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| ITU logo | INTERNATIONAL TELECOMMUNICATION UNION  **TELECOMMUNICATION STANDARDIZATION SECTOR**  STUDY PERIOD 2017-2020 | | | TSAG-TD819 |
| **TSAG** |
| **Original: English** |
| **Question(s):** | | N/A | | Geneva, 21-25 September 2020 |
| **TD** | | | | |
| **Source:** | | TSB | | |
| **Title:** | | Report of the 19th meeting of the IEC/ISO/ITU World Standards Cooperation (WSC), 21 February 2020, Geneva | | |
| **Purpose:** | | Information | | |
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| **Keywords:** | WSC; |

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**REPORT OF THE 19th MEETING OF THE IEC/ISO/ITU**

**WORLD STANDARDS COOPERATION (WSC)**

**Meeting held at ITU on Friday, 21 February 2020, 10:00-12:00**

List of participants:

**IEC**

President Dr. Yinbiao Shu (remote)

Immediate Past President  Mr. James M Shannon

Vice-President and SMB Chair Dr. Ralph Sporer

General Secretary Mr. Philippe Metzger

Former General Secretary Mr. Frans Vreeswijk

Secretariat Ms. Katharine Fraga

**ISO**

President Mr. Eddy Njoroge

Special Advisor Mr. John Walter

Vice-President (policy) Dr. Scott Steedman

Vice-President (technical management) Ms. Sauw Kook Choy

Secretary-General Mr. Sergio Mujica

Secretariat Mr. Henry Cuschieri

**WHO**

Chief Information Officer Mr. Bernardo Mariano

**ITU**

Secretary-General Mr. Houlin Zhao

Director, Telecommunication Standardization Bureau Dr. Chaesub Lee

WSC Secretary Dr. Bilel Jamoussi

Study Group Councilor, Radiocommunication Bureau Mr. Nelson Malaguti

**Guests/observers**

Development Partner (Standards), Ms. Jayce Leow

Enterprise Singapore

Kenya Bureau of Standards Mr. William Amwayi

**Regrets received from**

ITU Telecommunication Standardization Advisory Group Dr. Bruce Gracie  
(TSAG) Chairman

ITU, Director Radiocommunication Bureau (BR) Mr. Mario Maniewicz

**Agenda item 1: Opening of the meeting**

ITU Secretary-General Mr. Houlin Zhao extended a warm welcome to all participants and highlighted the importance of the longstanding cooperation of IEC, ISO and ITU, cooperation that has enabled IEC, ISO and ITU to deliver a range of common or aligned international standards as well as the ITU-R/ITU-T/ISO/IEC Common Patent Policy and related Guidelines.

**Agenda item 2: Session presentation by Mr. Bernardo Mariano, Chief Information Officer**

**Director, Digital Health and Innovation, World Health Organization**

The ITU Director Telecommunication Standardization Bureau (TSB), Chair of the 19th WSC meeting, welcomed Mr Mariano.

* 1. **Main points of presentation**
* Mr. Mariano presented the four objectives of WHO’s global strategy on digital health recently approved by WHO Executive Board.
* Mr. Mariano noted that the health sector is lagging behind in terms of digital transformation and the associated need for countries to prioritize investments in digital health.
* In highlighting the importance of standardization in maximizing the value of digital health technologies and mitigating related risks, Mr Mariano placed particular emphasis on the importance of interoperability standards.
* Mr. Mariano highlighted the value of ongoing ITU-WHO collaboration to establish a framework and associated processes for the performance benchmarking of ‘AI for Health’ solutions.

**2.2. Identifying ways of furthering collaboration**

Dr. Shu provided some updates on the current situation of the Coronavirus outbreak in China and conveyed the Chinese Government’s appreciation to WHO and the WSC community for their support. Dr. Shu called on all the organizations present to work closely together on standards to combat this health emergency.

The WSC Members proceeded to discuss the need to develop standards to address Coronavirus, with the challenge of responding quickly and effectively.

Besides the socioeconomic impact of the outbreak itself, Mr. Mariano highlighted two main challenges: the virus, and the online spread of inaccurate information. Mr. Mariano raised two points for WSC’s consideration on how to respond to these challenges: a) Compel tech giants to prioritize correct information and b) create standards for consumers. Mr Shannon and Mr Walter echoed the responsibility of finding ways to prevent dissemination of inaccurate information.

**2.3 Other comments on the presentation**

Mr. Mujica reminded WHO to use WSC’s technical committees network to address global health issues.

Mr. Metzger seconded Mr. Mujica’s remark. Referring to Dr. Shu’s statement, he invited WHO to consider how to initiate cooperation with IEC, ISO and ITU on standards against health emergencies.

Dr. Steedman noted the national processes driven by ISO and IEC have the power to achieve consensus on standards that will influence the health care sector. Dr. Steedman added that health standards need to bring rapid changes however, an integrated health care does bring its set of challenges. Dr. Steedman referred to the quality and the history of data sets as two big challenges related to AI and health.

Mr Njoroge shared concerns on the monetization of data and recalled the need to address data misusage while encouraging the use of data for research.

To conclude, Dr. Lee stressed the importance of building trust in digital health technologies and the key role to be played by international standardization in this regard.

**Agenda item 3: Approval of the draft agenda:** document WSC 187

WSC approved the draft agenda.

**Agenda item 4: WSC Workshops**

4.1 Academic Roundtable (IEC lead): document WSC 188

Mr. Vreeswijk introduced document WSC 188, informing that in 2020, IEC will organize the 5th Academic Roundable for first time in Europe, in either in Berlin or Rotterdam. He noted that the topic was still under discussion with the project team who is investigating a common proposal.

Mr. Njoroge expressed concerns over the dropping numbers of attendees over the years. Dr. Steedman pointed to the disconnect between senior academics and standards-related events unless they deal with “hot topics”. Dr. Steedman noted that Academia was well established in Europe, and offered to personally facilitate outreach to members of the research community to ensure higher attendance this year. Mr. Vreeswijk proposed to convey this message back to the group.

4.2 WSC @ G20 Saudi Arabia (ISO lead): document 189

Mr Mujica presented the document 189, and advised that IEC and ISO member SASO were planning a one-day event in Riyadh, on June 28, on the theme of “Standards: A key enabler for Global Trade”. This event will be held on the sidelines of the G20 meetings taking place in Saudi Arabia. WSC took note of this update.

4.3 WSC @ G20 Saudi Arabia (ITU lead):

Dr Jamoussi informed that ITU had been in touch with the Saudi Regulator (CITC) on the opportunity to hold a session on standards, to take place on the sidelines of the Ministers’ G20 meeting 22-23 July 2020 in Riyadh. Dr Jamoussi noted that the slot needed to be confirmed and that discussions were ongoing around three themes: digital health, digital finance and ITS. The proposed uniting theme would be smart cities. Dr. Steedman recommended focusing the session on digital finance indicating that it would be more appropriate to the audience of Ministers. Mr. Sporer noted that the SDGs or sustainable finance might be better fitting themes. In conclusion, it was recommended to not rely on smart cities as the topic to secure the slot.

**Agenda item 5: World Standards Day**

5.1 WSD 2020 “Protecting the planet with standards” (IEC lead): document WSC 190

Mr. Vreeswijk introduced document WSC 190 on World Standards Day 2020 with the proposed theme “Protecting the planet with standards”**.** WSC Members had agreed on the relevance of this theme during the 2019 WSC meeting. Mr. Vreeswijk recalled last year’s video competition, and indicated that this year a poster competition will be organized. Dr. Steedman requested IEC to reword the last sentence of the second paragraph of the document as their focus is currently too limited or to research what initiatives from each organization could be highlighted. To this end, for ISO, he recommended highlighting the success of ISO 50001: Energy management. It was suggested that the text be sent back to the communication team to update it based on the WSC comments.

***Action:***

* IEC to follow-up with the communication team on the request for text revision.

5.2 Theme for 2021 (ISO lead): document WSC 191

Mr Mujica introduced document WSC 191 and proposed three themes for WSC’s consideration:

* Standards for the SDGs
* Standards for diversity
* Standards defend against disasters

The SDGs were deemed most appropriate overarching theme for the three organizations. The WSC agreed to pursue the first option: Standards for the SDGs.

**Agenda item 6:** Opportunities for enhancing cooperation (Lead ISO, ITU, IEC) – for approval: document 192

Mr. Mujica introduced document WSC 192 and noted that the 3 proposals to enhance WSC build on a sense of urgency. He noted the need to move faster and with more concrete programmes and agendas, not just general agendas.

Mr. Njoroge stressed the need for WSC to have more concrete agenda on all levels, from marketing to capacity building. Mr Shannon highlighted the importance of the initiative to enhance cooperation. Dr. Steedman commented that proposal 1 would be a concrete activity, that proposal 2 would mean content creation, and that proposal 3 was a good concept to improve productivity, but delivery might be an issue. Referring to proposal 2, Ms Choy stressed the importance to prioritize topics.

The WSC approved the proposed additional collaboration opportunities, with a view to have them further developed for consideration at the WSC 2021 meeting.

The WSC reviewed and supported the modifications to the revised Terms of Reference, noting that the edits clarify expectations voiced in the past. It was further recommended that the IEC, ISO and ITU Standardization Programme Coordination Group (SPCG) be explicitly mentioned in the activities to enhance cooperation.

It was noted that the revised Terms of Reference need to be approved by the relevant bodies of each of the three organizations.

**Agenda item 7: Three-year rolling plan for WSC activities (ITU lead):** document WSC 193

Dr. Lee introduced document WSC 193 and opened the floor for comments. Mr Mujica noted that one of ISO’s upcoming events, the previously-discussed event in Riyadh being hosted by SASO, was missing from the table. Ms. Choy requested to ensure that the comments provided over the 2019-2020 period were reflected in the 2020-2021 rolling plan. Dr Lee assured that this live document reflects the comments received last year.

***Action***

* ITU to update ISO-led event missing from the table.

**Agenda item 8 Lessons Learned**

The WSC Members agreed on four main lessons learned as follows:

1. Build trust by strengthening the collaboration
2. Sense of urgency
3. The need for a more concrete agenda
4. The need to engage with respective teams at all levels

**Agenda item 9:** **Dates of next meetings:**

Friday 26 February 2021 (IEC) confirmed

Friday 25 February 2022 (ISO) confirmed

**Agenda item 10: Any other business**

Dr Lee informed Members that Dr. Jamoussi will be taking care of WSC coordination within ITU.

Members extended their warm thanks to Mr. Vreeswijk for his contributions on his last WSC meeting.

**Agenda item 11: Close of meeting**

Having concluded all business on the agenda, Dr. Lee thanked all the WSC Members for their active participation and closed the meeting.

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