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ITU PLENIPOTENTIARY CONFERENCE 2014

BUSAN, KOREA

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ROOM B

THIRD MEETING OF COMMITTEE 6

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>> CHAIRMAN: Good afternoon, everyone. If you could please take your seats. We have a shortened session this afternoon. We're required to finish at 3:45 and make our way down to plenary for the second round of the voting.

So if you could please take your seats.

And for information, we now have arrangements for the ad hoc group on Resolution 11, on ITU Telecom World, and that will be meeting in room M at 5:30 p.m. tomorrow afternoon.

I'm sorry. I understand some of the interpreters mentioned the morning. But I confirm that is 5:30 in the afternoon, not in the morning.

Argentina introduced their document just before we broke for lunch on the CITEL document on strategy for the coordination of efforts among the three sectors of the Union. So I'll open the floor for any comments on that contribution.

So no comments from colleagues? If not, we had a suggestion which was a possibility of merging the draft new Resolution with Resolution 72. And I would just like to raise that as a possibility and to see what the reaction would be to that.

>> BRAZIL: That is an interesting proposal, but we have to take into account the workload that we are having already in the second meeting. And we're going to have more in the third meeting. If we have -- we have a lot of drafting groups already. And my personal opinion, we could live with both Resolutions for the moment. It seems like Member States are in favor of the InterAmerican Proposal on the strategy for coordination. So my proposal is that we go with the two Resolutions.

Thank you.

>> CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Brazil. That seems to be the case, unless I have any further requests for the floor.

CITEL?

>> CITEL: Thank you, Madam Chair. As my colleague from Brazil which went before me said -- I'm representing CITEL and we submitted this InterAmerican Proposal. We also agree, perhaps it would be best if we are able to keep both solutions.

While this is a new proposal, it does define specific issues which I believe we could keep in this text separately. And as the colleague from Brazil said, in the interest of not creating more work, increasing the workload, then we have the same opinion as Brazil in this regard.

Thank you, Chairman

>> CHAIRMAN: Thank you. And I think we are all as one in wanting to reduce the workload.

So I see support for the proposal. In that case, we will be able to send the Resolution to the Editorial Committee.

Thank you, everyone.

We now move on to consideration of future Conferences, Assemblies, and Forums of the Union, Resolution 77. And we have three documents. One from the Arab Group. One from the USA, and one that has been referred to PP-14.

So I'll ask Mr. Ba to introduce the document PP-14/56.

Mr. Ba.

>> SECRETARY: Thank you, Madam Chair.

I'm going to try to introduce this document on behalf of the Director of the Department of Conferences and Publications, who is working on the elections, working on the elections this afternoon.

So document PP14/56 is an information document. It is presented for years 2014 to 2017. It's a general schedule of conferences, assemblies and meetings of the Union, which the Conferences and Publications Department has produced for information purposes.

It consolidates all of the events in the various sectors which we have had for the preparation of this document. Member States will consult the WRC which will take place 12-13 November 2014 and the World Radiocommunication Conference which is planned from the 2th to 27th of November 2015. However, this document also presents the planning for conferences from 2014 up until 2017, other than that.

So, Madam, this is an information document to assist the participants to have an idea of the future conferences and so on in the years to come.

Thank you, Madam.

>> CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Mr. Ba. And if I could call on a representative from the Arab Group to introduce document 79A1/5.

>> UNITED ARAB EMIRATES: Thank you very much, Madam Chair.

And good afternoon everyone.

As regards the proposal which was submitted by the Arab States, the Arab Group has put forward modifications to Resolutions 77 and 153. These amendment are the same for these two Resolutions.

As to modifications, we are proposing modifications to Resolution 77 on conferences and Assemblies and forums of the Union from 2015 to 2018. The proposal pertains to regular conferences and Assemblies, periodic meetings of the Union held every four years. Namely, the Plenipotentiary Conference, the WRC, and the Radio Assembly, as well as the WTDC.

We are suggesting that one conference be held per year with the exception of the WRC and the RA. And we propose holding World assemblies at the end of the year, while Council sessions are held during the second quarter of the year.

This is for the following reasons. Holding more than one conference in one year means that participation and preparation for conferences, meetings, preparatory meetings, is required for participants. And for countries, this is a large cost. Then having more than one conference in a year means that the responsibilities of ITU's officials increase, and certain conferences may not be well prepared for, given the various conferences could be held during a relatively short period of time.

So this Resolution would allow us to better prepare for Conferences and Assemblies of the ITU, both on the part of the ITU itself and on the part of Member States. This Resolution would allow us to reduce expenditure for Member States and would allow for balance. The budget would be able to provide for expenditure on one conference only per year.

Finally, with regards to the Council, we believe that it would be better for the Council sessions to be held in April, May and June or July. We believe it would be preferable for the Council sessions to be held during these four months. And each session will decide on the dates of the next session of the Council.

Those are the modifications to Resolution 77, and we recall Resolution 153 of the Plenipotentiary Conference. What I'm proposing is that we also take into account the document submitted by Mr. Ba and considering Resolution 111. When we look at Mr. Ba's document, we note that the next Radio Conference will be held in October or November of 2015 -- from the 2nd to the 27th of November of the WRC. And we will propose that -- and we note that the WTSA -- the Plenipotentiary is going to be held in the last quarter of 2018.

If you allow me here, I have some additions to make to document 56. It was announced that the United Arab Emirates will host the next Plenipotentiary Conference. Please allow me to add the UAE under point 3 of "Decides."

We also have a modification of the date. The agenda for the regional -- under part 2 on the agenda, the Council will decide on these dates, talking to Resolution 153. I would like to add that the Resolution 153 is linked to this subject. This is why I am proposing that we discuss it together with this Resolution.

Thank you, Madam.

>> CHAIRMAN: Thank you, UAE.

Could I ask the United States to introduce document 27A3/2.

>> UNITED STATES OF AMERICA: Thank you, Chairman, and good afternoon everyone.

The US proposals on future Conferences, Assemblies and Forums of the Union, we are proposing to modify Resolution 77. One of the proposals that we're proposing is to align the Resolution 77 time periods with the strategic and the financial plan for the Union. So we would -- we're suggesting that the proposal time periods be 2016 to 2019.

We're also proposing that there should be no more than one Treaty conference in any calendar year and no more than one Sector conference or Assembly in one calendar year. And the events and symposiums of a worldwide character should be limited to no more than one in any calendar year, providing they can be accomplished within the resources and the financial plan. We believe that the World Radio Conference and the Radio Assemblies as articulated in Article 13, number 91 of the constitution, should still be maintained together as proposed.

We're also proposing to have the World Development Conference be held in 2017 and then every four years thereafter. And the reasons for these proposals, we believe that this would save the Union significant financial resources. It would save the Union money.

We also believe that in scheduling these events, we must really think about the financial health of the Union, which must be our utmost importance. And we think that these changes would -- will help us to adequately manage the resources, financial resources as well as conference preparations, and Member States' budgets as well. It would help us to have a more targeted understanding of when we have to plan for these conferences.

We're -- it is our view that having more than one Conference or Assembly causes financial and human resource burdens for the Union.

So we present this proposal for your consideration.

Thank you.

>> CHAIRMAN: Thank you, U.S. I note the proposal from the UAE, that because of the similarity between the issues that they cover, that we consider this issue together with Resolution 111 and with Resolution 153. So if people are open to that or have a comment to make as a suggestion, the floor is open.

I see none. So that is the approach that we will take.

So if I could ask the Arab Group to introduce their document on the scheduling of ITU Conferences and Assemblies, dealing with Resolution -- sorry about that.

So if I could ask Brazil to introduce their document, scheduling of Council sessions and Plenipotentiary Conferences, Resolution 153. Document B/75/5. Thank you, Brazil.

>> BRAZIL: Thank you, Madam Chair. I'd like to present to you the proposal, Brazil proposal 75, number 5. Changes and amendments to Resolution 153 on scheduling of Council sessions and Plenipotentiary Conferences.

Basically, in summary, we are proposing here fixed and predictable periods of the year to hold Council sessions. Resolution 153 as it is right now is contradicting in the sense that it says Council sessions should be held in the last quarter of the year. But the last Council sessions were held in the second to third quarter of the last three years, since 2011. And they have been held successfully, apart from some problems that we have in receiving the audit remarks and the IMAC reports timely for the meeting.

So we have to take that into account.

But the main proposal in the Brazilian contribution is that Council is held in May, June or July, every year. And what are the advantages of that? We saw when we created the CWG on the strategic and financial plan last year, it was held in the middle of the year. Since it was held in the middle of the year, we had more time to hold meetings of the Council Working Group and that was very beneficial to our work.

The second reason is if we have a predictable period of the year for Council sessions, the Council Working Groups will have more time to hold their meetings within Council sessions, so that is another benefit of this proposal.

In summary, these are the main proposals of our contribution. And I put it forward for your consideration. We have to take into account the timely delivery of external audit reports and IMAC. That's the main issue in deciding when Council sessions will be held.

Thank you.

>> CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much, Brazil.

Now I'd like to open the floor for comments on any of the documents that have been introduced. Russian Federation, please.

>> RUSSIAN FEDERATION: Thank you, Madam Chair. We looked through the proposals regarding the holding of Council sessions in the second quarter. We looked at these carefully. And we would like to make an intervention regarding our view on this issue.

The previous sessions of the Council showed that reviews and considerations of financial issues to which the Council devotes a large proportion of its time are quite difficult in the beginning of the year because there are not enough financial documents yet for them to be considered.

And the consideration of financial accounting, for example, accountings for 2014, when you look at them in May 2015, and accounts for the entire year of 2014, come sometime later. It does not allow us to manage the financial aspect of the Union in this regard.

So we're in a difficult situation when it is proposed to hold Council sessions in the second quarter of the year.

Thank you, Madam.

>> CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Russian Federation.

Now I'll ask the Secretariat to respond to some of the issues that have been raised.

>> SECRETARY: Thank you, Madam Chair.

I would like to thank the Delegations for the proposals made. However, as the Distinguished Delegate of Russia noted, we do have a difficulty here, particularly with the external auditor's report. As you know, this year the Council took place in the beginning of May. The external auditor was not yet able to produce the report. That is why we had a final meeting here in Busan last Saturday, in order to be able to present the 2013 accounts.

We also had a discussion recently with the external auditor regarding proposals for the date of the Council. If the Council takes place in the first months of the second quarter, that does pose a problem as regards to availability of these reports. As you know, the financial year of the ITU runs from the 1st of January to the 31st of December. And in accordance with Article 29 of our financial Regulations, the accounts need to be closed and the financial statements provided to the external auditors by the 31st of March of each year. The external auditor will begin his or her work starting from the 1st of April. And they will need at least two months to analyze the accounts of the Union in detail and to produce their report.

This also allows the -- and then the management needs to make comments on these recommendations. This means that if the Council must take place in the first months of the second quarter, that does risk posing a problem and that could mean that the financial reports will not be considered until the next year, which is not a good accounting practice. While the Council can in fact approve its financial plans in the first part of the period under consideration.

As you know, in years where there is a Plenipotentiary, I believe there is a need for six months. The Council needs to be held six months before the beginning of the Conference. And in order to do this, Council could be organized in April. In fact, this year it was organized in May. But we could not have the financial statements as well as the report of the external auditor early enough.

So those are the comments I wish to make before we take a decision regarding the dates of the Council.

Thank you, Madam Chair.

>> CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Mr. Ba. Are there any other views about Council dates? Korea, please.

>> REPUBLIC OF KOREA: Thank you, Madam Chair.

And I'd like to thank you Brazil for your contributions. Regarding the schedule of Council, if the ordinary session of Council is held in or around the second quarter of the year as is suggested, it will be more predictable for staff and ITU members, which helps in preparing.

As the Russian Federation and Mr. Ba just mentioned, it would be desirable for the Council to have the external audit reports on ITU's finances on the table to review the activities of the previous year during the Council meeting. And scheduling the sessions in the second half of the year would make the meetings more effective.

I'd like us to schedule the Council meeting at the earliest possible time of the year with the audit report in our hands.

Thank you.

>> CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Repubic of Korea.

Mali, please.

>> MALI: Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

We join previous speakers. We also think we have to take another look at when Council is held. And we have heard Mr. Ba's comments. Perhaps Council could be held as of July, the second half of the year, as the Republic of Korea just proposed. Thus Mr. Ba's position and that of certain administrations would be satisfied. At each session of Council, we have this problem with the examination of the reports of the external auditor. So what about starting from the month of July, July or August? This period isn't a problem in terms of proposals from other administrations, because at least we've got the month of July which is common to a certain number of proposals.

So I think everybody could perhaps come to an agreement on July.

>> CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much, Mali.

Are there any views about Mali's suggestion about July? United Arab Emirates.

>> UNITED ARAB EMIRATES: Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

It would be difficult for us to specify a month for the Council meetings. These meetings are very long. They usually last two weeks. If we decide on one specific month, that causes several difficulties to us. First of all, we have religious holidays, and then there are other related issues.

Maybe we could find a solution on the basis of the financial reports mentioned by Mr. Ba. When I presented the Arab proposal, we took into account the meetings which Council held in the past, and we found that most of those meetings -- sessions of Council were held towards the middle or the end of the second quarter. Some sessions were held in April. So there could be a small group convened to examine this issue, perhaps they could come up with a solution, especially as regards the financial reports which might not be ready if the meeting is held at the beginning of the second half of the year.

>> CHAIRMAN: Thank you, UAE.

Brazil, please.

>> BRAZIL: Thank you, Madam Chair. Yes, we need to take into account the Resolution that says that we should avoid scheduling meetings during religious holidays.

And the problem with the original Resolution 153 was that there was this exception in Plenipotentiary years. So in order to solve that issue of the exceptions, I think that the text in the "Resolves" section should be more flexible.

If you look at the Brazilian proposal, "resolves" 2 says the Council in principle should hold the ordinary session in the second quarter. That was a proposal, but we also put in the reasons that we came here to clarify what was the best for the Secretariat and for the Member States, in terms of receiving the reports that we need to analyze at Council timely. So it's clear from Mr. Ba's clarifications that we cannot have the ordinary Council sessions outside of PP years before June. So if we give more flexibility to the "Resolves" section, "the Council shall hold the ordinary session in the second/third quarter of each year," we would be dealing with exceptions in the PP years.

And I'm sorry, but I forgot to mention another part of the Brazilian proposal, which is scheduling three following sessions of Council, for the subsequent three years. This is an important part of our contribution, and it's an idea that has been discussed at Council in the last period. And for us it's a very interesting idea, because it gives us more information to be able to plan better for each Council session.

So, in summary, the proposal is in the Brazilian text, and everywhere we read "second quarter" it would read "second/third quarter." And we still have to discuss the issue of scheduling three Council sessions in a following manner.

Thank you.

>> CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Brazil.

Mali, please.

>> MALI: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. First, Mali didn't say it had to be in July, we just said that was a period which begins in July, which would be a good time. We weren't saying that it had to be July exactly.

As for the proposal from Brazil, well we think that's also interesting. I mean, that does seem to coincide with many proposals, second or third quarter. And we'd like to know what the Secretariat thinks about this.

The problem is to have the report of the external auditor available. And so we would like to have the Secretariat's views on this proposal.

Thank you.

>> CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Mali.

Czech Republic.

>> CZECH REPUBLIC: Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Having heard the comments and the introduction of the documents, which we are grateful for, we also would like to support the Brazilian and Mali's proposal. And having no special ad hoc group on this issue, we think that it is good to resolve it in cooperation with the General-Secretariat.

Thank you.

>> CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

Now I'd like to call upon the Russian Federation.

>> RUSSIAN FEDERATION: Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

In principle, we have no difficulties with having the second or third quarter, but we think it's important that it should also be recorded, "provided that we have available for analysis the external auditor's documents." If that condition is fulfilled, then we can resolve financial issues.

Thank you.

>> CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Russian Federation.

The UAE, please.

>> UNITED ARAB EMIRATES: Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

On Brazil's point, that is to decide at each of the sessions the date of the next three sessions be set, for this proposal we participated in Council this year, last year, and the year before, and we all noticed that it was difficult to reach agreement on a specific date for Council. We decided Council would decide on the next session. This is also reflected in the proposal from the Arab Group.

If you think we could create an ad hoc group, the ad hoc group could discuss this issue.

The difficulty is setting the dates. Even if dates are set, they will be modified. Perhaps we could write a text. But it has to be a flexible text to enable Council to change dates if necessary. Otherwise, I'm afraid we won't be able to decide on the next three sessions of Council following a given session, following the session after Plenipotentiary.

Thank you.

>> CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

I'll ask Mr. Ba for his views, noting that there seems to be general agreement that the availability of external audit and other necessary financial reports are very necessary in setting a date for the Council. And also that there needs to be some flexibility to take account of other considerations, like the scheduling of religious holidays in a particular year.

So Mr. Ba.

>> SECRETARY: Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

As I said a little earlier, the external auditor's report is a very sensitive issue. The external auditors cannot begin their work before the first of April each year and it takes about two months for them to complete their work and about one month to finalize the report. So if we are asked to give the dates when the report of the external auditor can be available, I would say it's the last month of the second quarter and possibly also the first month of the third quarter, between end of June and the beginning of July. At that point in time the external auditor can provide his report to be submitted to Council. Otherwise, the external auditor's reports will not be available at Council session, the regular Council session of the year if it's held in the first months of the second quarter. The first months of the second quarter.

That would mean that the report has to be taken up the next year, and this would be one year late. That is not good financial practice for financial reports submitted for approval.

And as I said, in Plenipotentiary years, we also need a special session on the Saturday before the Plenipotentiary Conference. We had that this year on Saturday. We had a special Council session. We brought in the external auditor. That cost a lot of money, by the way. And that was how we were able to report to you on the external auditor's report.

So for the Secretariats, we would prefer the second half of June and the first half of July. These would be the best periods to be able to study the external auditor's reports.

>> CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Mr. Ba.

UAE, please.

>> UNITED ARAB EMIRATES: Thank you, Madam Chair. I'm terribly sorry to ask for the floor again. It must be the third or fourth time on this subject.

But now I've heard Mr. Ba. I think he agrees with the proposal of the Arab Group. We mentioned the second quarter. I understand, of course, that if we have the meeting in April or May it's going to be difficult to have the external auditor's reports ready on time.

So my question is: Why do the external auditors not begin their work before April or May? Couldn't they begin to prepare their reports in February, for instance? Of course, we don't have the necessary experience or knowledge to know what is the answer to that question. But perhaps the answer could be provided to us.

>> CHAIRMAN: Mr. Ba?

>> SECRETARY: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. As I mentioned, the fiscal year of the International Telecommunications Union is from 1st January to 31st December of each year. We also have relationships with other organizations, in particular UNDP. And some information from the United Nations Development Programme only comes in the first half of May. Now also we have established the IPSA standard. So we have to carry out actuarial studies every year and especially on the insurance fund and the benevolence fund. This can only begin in the middle of January when we consolidated the files into the accumulated leave of staff, who have to take their leave before the 31st of December. And we have to give the data back in the first half of January. The actuarial study starts in mid January, and the reports of these experts are available only in the first week or even the second week of March. And then we close the annual accounts and draw up the financial statements and the reports, which explains the various movements in the account within the ITU. At that point in time, as stipulated by the financial Regulation, the accounts are closed on the 31st of March of every year, with the financial statements accompanying them. The external auditor can only begin his work as of 1st April. And because of the very special nature of the accounting standards and the accounts themselves, they -- the external auditor needs at least two months to verify the accounts and then one month to write the report and have meetings with the financial management of the ITU. And therefore the report can be available only towards the end of May.

And this is why, I think, ideally, if it is to have the external auditor's reports available, Council sessions should be held the last half of June or the first half of July, in between those dates, so as to make sure that the external auditor's report is available.

This is what I wanted to answer.

Thank you, Madam.

>> CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Mr. Ba.

United States, please.

>> UNITED STATES OF AMERICA: Thank you, Madam Chair. As a big part of my job I review the reports of external auditors for many, many organizations. So I know for a fact that those reports are always due at at the same time, at the end of May. I understand the difficulties. And it's just the time that the external auditor finishes it. But it's almost agreed when it could be. And I think it can be noted in the language that preferably it takes place the second half of June and beginning of July. And adding what the Russian Federation suggested, provided that the reports of the external auditor are available. And I think that should satisfy the concern that everybody has. I think that we are almost in agreement.

>> CHAIRMAN: Thank you, U.S. I think so, too.

Does that suggestion have support or no support? It seems that it does. There is one remaining question, though, as well. UAE has asked for the floor. And that is the location of this. We have got two suggestions. The Arab Group have included in Resolution 153. And Brazil in Resolution 111. So one suggestion that I'd like to put to the floor is whether there is any possibility of combining these two Resolutions. Resolution 111 is currently quite short.

UAE, please.

>> UNITED ARAB EMIRATES: Thank, Madam Chairperson.

I agree with the proposal of the United States with a few modifications, however. We could say that it would either be the sixth or the seventh month of the year, June or July of each year, taking into account the fact that the financial reports and external auditor's reports should be presented.

As regard to your proposal, Madam Chairperson, we would prefer Resolution 111 and 153 to remain separate.

Thank you.

>> CHAIRMAN: So thank you, UAE.

Currently the titles are similar, we have Resolution 111 as suggested by the Arab Group. "Scheduling of ITU Conferences, Assemblies and Council sessions." And Resolution 153 "Scheduling of Council Sessions and ITU Conferences and Assemblies." So at the moment, there is a lot of crossover between the two.

Mali, please.

>> MALI: Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

We thank the United States for their proposal supported by the United Arab Emirates with a minor modification. I think, yes, we could have June or July. We could say the period of June and July of each year. And that gives us flexibility. If we start specifying weeks in June and weeks of July, the last week in June, the first week in July, we're painting ourselves into a corner. So if we just say the period of June and July, that gives us more room for maneuver.

>> CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much, Mali.

UAE, please.

>> UNITED ARAB EMIRATES: Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Maybe the title of the Resolution 111 and 153 is more or less the same, but the content isn't really the same. Maybe we could modify the title instead of merging the two. I agree that the two titles of 153 and 111 are very similar, but the content is different.

>> CHAIRMAN: Brazil, please.

>> BRAZIL: Thank you, Madam Chair.

Taking into consideration what Mr. Ba has clarified, of course we shouldn't push for something that will make the Secretariat's life more difficult. That's not the goal of our proposal. So I guess the final text of the Resolution, or whatever it may be, should be the same, that we hold the Council sessions in June or July. We agree with that. No problem.

And regarding your proposal of combining both resolutions, Resolution 111 is indeed very short. And if we made some changes to the title in Resolution 153, and included everything that is inside Resolution 111, maybe we could have only one Resolution. I think as a general point of view, it's better to have less Resolutions, but not in every case.

And I agree with your proposal, but if the UAE does not agree, I will not push for that. But I think it would be a good solution to have both combined and changing the title of 153. And that one, 153, should say that Council sessions should be in June and July, except in the years of PP.

But we still have to take a decision on the issue of scheduling three Council sessions at each session.

Thank you.

>> CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Brazil.

UAE, did you have any reaction to that? Still the preference for the two Resolutions?

>> UNITED ARAB EMIRATES: Yes, Madam. Thank you, Madam.

We would prefer for the two Resolutions to be kept separate. During the coffee break, I explained why we wish this. As regards the year for the Plenipotentiary to be held, in June of the same year, we have the regular session of Council in June or in July. For those years the auditor's reports will be ready. So that is why in the Arab proposal we have this.

And also in the U.S. proposal we see the same thing, that the date of WTDC should be one year before the Plenipotentiary, if possible. If it's possible to have this, perhaps we could organize WTDC in a year which is not the year of the Plenipotentiary. If there is no pressing reason to have them together, we prefer the regular session of Council to be in June or July the same year.

>> CHAIRMAN: Thank you, UAE.

I think for Resolution 111 and Resolution 153, we are fairly close to a solution. I think we probably would benefit from sort of further discussion out of session. Perhaps an ad hoc group. The suggestion is that all of those colleagues that are interested, indicate that to the Secretariat and we will be in touch about the arrangements for taking this further.

That still leaves us with the two proposals for Resolution 77, the one from the U.S. and the one from the Arab Group.

I see those as being very similar in intention. So I'm wondering whether there was a possibility of the U.S. And the Arab Group getting together and working through an agreeable text.

The Russian Federation, please.

>> RUSSIAN FEDERATION: Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

We don't have any difficulties for delegates who have made proposals to meet together and discuss them. That's fine. But we are concerned about something else on Resolution 77,

And Resolution 77, there was a date for the World Conference on International Telecommunications, and now Committee 5 is looking at when the WCIT will be held. So we would like to keep that conference with that list with the date in square brackets unless Com 5 completed its consideration for that.

Thank you.

>> CHAIRMAN: Thank you for that suggestion.

U.S. Please.

>> UNITED STATES OF AMERICA: Thank you, Chairman.

My question concerns Resolution 153, where we are discussing WTDC. I do think that we would need to modify that language. When we are looking at Resolution 77, we have to take into account the Resolution 153 that has the WTDC. So that's my only concern is to make sure that we align the two Resolutions.

>> CHAIRMAN: Exactly. And that's a very good comment. We will take note of that.

UAE, please.

>> UNITED ARAB EMIRATES: Thank you, Madam Chair.

I fully agree with the delegate from the United States, yes. The two Resolutions, 77 and 111, and Resolution 153 need to be discussed in the same forum. The subjects they address are linked. And for that, an ad hoc group might be convened.

Now, turning to the comments which were made by the delegate of the Russian Federation, yes, there will be a decision to be taken on this subject. But the period fixed is situated between 2016 and 2019. As you know, there has not been any decision in this regard.

Having said that, the date could remain within square brackets until we do take a decision in this regard.

Thank you.

>> CHAIRMAN: Thank you, UAE. Then we will consider the three Resolutions together.

I wonder if I might ask the U.S. whether they would consider taking on this role.

>> UNITED STATES OF AMERICA: Thank you, Chairman.

Yes, and we will -- I will let you know who that person will be.

Thank you.

>> CHAIRMAN: Thank you. And thank you for taking that.

We will move on now to the consideration of host country agreements. And we have two proposals there. One from the USA and one from CITEL. So if I could ask the U.s. to introduce their document 27A1/7. USA, please.

>> UNITED STATES OF AMERICA: Yes. So document 27, we don't have to introduce this document because we have joined the CITEL IAP on this. So there is no need to introduce. Thank you very much.

>> CHAIRMAN: Thank you, U.S.

CITEL?

>> UNITED STATES OF AMERICA: CITEL's proposal is to add in the Resolution 175 on the persons with disability -- taking into account persons with disabilities into the work of the ITU, as well as to add in language into the host country agreement related to webcasting and captioning. And we believe this is an invaluable tool which would benefit people with disabilities and specific needs.

We also think it's very important to remove barriers that limit participation in the work -- in the Union's activities. So the proposal is to, in the "resolves," to modify the host country agreement to add in arrangements for webcasting facilities and captioning, including transcription of the captioning when convening Conferences, Assemblies and Meetings for the meeting, as articulated in 2.12. Thank you.

>> CHAIRMAN: Thank you. Now I'll open it for the floor for comments. Argentina, please.

>> ARGENTINA: Good afternoon, Madam Chair.

Argentina on behalf of CITEL is submitting the amendments to Resolution 175 on access of People with Disabilities as regards to accessibility to ICTs and telecommunications, taking into account that the members of the ITU as well as political decision makers, politicians, and service providers have an important role to play to ensure that ICT services in their countries be accessible to People with Disabilities and have to remove barriers to accessibility for ICTs.

At the moment, a billion people worldwide live with some kind of disability and they can only use information which is accessible, and accessible ICT. That means that they cannot see typical traditional screens. They need a way to understand what is on it.

For example, voice functionality of text. If a user cannot hear the information, because he or she needs to ensure that there are different forms of providing information, such as voice to text, or subtitles, or can read them as on a mobile phone, in the same way. When someone cannot put a command into ICT applications, they need alternative forms of accessing it. It's a culture. It's a way of living. It's a way of creating a present which is a more dignified and better future for all. Without exceptions.

So ITU is to continue with its hard work in this regard as well as other United Nations family organizations.

Along the same lines, the draft Resolution reflects the efforts to contribute to providing access, since it is impossible to live without ICTs. And it is information and communication which provides us with access to knowledge and culture and allows us to develop the human capacity we have, and ensure high quality way of life for People with Disabilities and their families.

The draft Resolution identifies under "resolves" the following modification, integrating People with Disabilities and with special needs in the work of the ITU to collaborate on the adoption of an comprehensive action plan in order to extend its access to telecommunications and ICTs in cooperation with external organizations and entities which are interested in this.

Regards this modification and integrating People with Disabilities and special needs, it draws on a Resolution 58 adopted in Dubai. It has a paragraph "instructs the Director of the BDT" under point 8 that they consider the possibility of creating a programme for Persons with Disabilities which has specialized knowledge as regards ICTs and telecommunications, with the aim of training People with Disabilities vis-a-vis the process of developing public policies and the United Nations goals, too.

The UN goal also contributes to this aim with an inclusive society in which People with Disabilities and special needs are both agents and beneficiaries.

Part 2 of "resolves" identifies providing interaction between ICTs and people with disabilities, working together so they have better knowledge of data and better data, so that they can compile on a national level and also use International standards.

And then under 3, it says identifies a potential cause for action to encourage cooperation with regional institutions and organizations and global ones, too, which address accessibility for People with Disabilities, including age-related disability, to ensure that accessibility and ICTs is included in the agendas and is taking into account its cross-cutting nature with regard to other topics.

Finally, making possible use of teams for circulation and also sub titles that include transcription. And, if possible, considering the technical and financial limitations of the Union, provide them in the six official languages of the Union, both during and after the conclusion of any sessions or conferences or assemblies for and of the Union as covered in the General Rules of conferences, Assemblies, and meetings of the Union.

We would like to request that we submit for the consideration of the meeting this current Resolution and we also want to request your support for its adoption.

Thank you.

>> CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Argentina.

Currently, we're discussing Resolution 144, and I have a request for the floor from the UAE.

UAE, please.

>> UNITED ARAB EMIRATES: Thank you very much, Madam Chair.

Firstly, I would like to thank the United States for the various amendments proposed to Resolution 144, which I support. So in the Arabic text, there is an amendment to be made "considering" C, under "considering" C, in Arabic, it says "for the benefit of People with Disabilities and specific needs." I would like it to be retranslated in the Arabic text.

In English, we use the word "Specific needs" and not "Special needs," so I would like to request that you use the -- that you modify the Arabic text in order to take into account this issue of "Specific needs."

I also have another proposal to make regarding "resolves." Regarding additions to host country agreements, I'd like to add in a sentence which specifies that host countries are to provide for accessible passages for everyone. I would like it to be worded in such a way so as not to overburden the Member State, but there needs to be access for people who have disability -- to the facilities for people who have special needs or who have disabilities.

Thank you.

>> CHAIRMAN: Thank you, UAE. We have taken note of that.

Mali, please.

>> MALI: Thank you, Madam Chair.

We agree with the proposed amendment which the United States proposed. In this regard, we would like through you to request the Secretariat -- or ask the Secretariat, rather, whether or not there will be a budgetary implication for the implementation of these amendments.

If you look at the Council session of this year, the question was asked regarding budgetary implications. So I don't know whether or not those problems still persist or whether or not there has been a solution found.

But subject to this response, we do support these proposals.

Thank you.

>> CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Mali.

Argentina, please.

>> ARGENTINA: Thank you very much, Madam Chair.

I wish to request a clarification. We are currently looking through agenda item 10, or are we looking at agenda item 13? Thank you.

>> CHAIRMAN: Agenda item 10, Argentina.

>> ARGENTINA: Thank you very much.

>> CHAIRMAN: I'll ask Japan to take the floor. But then we will have to suspend discussion this afternoon because we need to take account of the voting that will take place in plenary from 4.

So Japan, please.

>> JAPAN: Thank you, Madam Chair. Japan would like to support the US proposal on the modification on Resolution 144 and to introduce webcasting and the captioning and encouraging participation of People with Disabilities to ITU meetings. So under "considering" of budgetary considerations for ITU.

Thank you very much. Thank you very much.

>> CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much. Japan.

Just to clarify that we are discussing at the moment a CITEL proposal, that the U.S. has now become part of that CITEL proposal.

So we will suspend discussion this afternoon and in the meantime the Secretariat will prepare a DT document, taking into account all of the comments and questions that have been asked this afternoon.

So thank you very much. Thank you for your attention and participation. And we will see you all tomorrow. I think our session starts at maybe 11, I think. But... 11. See you then.

(End of session, 15:47)

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