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| itu_logo | World Telecommunication Standardization Assembly (WTSA-16)Hammamet, 25 October - 3 November 2016 | CCITT/ITU-T 60th Anniversary logo |
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| Member States of the Inter-American Telecommunication Commission (CITEL) |
| PRINCIPLES OF STUDY-GROUP STRUCTURING |
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| **Abstract:** | This contribution presents the current, initial views of CITEL concerning the structure of the ITU Telecommunication Standardization Sector (ITU-T). The contribution is offered to stimulate discussion on possible approaches to the structuring of the ITU-T, which will be addressed by the 2016 World Telecommunication Standardization Assembly (WTSA 16).  |

**Background**

Telecommunications/ICT continues to evolve, and consequently, so must the standards ecosystem. There are numerous standards organizations and fora focused on aspects of telecommunication/ICT systems. No single organization can cover all ground, nor should it try or claim to do so. Focus on specific areas will draw expertise, whereas addressing too many areas may diffuse efforts.

**Discussion**

The exercise of reorganizing the study groups has been carried out at nearly every quadrennial WTSA meeting. Experience has shown that the following principles when applied to determination of the study group structure can enable the development of timely and technically sound standards:

1. The structure should be concise, and give clear guidance to the ITU-T membership on the priorities and goals for the upcoming four years. The structure should link the priorities of the Union and the ITU-T as outlined in the Strategic Plan (Resolution 71), Plenipotentiary Resolutions, and WTSA Resolutions, and mandate of the Study Groups.
2. The structure must take into account the Financial and Operational Plans of the Union, given the current budget climate of fiscal constraint and the budget approved by the ITU Council which is based on the concept of "zero nominal growth", in the amount of the contributory unit. The Union’s limited financial resources necessitate the identification and implementation of efficiency measures as identified in Decision 5, which includes reviewing the number of study group meetings and their duration with a view to reducing costs. Review and consider options to reduce the number of study groups. This implies cost-effective and efficient use of the approved Financial Plan and the Council-approved budget.

1. The structure should provide synergy, address issues such as transparency, efficiency and concentrate on the ITU-T’s established base principles and core areas of work.
2. In order to avoid duplication of work among ITU-T study groups and other sectors within the Union, the structure should minimize overlap and maximize synergy among the work items. Topics and meeting schedules should be organized to encourage effective interaction among groups and participants.
3. The structure should make ITU-T an attractive place to develop international Telecommunication/ICT standards. It should attract new members and participants, as well as maintain existing members.
4. The structure should facilitate effective and efficient development of high-quality international Telecommunication/ICT standards.
5. The structure must support coordination and common approaches at the working level, and provide flexibility in the grouping of work as well as economies for the delegates.
6. The structure should allow dissimilar topics to run independently within one group.
7. The structure should account for potential future technology needs.
8. Groups should provide:
	1. adequate diversity of interests on matters of global relevance;
	2. challenging, interesting, cross-fertilized and sizeable work program;
	3. an adequate gender and regional diversity;
	4. The fulfilment of the needs of developing countries
9. The Questions that define the studies to be executed should reflect broad and ongoing interest of the membership. Questions that have not received contributions at previous two study group meetings should be discontinued.
10. Groups should undertake studies that are limited to those that can have impact on telecommunication/ICT standards.
11. The ITU-T work programme should concentrate on ITU-T’s core competencies as reflected in the goals, objectives and outputs in the Strategic Plan, taking due account of the need to avoid replicating work already being addressed under the competencies of other standards bodies and within ITU, maximizing efficiencies, and establishing mechanisms to enhancing close cooperation and communication with other entities.

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**Recommendation**

CITEL support a structure that is concise and gives guidance to members and participants on the ITU-T’s priorities and goals for the upcoming four years. The principles listed in the Discussion section of this contribution should be used to determine the structure of study groups. CITEL is also of the view that restructuring the telecommunication sector study groups should be sufficiently flexible to allow either a horizontal or vertical structure depending on the requirements and context of the group. Trying to fit a study group into a certain structure for the sake of restructuring, may limit the study group’s flexibility. Although “horizontal” and “vertical” are different structures that may be considered when developing proposals, such proposals should always be measured against the principles listed in the Discussion section of this contribution, along with ITU-T’s overall aim to develop high-quality, relevant, and timely standards, to assess whether they are appropriate for any given situation.