote-6), which means “to study something carefully, minutely”. The definition in the French dictionary Le Robert is similar[[7]](#footnote-7).

6. The work of the current ITR-EG is specified in its Terms of Reference:

2 Taking into consideration the work of the previous two Expert Groups, the review may consider, among others:

a) new trends in telecommunications/ICT and emerging issues in international telecommunications/ICT environment which may impact the ITRs,

b) empirical data on the current use of the ITRs by operating agencies and/or administrations and the proportion of global telecommunication services which now rely on the ITRs, and

c) the relevance of the ITRs which “consist of high-level guiding principles” in the current telecommunication/ICT environment.

7. As stated in our previous contribution, [EG-ITRs-1/2](https://www.itu.int/md/S23-EGITRS1-C-0002/en):

1. In our view, some provisions of the ITRs (whether the 1988 version or the 2012 version) are no longer useful or appropriate.
2. All international telecommunication services rely on the ITRs to some extent.
3. Most operating agencies do not rely directly on the ITRs, because the ITRs is a treaty that binds states.
4. The 2012 ITRs include provisions on new issues, for which binding treaty-level provisions have been proposed in trade negotiations, in particular regarding spam and cybersecurity.
5. In our view, the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in international telecommunications network is an emerging issue that might merit discussion in the context of the ITRs. Indeed, the September 2023 G20 Declaration[[8]](#footnote-8) states in its paragraph 61.ii: “[We] Will pursue a pro-innovation regulatory/governance approach that maximizes the benefits and takes into account the risks associated with the use of AI.”

8. We propose that the ITRs be reviewed in the context of the above considerations, see below.

9. Further, the cited September 2023 G20 Declaration mentions new emerging issues which might merit discussion in ITU in the context of the ITRs. In particular, paragraph 56 of that Declaration refers to building a Digital Public Infrastructure; and paragraph 65 commits to halve the digital gender gap by 2030. Thus discussions on measures to build a digital public infrastructure and/or to reduce the digital gender gap might be appropriate in the context of the review of the ITRs.

**Proposal**

10. In light of the above, the following work plan is proposed for the EG-ITRs:

1. Review the ITRs by:
   1. Inviting contributions on:
      1. Which, if any, provisions of the ITRs (whether the 1988 version or the 2012 version) are no longer relevant.
      2. Which, if any, provisions of the ITRs should be modified in light of current developments – such as discussions in trade forums on issues such as spam and cybersecurity – in order to ensure that the ITRs continue to provide relevant high-level guiding principles in the current telecommunication/ICT environment.
      3. New and emerging issues for which new provisions should be added to the ITRs, such as the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) for international telecommunications networks, and/or building a digital public infrastructure, and/or bridging the digital gender divide.
   2. At each meeting, consider and discuss the contributions received, summarize them, and document either consensus or divergent views.
2. Agree a report to PP, transmitted via Council, on consensus and divergent views.

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1. <https://www.itu.int/md/S23-CL-C-0121/en> [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/review> [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/review> [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. <https://www.collinsdictionary.com/dictionary/english/review> [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. <https://www.britannica.com/dictionary/review> [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. <https://www.larousse.fr/dictionnaires/francais/examiner/31942> [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. <https://dictionnaire.lerobert.com/definition/examiner> [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. <https://www.g20.org/en/media-resources/documents/doc-outcomes/> [↑](#footnote-ref-8)