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| **The 4th Meeting of the APT Preparatory Group**  **for PP-22 (APT PP22-4)** | **APT PP22-4/OUT-27** |
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APT Preparatory Group for ITU Plenipotentiary Conference 2022

**PRELIMINARY APT COMMON PROPOSAL**

**PROPOSED NEW RESOLUTION**

**The role of telecommunication/information and communication technologies in mitigating** **global pandemics**

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| **Summary:**  This document proposes a draft new Resolution for the ITU Plenipotentiary Conference: “The role of telecommunications/ICTs in mitigating global pandemics”. |

**INTRODUCTION**

At the WTSA-20, APT ([APT/37A29/1](https://www.itu.int/dms_pub/itu-t/md/17/wtsa.20/c/T17-WTSA.20-C-0037!A29!MSW-E.docx)), Arab ([ARB/36A31/1](https://www.itu.int/dms_pub/itu-t/md/17/wtsa.20/c/T17-WTSA.20-C-0036!A31!MSW-E.docx)) and African ([AFCP/35A32/1](https://www.itu.int/dms_pub/itu-t/md/17/wtsa.20/c/T17-WTSA.20-C-0035!A32!MSW-E.docx)) regions proposed a new WTSA-20 Resolution on the ITU-T’s role in facilitating the use of ICTs to prevent the spread of global pandemics.As a result, COM4 agreed to establish a formal drafting group, and the group produced an agreed text ([DT/62](https://www.itu.int/md/meetingdoc.asp?lang=en&parent=T17-WTSA.20-220301-TD-GEN-0062)). Per the **Action for Plenary 4** of the COM4 meeting report ([88](https://www.itu.int/md/T17-WTSA.20-C-0088/en)), the Plenipotentiary Conference was invited to consider this text and take any necessary actions on this matter as appropriate.

Meanwhile, at the WTDC-21, APT, RCC, and ARAB regions submitted Contributions on the use of telecommunications/ICTs to combat global pandemics and mitigate the consequences. The contributions, however, were withdrawn during the meeting. Hence, there were no deliverables concerning this topic.

In this sense, APT Member Administrations drafted a new Resolution based on the result ([DT/62](https://www.itu.int/md/meetingdoc.asp?lang=en&parent=T17-WTSA.20-220301-TD-GEN-0062)) of the WTSA-20. Some clauses were unchanged, while others were merged/removed to streamline the document. In addition, some clauses were added to address specific actions for the development and radiocommunications sectors to ensure collaboration and implementation across the Union.

**PROPOSAL**

APT Member Administration propose a draft new Resolution for the ITU Plenipotentiary Conference: “The role of telecommunications/ICTs in mitigating global pandemics” to provide necessary efforts for the Union.

**PACP-22**

**ADD**

DRAFT NEW RESOLUTION (APT-AAA)

**The role of telecommunication/information and communication technologies in mitigating** **global pandemics**

*(Bucharest, 2022)*

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

*recalling*

*a)* Article 40 of the ITU Constitution on the “Priority of Telecommunications Concerning Safety of Life”;

*b)* Resolution 136 (Rev. Dubai, 2018) of the Plenipotentiary conference - The use of telecommunications/information and communication technologies for humanitarian assistance and for monitoring and management in emergency and disaster situations, including health-related emergencies, for early warning, prevention, mitigation and relief;

*c)* Resolution 34 (Rev. Kigali, 2022) of the World Telecommunication Development Conference (WTDC), on the role of telecommunications/information and communication technologies (ICTs) in disaster preparedness, early warning, rescue, mitigation, relief and response;

*d)* Resolution 647 (Rev. Sharm el-Sheikh, 2019) of the World Radiocommunication Conference (WRC), on radiocommunication aspects, including spectrum management guidelines, for early warning, disaster prediction, detection, mitigation and relief operations relating to emergencies and disasters;

e*)* WTPF-21 OPINION 5: Use of telecommunication/ICTs in COVID-19 and future pandemic and epidemic preparedness and response,

*recalling further*

*a)* item c of § 20 of Action Line C7 (E-environment) of the Geneva Plan of Action adopted by the first phase of WSIS on establishing monitoring systems, using ICTs, to forecast and monitor the impact of natural and man-made disasters, particularly in developing countries, LDCs and small economies;

*b)* Resolution 74/270 of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) on “Global solidarity to fight the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19)”, which calls on the United Nations system “to work with all relevant actors to mobilize a coordinated global response to the pandemic and its adverse social, economic and financial impact on all societies”;

*c)* UNGA Resolution 74/306 on “Comprehensive and coordinated response to the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic”;

*d)* UN Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 3 “Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages”, as well as SDG 9 “Build resilient infrastructure, promote sustainable industrialization and foster innovation”, and SDG 11 “Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable” of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,

*recognizing*

*a)* the new coronavirus disease (COVID-19), pneumonia of unknown cause first reported to the WHO in late 2019, is a major public health crisis that disrupted public life and dramatically changed the global society, including quarantine, strict social distancing, imposing a blockade, declaring a state of emergency, and even harsher measures to mitigate the spread of the disease;

*b)* that since such pandemics can cause numerous confirmed cases and deaths and could eventually lead to global economic crisis and depression, telecommunication/ICTs, in particular new and emerging technologies, play a more prominent role in connecting remote populations allowing them to pursue their regular lives while preventing direct contact from each other and can help predict and monitor global pandemics;

*c)* that ICTs are an important and integral component of multi-hazard early warning systems and common alerting protocol, that manage and deliver alerting messages to those in affected areas and wider at national or international level which allows them to take action to mitigate the impacts of the hazard;

d) that while the pandemic has devastated the economy and life of the people, it has also emphasized the importance and the needs to advance telecommunication/ICTs based solutions/innovation and study the research and practice of technology including information management, work practices and design and use of technologies,

*recognizing further*

*a)* that the declaration of WTDC 2022 emphasized the importance of committing to urgently mitigating the impact of disasters and the COVID-19 pandemic by building digital resilience through bold and innovative national plans and recovery strategies for ensuring governance, business, education and social-life continuity;

*b)* the continuous studies carried by relevant ITU-T Study Groups in using telecommunication/ICTs to facilitate the use of new and emerging technologies in mitigating global pandemics;

*c)* the various efforts of the ITU-D including the Global Network Resiliency Platform (REG4COVID) and the Connect2Recover Initiative to collect and provide information and case studies to help recover from the global pandemic;

*d)* the ITU’s partnership with WHO and UNICEF to work with telecommunication companies to text people directly on their mobile phones with vital health messages,

*taking into account*

*a)* Member States, to the extent practicable, have shared their experiences in robust testing, vigorous tracing, and quick treatment of patients to reduce and minimize the human suffering as well as socio-economic consequences;

*b)* Member States are being asked to further share their best practices how they responded to COVID-19 using telecommunication/ICTs and how telecommunication/ICTs help social distancing, rapid testing, and quick tracing to flatten the curve on the global pandemic;

*c)* that there will be a continuing need to assist developing countries in the use of ICTs to preserve life by ensuring a timely flow of information to government agencies, consumers, humanitarian-oriented organizations and industry involved in the provision of medical assistance to those affected by global pandemics;

*d*) that the Union plays a role in the telecommunication/ICTs which are used for taking necessary measures pre-emptively before unexpected pandemics occur and travel around the world to prevent unnecessary deaths,

*considering*

*a)* that such necessary measures include ITU’s crucial role in providing their deliverables such as Recommendations, Technical Reports, White Papers to facilitate the use of telecommunication/ICT at a suitable time and place for the right purpose of preventing the spread of global pandemics;

*b)* that ITU-T has already developed a number of Recommendations on telecommunication/ICTs understanding the rising importance of telecommunication/ICTs that will impact a wide range of industries in the future, and thus, it is crucial for ITU-T to harmonize these different Recommendations from a holistic point of view;

*c)* that the ITU-D’s role is designed to focus on the use of these deliverables on telecommunications/ICTs to empower communities and people,

*bearing in mind*

*a)* that a culture of avoiding direct contact may carry on even after the pandemic ceases and such culture may dramatically shift the paradigm of the majority of industries including not only healthcare but also education and transportation including working from home, electronic transactions, online learning and tourism;

*b)* that the change of culture requires leveraging the use of telecommunication/ICTs, which is especially important to assist Member States to ensure timely access to information and infrastructure;

c) that information needs to be accessible and available in local languages so as to ensure maximum impact;

d) that the contribution of the private sector is necessary in the prevention, mitigation and relief of pandemics such as COVID-19 infections,

*noting*

*a)* that timely provision of ITU’s deliverables could act as useful references when deploying ICT solutions and could help people by keeping them alerted to take necessary measures in a view to being protected by environment effects;

*b)* that ease of access to the ITU deliverables would assist all Member States, in particular, developing countries to counter the pandemic;

*c)* the initiatives like AI for Good Webinar Series encourage participation from distanced participants who may not have been able to travel due to the global pandemic,

*resolves*

1 to acknowledge that the role of telecommunication/ICTs will become increasingly important and pervasive in tackling global pandemics;

2 to identify existing and potential ITU relevant deliverables based on the analysis of *invites the Secretary-General* 2 above with a view to be easily and quickly search in order to develop ICT solutions to mitigate the global pandemics;

3 to publish the result of *resolves* 2,

*instructs the Director of the Telecommunication Standardization Bureau*

1 to support the activities of the ITU-T members to fulfil the *resolves* above by establishing appropriate working groups and developing a standardization roadmap in order to facilitate better deployment of future ITU deliverables and systematically organize and initiate work on potential Recommendations on relevant telecommunication/ICTs;

2 to facilitate the exchange of best practices to mitigate global pandemics with all relevant SDOs and entities to create opportunities for cooperative efforts to support the active deployment and use of telecommunication/ICTs;

3 to liaise with other SDOs, as appropriate, to foster studies carried out by relevant ITU-T study groups and focus groups by sharing on-going works to avoid duplication of work,

*instructs the Director of the Telecommunication Development Bureau*

1 to support the activities of the Kigali Action Plan to encourage digital transformation, which is considered of critical importance as societies adapt to changes, including those in the aftermath of global pandemics;

2 to continue to collaborate closely with the Director of TSB to continuously raise awareness and enhance knowledge on the use of telecommunication/ICTs in health-care emergencies through the implementation and promotion of international standards to Member States;

3 to develop a mechanism for supporting the collation and sharing of digital solutions developed by Member States to respond and address global pandemics through existing, accessible repositories such as the WSIS database,

*instructs the Director of the Radiocommunication Bureau in collaboration with the Director of the Telecommunication Standardization Bureau and the Director of the Telecommunication Development Bureau*

to support studies and projects for efficient use of radio and broadband resources for the purpose of creating solutions for early detection and mitigation of global pandemics,

*invites the Secretary-General,*

1 to continue cooperating with relevant international organizations such as World Health Organization (WHO), UNICEF, World Meteorological Organization (WMO), Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and, World Food Programme (WFP) in providing up-to-date information and studying means to mitigate the effects of global pandemics and promote recovery;

2 to collect and analyse best practices and guidelines of Member States in facilitating the use of telecommunication/ICTs to prevent the spread of global pandemics and lessons learned from their experience in containing the pandemic;

3 to submit a report on the progress in the implementation of this Resolution to the next Plenipotentiary Conference in 2026,

*invites Member States, Sector Members, Associates and academia*

1 to cooperate to raise awareness, build capacity, and share best practices and lessons in using telecommunication/ICTs to act quickly and pre-emptively help in mitigating the adverse impact of global pandemics;

2 to encourage active participation of all stakeholders including entrepreneurs, SMEs, start-ups and incubation and acceleration centres in the implementation of this resolution;

3 to share ICT solutions related to health care which would expand access to care and reduce disease exposure, especially in developing countries.

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