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| **The 4th Meeting of the APT Preparatory Group**  **for PP-22 (APT PP22-4)** | **APT PP22-4/OUT-14** |
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APT Preparatory Group for ITU Plenipotentiary Conference 2022

**PRELIMINARY APT COMMON PROPOSAL**

**PROPOSED MODIFICATIONS TO RESOLUTION 11**

**ITU Telecom events**

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| **Summary:**  This contribution proposes changing the name of ITU Telecom events to ITU Digital events. |

**INTRODUCTION**

ITU Telecom events go along with the history of telecom development. ITU Telecom World started out life in Geneva in 1971, with “a message to the 21st century”. Since 1971, ITU Telecom events have helped connect the unconnected and spread the benefits of ICTs. They have offered a window for the world onto a rapidly evolving ICT industry, helping showcase, debate and set the agenda for the development of new technologies from mobile or Internet to broadband, AI, 5G and beyond.

ITU Telecom events in 2020 and 2021 have been organized under the brand ITU Digital World reflecting the accelerating convergence of telecommunication and digital technology. Because of this convergence, the number of government ministers and global ICT industry leaders attending the event has significantly increased comparing with its past events.

The brand ITU Digital World will open the events’ scale to all digital technologies, attract all digital and innovative tech companies particularly SMEs and bring opportunities to more SME to join this world-class event to explore the impact of digital technologies and accelerate digital transformation.

**PROPOSAL**

APT Member Administrations propose to modify Resolution 11, as attached below.

**PACP-01**

**MOD**

RESOLUTION 11 (Rev. BUCHAREST 2022)

**ITU Digital events**

The Plenipotentiary Conference of the International Telecommunication Union (Bucharest, 2022),

*considering*

*a)* that the purposes of the Union, as reflected in Article 1 of the ITU Constitution, include to promote the extension of the benefits of the new telecommunication technologies to all the world's inhabitants and to harmonize the actions of Member States and Sector Members in the attainment of those ends;

*b)* that the telecommunication environment is undergoing considerable changes under the combined influence of advances in technology, the globalization of markets and growing user demand for integrated cross‑border services adapted to their needs;

*c)* that annually, in addition to a wide range of national, regional and global exhibitions and conferences on telecommunications/information and communication technologies (ICTs) hosted by numerous organizations, ITU also hosts a number of global and regional events consistent with the aims of the strategic and financial plans of the Union and taking account of ITU's efficiency measures, to promote the development and advancement of telecommunications/ICTs;

*d)* that the need for a global framework to exchange information on telecommunication strategies, policies, new technologies and future trends has been evident for many years;

*e)* that ITU Digital events fulfil the mandate to keep Member States and Sector Members informed of, and offer a universal opportunity for the display of, state-of-the-art technology concerning all aspects of telecommunications/ICT and related fields of activity, and provide a forum for the exchange of views between Member States and industry;

*f)* that recent ITU Digital events have proved successful in elevating the role of small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in the development and advancement of world-class solutions, applications and technologies, and ITU must continue to enhance the participation of SMEs and ensure that SMEs continue to be a key focus area at all its future events as far as practically possible,

*emphasizing*

*a)* that it is necessary for the Union, as an international organization playing a leading role in the field of telecommunications/ICT, to continue organizing an annual event, subject to a strategic and financial review, to facilitate the exchange of information on state-of-the-art technologies, strategies and policies;

*b)* that the small-business sector within the ICT sector is uniquely positioned to create the desired job numbers and job opportunities most likely to reduce the high numbers of unemployed generally, and of unemployed youth and women in particular, across the world,

*noting*

*a)* that after consultation with Member States in 2014, and acknowledging the vital role of SMEs in advancing ICT innovation and growth, the ITU Digital events have moved towards providing an international platform to foster the development and highlight the solutions of ICT SMEs;

*b)* that ITU Digital events continue to face challenges, such as the increasing costs of exhibits and the trend towards reducing their size, the specialization of their scope and the need to provide value to industry;

*c)* that ITU Digital needs to continue its transition to becoming an international platform providing all digital technologies and services, attracting all digital and innovative tech companies particularly SMEs, bringing value and opportunities for participants to explore the impact of digital transformation and to earn a reasonable return on their investments,

*noting further*

*a)* that participants, and in particular industry members, are seeking reasonable predictability of time and place of ITU Digital events and opportunities;

*b)* that there is increased interest in further developing the ITU Digital events as a key platform for strategic networking, showcasing innovative ICT applications and services, and discussions among policy-makers, regulators, industry leaders and SMEs;

*c)* that there are requests for more competitive raw space costs and participation fees, preferential or discounted hotel prices and adequate numbers of hotel rooms and options, in order to make the events more accessible and affordable, particularly to SMEs and techno-startups;

*d)* that financial difficulties are the main limitation for developing countries[[1]](#footnote-1)1 to participate in ITU events in general, and ITU Digital events in particular, where the price for some types of entry pass is high;

*e)* that the ITU Digital event has moved towards becoming the international platform providing services for ICT SMEs, and the ITU Digital brand should be reinforced by appropriate means of communication in order to develop further towards being one of the most respected telecommunication/ICT events;

*f)* that there is a need to ensure the financial viability of ITU Digital events, including through consideration of their impact on the limited resources of the ITU secretariat;

*g)* that there is general support for keeping the ITU Digital events as an ITU platform to address the strategic issues emerging from market development, and an increasing call to consolidate this platform as the major venue for other ITU activities,

*resolves*

1 that the Union should, in collaboration with its Member States and its Sector Members, organize ITU Digital events related to issues of major importance in the current telecommunication/ICT environment and addressing market trends, technological development and regulatory issues, including SMEs and their role in the ICT ecosystem;

2 that the Union should initiate a process to organize the, 2024, 2025 and 2026 ITU Digital events in advance of the 2023 session of the ITU Council;

3 that the Secretary-General is fully accountable for ITU Digital activities (including planning, organization and finance);

4 that ITU Digital events should be organized on a predictable and regular basis, preferably at the same time each year, taking due account of the need to ensure that the expectations of all participating stakeholders in such events are met, and, in addition, to ensure that they do not overlap with any major ITU conferences or assemblies;

5 that each ITU Digital event shall be financially viable and shall have no negative impact on the ITU budget on the basis of the existing cost-allocation system as determined by the Council;

6 that the Union, in its venue selection process for ITU Digital events, shall ensure:

6.1 an open and transparent bidding process, based on the model host-country agreement approved by the 2016 session of the Council, in consultation with Member States;

6.2 accessibility and affordability of passes for participants, especially from developing countries, to join ITU Digital forums;

6.3 the generation of profit from ITU Digital events;

6.4 that selection of venues for ITU Digital events is based on the principle of rotation between regions, and between Member States within regions to the extent possible; notwithstanding, due consideration may be given to Member States which propose to host the event for a number of consecutive years if this is considered by the Secretary-General to be in the interests of ITU and its membership;

7 that the audit of ITU Digital accounts shall be carried out by the External Auditor of the Union;

8 that the EWCF shall provide a minimum reserve of 5 million Swiss francs (CHF 5 000 000);

9 that, once all expenses have been recovered, and having due regard to *resolves* 10 above, a significant part of any generated profit derived from ITU Digital activities shall be transferred to ITU’s ICT Development Fund (ICT-DF);

10 that the Union should, in collaboration with its Member States and Sector Members, consciously increase the participation of SMEs in ITU events by scheduling issues of importance to SMEs throughout the events' programmes and enabling SMEs to speak on the regulatory and bureaucratic issues as they affect them,

*instructs the Secretary-General*

1 to ensure the implementation of *resolves* 2, 3 and 4 above, applying the ITU procurement policy, and in particular to hire an independent external management consultancy, pursuant to *resolves* 3, by 1 April 2019 using funds from the EWCF;

2 to ensure the appropriate management of ITU Digital events and resources, in line with the regulations of the Union;

3 to consider measures that will enable and assist Member States which are capable and willing to do so, particularly developing countries, to host and stage ITU Digital events;

4 to develop a business plan for each proposed event;

5 to ensure the transparency of ITU Digital events and report on them in a separate annual report to the Council, including:

– all ITU Digital business activities;

– the reasons for the selection of venues for future ITU Digital events;

– financial implications and risks for future ITU Digital events, preferably two years in advance;

6 to continue to develop initiatives to encourage, grow and foster the participation of SMEs and all other stakeholders within the context of the ITU Digital platform, in particular in the events' forums, and to identify opportunities to hold other ITU activities/meetings/events under the ITU Digital umbrella;

7 to propose to the Council a mechanism to implement *resolves* 8;

8 to ensure that ITU Digital events do not overlap with any major ITU conferences or assemblies: the determination of the venue shall be based on competitive selection, and the contract negotiation shall be based on the model host-country agreement approved by the Council;

9 to ensure that, if an ITU Digital event is held in the same year as a plenipotentiary conference, the ITU Digital event should preferably take place no later than the plenipotentiary conference;

10 to ensure that there is internal control and that internal and external audits of the accounts for the different ITU Digital events are carried out on regular basis;

11 to report annually to the Council on the implementation of this resolution, and to the next plenipotentiary conference on the future evolution of the ITU Digital events,

*instructs the Secretary-General, in cooperation with the Directors of the Bureaux*

to give due consideration, in planning ITU Digital events, to the possible synergies with the major ITU conferences and meetings, and vice versa, where justified,

*instructs the ITU Council*

1 to review the annual report on ITU Digital events described under *instructs the Secretary-General*5;

2 to review and approve the allocation of part of the profit generated by ITU Digital events to development projects within the framework of the ICT-DF;

3 to submit a report based on the implementation of *resolves* 3to the 2026 plenipotentiary conference.

1. 1 These include the least developed countries, small island developing states, landlocked developing countries and countries with economies in transition. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)