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| Contact: | Stephen BereauxDeputy to Director BDT & Chief of Dept. BDT / DDR | Tel: +41 22 730 5131E-mail: stephen.bereaux@itu.int  |

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| **Abstract:** | This document summarizes contribution of the ITU Regional Offices to the implementation of the ITU-T four-year rolling operational plan as requested by the Resolution 25 (Rev. Bucharest, 2022) of the ITU Plenipotentiary Conference. |

**1 Introduction: ITU Regional Presence**

ITU has offices in the six BDT regions:

* Africa
* [Americas](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Regional-Presence/Americas/Pages/default.aspx)
* [Arab states](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Regional-Presence/ArabStates/Pages/default.aspx)
* [Asia and the Pacific](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Regional-Presence/asiapacific/Pages/default.aspx)
* [Commonwealth of Independent States](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Regional-Presence/CIS/Pages/default.aspx)
* [Europe](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Regional-Presence/Europe/Pages/default.aspx)

[ITU Regional presence](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Pages/Regional-Presence.aspx) includes thirteen field offices, which include five regional offices in Addis Ababa (Africa), Bangkok (Asia and the Pacific), Brasilia (Americas), Cairo (Arab States), Moscow (CIS countries), the ITU office for Europe situated at ITU headquarters, and eight area offices, located across Africa, Americas and Asia and the Pacific.

The revised Resolution 25 on strengthening the regional presence, mentioned in section 1 below, has enhanced the need for a stronger regional presence.

Regional and area offices play a key role in facilitating discussions on regional matters and in the dissemination of information and results of activities of all three Sectors of the Union and the General Secretariat, while avoiding the duplication of such functions with headquarters, and collaborating with the regional telecommunication organizations to enhance synergies and avoid duplication of activities and efforts.

2 ITU Plenipotentiary Resolution 25 (Rev. Bucharest, 2022)

ITU Plenipotentiary Resolution 25 (Rev. Dubai, 2018) “Strengthening the regional presence” introduces new reporting mandates for the Regional and Area offices to the advisory groups of each Sectors:

“resolves

4          that the regional and area offices should contribute, to the extent practicable, *inter* *alia*, to the annual four-year rolling operational plans of the General Secretariat and of the three Sectors, with content specific to each regional and area office, linked to the strategic plan for the Union for 2020‑2023 and the Buenos Aires Action Plan, then set up and continue to publish the annual plan/events on the ITU website for implementation;”

(…)

ITU Plenipotentiary Resolution 25 (Rev. Bucharest, 2022)

“further resolves

2        that regional offices shall regularly provide reports to the Sector advisory groups, as appropriate, and to inform the Directors of BR and TSB on regional activities related to their respective Sectors”.

It should be noted that Resolution 25 was updated at the ITU Plenipotentiary Conference. Regional Offices will enhance their collaboration and coordination with the TSB on ITU-T issues, in accordance with the revised resolution.

3 TSB mechanisms of coordination with the Regions

At the initiative of the TSB Director, conference calls and face-to-face meetings were organized on a regular basis between the regional and areas offices and the TSB senior management, covering each time overviews, updates, and briefings of activities organized by each TSB department in the various regions.

These coordination activities, as well as the establishment of a TSB Focal Point for the Regions, were conducted keeping in mind the goal of improving coordination and increasing the efficiency of the overall operations, events and activities in the Standardization Sector in each of the Regions.

The use of this coordination mechanism is a tool that has led to a significant improvement in the overall coordination with regional and areas offices in terms of events and activities.

4 Africa – Regional Office for Africa

The ITU Regional Office for Africa and representatives for the Area Offices in Cameroun, Senegal and Zimbabwe have held regular monthly meetings and continued close coordination with TSB on activities carried out in the region.

Through coordination, exchange activities have been implemented by the ITU Office for Africa in collaboration with TSB:

* SG13RG-AFR virtual meeting, 20 October 2022, 11:00 - 17:00 Geneva time
* ITU-T Study Group 3, virtual meeting of Regional Group for Africa (SG3RG-AFR), 2 to 5 May 2022
* ITU-T Study Group 13, 9th meeting of Regional Group for Africa (SG13RG-AFR); Virtual, 20 October 2022
* ITU DFS Security Clinics, 12-14 October 2021 (virtual)
* Study Group 17, virtual meeting of ITU-T Regional Group for Africa (SG17RG-AFR), 28 September 2021
* SG12RG-AFR, virtual, 7 September 2021
* Sustainable Digital Transformation in Africa followed by Meeting of ITU-T SG5 Regional Group for Africa (SG5RG-AFR), 28 September 2021.

The following WTSA preparatory meetings, led by the African Telecommunications Union (ATU), were supported by the Regional Office:

* ATU-4, 27 September-1 October 2021 (virtual meeting) hosted by NCA Ghana

Other areas of collaboration include:

* Exploring synergies with partners like Smart Africa through the working groups on Digital ID, Data protection, e payments, cross borders e-payments, OTT, among others.

Supporting and encouraging collaboration on work of the ITU-T Focus Group on AI for Health, including related AI challenges.

5 Americas – Regional Office for the Americas

The ITU Regional Office for the Americas and its Area Offices, in Chile (South America), Honduras (Central America) & Barbados (Caribbean), have continued close coordination with TSB on all activities carried out in the Americas region.

Monthly coordination calls with the TSB Director and TSB Management team have been held. They were supplemented by consultations at the operational level, wherever relevant or needed.

The following activities are planned or have already been implemented by the ITU Office for the Americas in collaboration with TSB:

**Coordination meeting with subregional telecom organizations**

* COMTELCA: July 2022; Telecom authorities of Mexico, Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, Panama, and Dominican Republic to exchange views on the ways to strengthening the relationship between ITU and COMTELCA and bilaterally between ITU and each country of the listed above.
* WTSA: Communications between CITEL and the TSB were managed by the regional representative during WTSA. CITEL meetings were attended, and relevant information was passed to WTSA Coordination meetings. Bilateral meetings between the TSB Director and delegations from the region were coordinated and informed.

**Accessibility**

* The regional event “Accessible Americas: ICTs for ALL” takes place every year in November and represents a knowledge sharing platform on the development of ICT accessibility in benefit of countries and institutions and provides good practices in digital inclusion. TSB supported the event by providing expertise to the event particularly in the field of Accessibility standards for products and services”.
* The regional event “Accessible Americas: ICTs for ALL” was carried out in Varadero, Cuba, from 29 November to 1st December 2021, although virtually for the most part due to the pandemics.
* In 2022 “Accessible Americas: ICT for ALL” was carried out in Brasilia, Brazil, from 16 November to 18 November 2022, as a presential event.

**Rural Connectivity**

* A presentation on Rural Connectivity, Smart Cities and Smart Villages was given to Universidad Nacional del Altiplano, Peru, in the framework of a Symposium, October 27 and 28, 2022.

#### 6 Arab States - Regional Office for the Arab States

The ITU Regional Office for the Arab has continued its close coordination with TSB on all activities carried out in the Arab region.

Monthly coordination calls with the TSB Director and TSB Management team have been held. These are supplemented by consultations at the operational level, wherever relevant or needed.

The Regional Office promotes TSB activities in the Arab Region and on regular basis through all the regional communications channels including but not limited to, the official regional twitter account and regional member states what’s-up group. In addition, the following activities are planned or have already been implemented by the ITU Office for the Arab in collaboration with TSB:

* Establishment of a Regional ITU IPv6 and IoT Expertise Centre for Arab region in collaboration and with support of Telecommunication and Post Regulatory Authority of Sudan (TPRA), Dec 2021
* Regional Training Workshop on IPv6 and IoT Strategy, Policy and Implementation for Arab States, Khartoum, Sudan, 17-19 May 2022
* Training courses on certified IPv6 and IoT for Arab Region-Silver level, 30 Oct-03 Nov 2022
* Training courses on certified IPv6 and IoT for Arab Region-Gold level, 27 Nov-01 Dec 2022

#### 7 Asia and the Pacific - Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific

The ITU Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific coordinates closely with TSB on activities carried out in the Asia-Pacific region. Monthly coordination calls with the TSB Director and TSB Management team have been held. These are supplemented by consultations at the operational level, wherever relevant or needed. The ITU Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific has also been providing support to the TSB with APT and with regional standardization bodies.

What follows are some of the specific activities that the Regional Office coordinated/assisted TSB with:

**Smart Sustainable Cities**

* Building on the impactful joint presentation of the ITU Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific and TSB colleagues on different aspects of the Smart Sustainable Cities hosted by Brunei online back in June 2020, the discussion in January 2021 as part of the ASEAN Digital Senior Officials' Meeting (ADGSOM), and bilateral presentations in 2021 to Brunei Darussalam, Thailand, and Viet Nam, ITU further sensitized U4SSC to stakeholders in the Asia-Pacific region. The ITU Regional Office facilitated the presentation by the U4SSC Secretariat on U4SSC to 2021-2022 cohort of the Mayors Academy for Sustainable Urban Development, under the module on Smart Cities.
* ITU Regional Office will also present in December 2022 at the ‘**International Conference on Innovation, Technology Transfer and Cooperation for Addressing Climate Change’** hosted by Asian and Pacific Centre for Transfer of Technology (APCTT), a regional institution of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP). The presentation will feature an overview of ITU-T’s work under Study Groups 5 and 20, as well as U4SSC.

**ITU-T SG3 Regional Group for Asia and Oceania (SG3RG-AO) Meeting**

* ITU Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific joined the Regional Standardization Forum (RSF) and the meeting of SG3RG-A), held in India from 8-12 August 2022. The Regional Director provided a keynote address at the RSF.

**Digital Financial Services (DFS) Security Lab**

* ITU Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific has ben facilitating introductory meetings in the region between telecommunications regulators and the DFS Security Lab. Bilateral meetings have been held by DFS Security Lab with telecommunications regulators in Cambodia, Pakistan, and Thailand. Additional meetings are being triangulated further.
* Additionally, security clinics were held with the State Bank of Pakistan in [Apri](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-T/webinars/dfs/sc/20220411/Pages/default.aspx)l and [June](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-T/webinars/dfs/sc/20220601/Pages/default.aspx) 2022.

**Project on Enhancing the Development of Standards and Frameworks for Critical Technologies in Southeast Asia**

* Following consultations with TSB and discussions with the Government of Australia’s Department for Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), the ITU team successfully signed a grant agreement on 4 June 2021 with DFAT on this project, under its Cyber and Critical Tech Cooperation Program. This project was successfully extended in 2022 for the full four year duration and is now slated to end in June 2024.
* The project will enhance the development and implementation of internationally recommended and industry-led critical technology standards, frameworks, policies, and initiatives at regional and national levels across Southeast Asia, which takes into account diverse stakeholders needs. The project’s initial focus will be on the Indonesia, Malaysia. The Philippines, and Thailand, and will also look at the regional context in Southeast Asia.
* Currently, the project is finalizing a research product on gender-sensitive Artificial Intelligence (AI) policy in Southeast Asia. The project has also launched a Women in AI Policy Network in Southeast Asia group, and successfully supported 1 fellow from Thailand to attend WTSA and 1 fellow each from Malaysia and Indonesia to attend WTDC.
* The project also conducted a physical ***Launch and Co--Creation Workshop and Study Tour on AI and The Creation Workshop and Study Tour on AI and The Potential Gender and Social Biases*** in May 2022, with representatives from all four focus countries attending.

**Digital Technology Innovations Series Webinar**

* Following discussions that began in 2020, the ITU has been co-organizing with the Telecommunications Standards Development Society, India (TSDSI) a series of webinars on Digital Technology Innovations. This series was hosted with the support from the Department of Telecommunications, select Ministries of Govt of India, and other partners from the Asia-Pacific region.
* Out of a total of 6 webinars, 3 were held in 2021. The additional 3 were held in 2022, featuring speakers on:
	+ Making a Global Impact in Standards Setting
	+ Terrestrial/ Non Terrestrial Technologies for Rural & Remote Areas
	+ Data Protection and Privacy
* Building on this partnership, ITU also facilitated the presentation by the Chairman of ITU-T Focus Group on Testbeds Federations for IMT-2020 and beyond (FG-TBFxG) at TSDSI’s Technical Deep Dive Conference 2022.

#### 8 Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) - Regional Office for the CIS Region

The ITU Regional Office for the CIS Region has continued close coordination with TSB on all activities carried out in the CIS region during the past year.

During the September 2021 – November 2022 timeframe the Regional Office for the CIS Region participated and contributed to the organization of the following regional events of the ITU-T/TSB:

* Meeting of the ITU-T SG11RG-EECAT, 20 October 2021, St. Petersburg (Russia)

Experts from TSB and ITU-T Study Groups participated in the following activities of the ITU Regional Office for the CIS Region:

* ITU Forum on Future Networks and C&I (St. Petersburg, Russia, 19-22 October 2021)
* ITU Forum “Smart Sustainable Cities: social, economic and governance perspectives” (Minsk, Belarus, 15-16 February 2022)
* Forum “ITU Youth Model” (St. Petersburg, Russia, 27 June – 1 July)

ITU-T SG11 and SG13 experts participate in the ITU-D project “International Research, Development and Testing Centre for new equipment, technologies, and services (IRDTC). Phase 2” which is being implemented in St. Petersburg, Russia.

The ITU Regional Office for the CIS Region is facilitating the engagement of countries in the ITU-T AI for Good and U4SSC programmes.

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#### 9 Europe - ITU Office for Europe

The ITU Office for Europe has continued to coordinate closely with TSB on all ITU-T activities carried out in the Europe region. Monthly coordination calls with the TSB Director and TSB Management team have been held. They were supplemented by consultations at the operational level, wherever relevant or needed. ITU Office for Europe has been providing support to the ITU-T Project Team of CEPT, facilitating TSB contributions to the work of the Project Team as well as CEPT Com-ITU. The ITU Office for Europe has been also engaging with TSB on a series of concrete activities in the region.

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