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| PLENARY MEETING | Addendum 14 toDocument 46-E |
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| Member States of the Inter-American Telecommunication Commission (CITEL) |
| Proposed modification to WTSA-12 Resolution 70 - Telecommunication/information and communication technology accessibility for persons with disabilities |
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| **Abstract:** | CITEL supports Accessibility in the ITU-T standardization process for persons with disabilities, older persons with age related disabilities and those with specific needs. The proposed changes to Resolution 70 are in order to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the ITU-T to create effective accessibility standards and mainstream standards that include accessibility features. |

Introduction

There has been a tremendous amount of work done in standardizing accessibility for persons with disabilities, older persons, and age related disabilities. For example, through member contributions, technical papers helped the ITU-T conduct accessible meetings and facilitate remote participation for persons with disabilities to participate meetings remotely. Another example was the new recommendation that standardized accessibility vocabulary to provide standards writers clear terms and definitions for writing standards. Now that that the JCA-AHF (joint coordination activity on accessibility and Human Factors) has come under TSAG, it covers accessibility needs for the entire ITU-T sector.

Proposal

CITEL proposed revisions to Resolution 70 improve the effectiveness and efficiency in how persons with disabilities are included in the standardization process. The modifications to Resolution 70, bring to date references of related recommendations technical papers and other citations.

MOD IAP/46A14/1

RESOLUTION 70 (REV. HAMMAMET, 2016)

Telecommunication/information and communication technology
accessibility for persons with disabilities

(Johannesburg, 2008; Dubai, 2012; Hammamet, 2016)

The World Telecommunication Standardization Assembly (Hammament, 2016),

recognizing

*a)* Resolution 175 (Rev. Busan, 2014) of the Plenipotentiary Conference, on telecommunication/information and communication technology (ICT) accessibility for persons with disabilities, including age-related disabilities;

*b)* progress made and ongoing work in ITU including its three Sectors;

*c)* the mandate of and work carried by ITU, in particular actions of the ITU-T Joint Coordination Activity on Accessibility and Human Factors (JCA-AHF) actions to increase cooperation outside groups such as with other United Nations organizations and activities, and specialized agencies and activities, in order to raise awareness about ICT accessibility in the framework of standardization, and ITU-T actions aimed at upholding JCA-AHF;

*d)* studies under ITU-T Question 4/2, on human factors‑related issues for improvement of the quality of life through international recognizing the inclusion of human factors in recommendations and technical papers;

*e)* studies under ITU‑T Question 26/16, on accessibility to multimedia systems and services, including all Recommendations and technical papers related to accessibility;

*f)* studies under Question 2/20 on accessibility to Internet of Things and Smart Cities and including smart homes for independent living;

*g*) studies under Question 7/1 of the ITU Telecommunication Development Sector (ITU‑D), on access to telecommunication services for people with disabilities, older persons and those with specific needs;

*h)* ongoing work in the ITU Radiocommunication Sector (ITU‑R) regarding compatibility for wireless hearing aids with spectrum interference;

*i)* the publication by the Telecommunication Standardization Advisory Group (TSAG) of the guide for ITU study groups – "Considering End-User Needs in developing Recommendations";

*j)* the continuation of the JCA-AHF under TSAG for the purposes of awareness-raising, advice, assistance, collaboration, coordination and networking with outside groups as per its ToR;

*k)* the activity carried out by the Internet Governance Forum Dynamic Coalition on Accessibility and Disability (DCAD) sponsored by the Director of the Telecommunication Standardization Bureau (TSB), and the partnership between ITU‑T and DCAD to maximize the benefits for all sectors of the global community of electronic communications and online information through the Internet,

considering

*a)* that Article 9, on accessibility, of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRDP), which entered into force on 3 May 2008, provides as follows: "To enable persons with disabilities to live independently and participate fully in all aspects of life, States Parties shall take appropriate measures to ensure to persons with disabilities access, on an equal basis with others, to the physical environment, to transportation, to information and communications, including information and communications technologies and systems, and to other facilities and services open or provided to the public, both in urban and in rural areas. These measures, which shall include the identification and elimination of obstacles and barriers to accessibility";

*b)* that §§ (2)(g) and (2)(h) of the same article of that Convention requires that States Parties take appropriate measures:

i) 9(2)(g) "to promote access for persons with disabilities to new information and communications technologies and systems, including the Internet";

ii) 9(2)(h) "to promote the design, development, production and distribution of accessible information and communications technologies and systems at an early stage, so that these technologies and systems become accessible at minimum cost",

considering further

*a)* that the World Health Organization estimates that more than one billion of the world's population live with some form of disability, of whom almost 200 million experience considerable difficulty in their daily lives, and it is to be expected that, in the future, disabilities will rise because of the increasing population of older persons and the risk that disability is greater among older persons;

*b)* that over the past 60 years, the approach to disability adopted by United Nations agencies, and by many Member States (through a changed emphasis in their laws, regulations, policies and programmes), has moved from a health and welfare perspective to an approach based on human rights, which recognizes that people with disabilities are people first, and that society places barriers upon them as opposed to their disabilities, and which includes the goal of full participation in society by persons with disabilities (Resolution 175 (Guadalajara, 2010));

*c)* that maximizing the accessibility and usability of telecommunication/ICT services, products and terminals through universal design will increase their uptake by persons with disabilities and older persons, and thereby increase revenues;

*d)* that United Nations General Assembly Resolution A/RES/61/106 adopting the Convention on the rights of persons with disabilities requests the Secretary-General (§ 5) "… to implement progressively standards and guidelines for the accessibility of facilities and services of the United Nations system, taking into account relevant provisions of the Convention, in particular when undertaking renovations";

*e)* the importance of cooperation between governments, the private sector and relevant organizations to promote affordable access possibilities,

recalling

*a)* § 18 of the Tunis Commitment, made at the second phase of the World Summit on the Information Society (Tunis, 2005): "We shall strive unremittingly, therefore, to promote universal, ubiquitous, equitable and affordable access to ICTs, including universal design and assistive technologies, for all people, especially those with disabilities, everywhere, to ensure that the benefits are more evenly distributed between and within societies, …"[[1]](#footnote-1)1;

*b)* the Phuket Declaration on Tsunami Preparedness for Persons with Disabilities (Phuket, 2007), which emphasizes the need for inclusive emergency warning and disaster management systems using telecommunication/ICT facilities based on open, non-proprietary, global standards,

taking into account

*a)* the activities of the ITU-T study groups in charge of accessibility to ICTs: ITU-T Study Group 16 (Multimedia coding, systems and applications), which is the lead study group on telecommunications/ICT accessibility for persons with disabilities, and ITU-T Study Group 2 (Operational aspects of service provision and telecommunication management) for the part relating to human factors;

*b)* the joint ITU and G3ict release of the Model ICT accessiblity Policy report Novemeber 2014;

*c)* various other international, regional and national efforts to develop or revise guidelines and standards for telecommunication/ICT accessibility, compatibility and usability by persons with disabilities,

resolves

1 that ITU-T Study Groups and JCA-AHF shall continue giving high priority to work on the relevant Questions, in accordance with the accessibility guidelines – facilitating the implementation of new software, services and proposals that enable all persons with disabilities, including persons with age-related disabilities, to effectively use telecommunication/ICT and Recommendation ITU‑T F.790 on telecommunication accessibility guidelines for older persons and persons with disabilities, and F.791: Accessibility terms and definitions;

2 to ask all ITU-T study groups to utilize the 2006 FSTP-TACL Telecommunications Accessibility Checklist, for standards writers which makes it possible to incorporate the principles of universal design and accessibility;

4 that ITU-T employ the technical papers FSTP-AM “Guidelines for accessible meetings” and FSTP-ACC-RemPart “Guidelines for supporting remote Participation for all as appropriate to make it possible for Persons with Disabilities to be able to attend ITU meetings and events;

5 that regular scheduled ITU workshops be held to inform and raise awareness about the progress of accessibility work and the results achieved by the study group Questions in charge of ICT accessibility before the next world telecommunication standardization assembly,

invites Member States and Sector Members

1 to develop, within their national legal frameworks, guidelines or other mechanisms to enhance the accessibility, compatibility and usability of telecommunication/ICT services, products and terminals, using ITU-T standards and technical papers and ITU/G3ict Model ICT Accessibility Policy report November 2014;

2 to consider introducing telecommunication relay services[[2]](#footnote-2)2 to enable persons with hearing and speech disabilities to utilize telecommunication services that are functionally equivalent to telecommunication services for persons without disabilities;

3 to participate actively in accessibility-related studies in ITU‑T, ITU‑R and ITU‑D, and to encourage and promote self‑representation by persons with disabilities in the standardization process so as to ensure

their experiences, views and opinions are taken into account in all the work of study groups;

4 to encourage the provision of differentiated and affordable service plans for persons with disabilities in order to increase the accessibility and usability of telecommunications/ICT for these persons;

5 to encourage the development of applications for telecommunication products and terminals to increase the accessibility and usability of telecommunications and ICTs for persons with visual, auditory, verbal and other physical and mental disabilities;

6 to encourage regional telecommunication organizations to contribute to the work on accessibility and consider implementing the results achieved in ITU study groups and workshops,

instructs the Director of the Telecommunication Standardization Bureau

to report to the ITU Council on the implementation of this resolution,

invites the Director of the Telecommunication Standardization Bureau

1 to identify and document good practice for accessibility in the field of telecommunications and ICTs for dissemination among ITU Member States and Sector Members;

2 to review the accessibility of ITU‑T services and facilities and consider making changes, where appropriate, pursuant to United Nations General Assembly Resolution 61/106, UNCRPD and to report to the Council on these matters;

3 to work collaboratively on accessibility-related activities with the Directors of the Radiocommunication Bureau (BR) and the Telecommunication Development Bureau (BDT), in particular concerning awareness and mainstreaming of telecommunication/ICT accessibility standards, reporting findings to the Council as appropriate;

4 to work collaboratively on accessibility-related activities with ITU‑D, in particular developing programmes that enable developing countries to introduce services that allow persons with disabilities to utilize telecommunication services effectively;

5 to work specifically on accessibility related activities with ITU-R to rectify current and prevent new barriers to Accessibility;

6 to work collaboratively and cooperatively with other standardization organizations and entities, in particular, in the interest of ensuring that ongoing work in the field of accessibility is taken into account, in order to avoid duplication;

7 to work collaboratively and cooperatively with NGOs that represent persons with disabilities;

8 to contribute to the development of an ITU-wide internship programme for people with disabilities who have expertise in the field of ICTs, so to build their capacity in the standards-making process and to raise awareness within ITU of the needs of persons with disabilities;

9 to continue the JCA-AHF’s accessibility coordination and advisory function within ITU‑T in order to assist the Director of TSB in reporting the findings of the review of ITU‑T services and facilities;

10 to continue providing accessibility services in the meetings organized by ITU-T in order to enable the participation of persons with disabilities in the standardization process,

instructs the Telecommunication Standardization Advisory Group

1 to revise the guide for ITU study groups – "Considering End-User Needs in developing Recommendations"and to update this guide on a regular basis, based on contributions from Member States and Sector Members as well as the ITU T study groups, as appropriate; to further facilitate accessibility for persons with disabilities;

2 to request all ITU study groups to facilitate, in their respective work, the implementation of new software, services and proposals enabling all persons with disabilities, including persons with age-related disabilities and specific needs, to effectively use telecommunication/ICT services, and relevant guidelines for end‑user needs,

instructs the Director of the Telecommunications Standards Bureau

 to report to the ITU Council on the implementation of the this resolution.

1. 1 Geneva Declaration of Principles §§ 13 and 30; Geneva Plan of Action §§ 9 *(e)* and *(f)*, 12 and 23; Tunis Commitment §§ 18 and 20; Tunis Agenda for the Information Society §§ 90 *(c)* and *(e)*. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. 2 Telecommunication relay services enable users of different modes of communication (e.g. text, sign, speech) to interact by providing convergence between the modes of communication, usually through human operators. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)