|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **World Telecommunication Development Conference (WTDC-14)** **Dubai, 30 March – 10 April 2014** | |  |
|  | | |
|  | |  |
|  | | **Addendum 3 to Document** **WTDC14/****37-E** |
| **25 February 2014** |
| **Original:** **English** |
|  |  | |
| SOURCE: | Asia-Pacific Telecommunity (See Annex 2 to Document WTDC14/37) | |
| TITLE: | Proposed Revision of Resolution 37 (Rev. Hyderabad, 2010) – Bridging the digital divide | |

# 1 Introduction

Universal access and services has been researched by ITU-D as well as the building and circulation of relevant toolkits. On this basis, many developing countries have implemented universal Internet access through the development of public and community Internet access points   
(e.g. Telecenters). However, many of these countries have been facing challenges and difficulties in maintaining these telecenters sustainably and effectively.

APT Members suggest assisting and supporting developing countries to research and assess difficulties and challenges in the operation and maintenance of multipurpose community telecenters in rural and remote areas with a view to advise developing countries on models of multipurpose community telecenters, including digital inclusion, in rural and remote areas in accordance with local circumstances.

# 2 Proposal

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **ACP/37/3** | Objective(s): All |

**MOD**

APT Members propose to revise the Resolution 37 as follows.

RESOLUTION 37 (Rev. Dubai, 2014)

Bridging the digital divide

The World Telecommunication Development Conference (Hyderabad, 2010),

recalling

a) Resolution 37 (Rev. Hyderabad, 2010) of the World Telecommunication Development Conference (WTDC);

b) Resolution 139 (Guadalajara, 2010) of the Plenipotentiary Conference;

c) Annex to Resolution 71 (Guadalajara, 2010) of the Plenipotentiary Conference;

d) Resolution 123 (Guadalajara, 2010) of the Plenipotentiary Conference,

recognizing

a) that the telecommunication environment has undergone significant changes since WTDC (Hyderabad, 2010);

b) that there is still a need to show clearly what the digital divide is, where it occurs, and who suffers from it;

c) that development in information and communication technology (ICT) has continued to reduce the cost of relevant equipment;

d) that in many ITU Member States regulations have been adopted dealing with regulatory issues such as interconnection, determination of tariffs, access and universal service, etc., designed to bridge the digital divide at the national level;

e) that the introduction of competition in the provision of telecommunication and information technology services has also continued to reduce telecommunication costs to users;

f) that the introduction of new applications and services has also resulted in bringing down telecommunication costs;

g) that there is still an ongoing need to create digital opportunities in developing countries, including the least developed countries, small island developing states, landlocked developing countries and countries with economies in transition, taking advantage of the revolution that information and communication technologies have witnessed and are currently witnessing;

h) that various activities are being executed towards bridging the digital divide by many international and regional organizations, such as, in addition to ITU, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), the United Nations economic commissions, the World Bank, the Asia-Pacific Telecommunity (APT), the regional economic communities, the regional development banks and many others, and that such activity has increased following the conclusion of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) and the adoption of the Tunis Agenda for the Information Society, particularly in relation to implementation and follow-up,

considering

a) that, even with all the developments mentioned above, in many developing countries and especially in rural and remote areas, telecommunications/ICTs, particularly in relation to the Internet, are still not affordable to the majority of the people, as is evident at present;

b) that each region, country and area should tackle its own specific issues regarding the digital divide, while stressing the importance of cooperation in this area at regional and international level in order to benefit from experience gained;

c) that many developing countries do not have the necessary basic infrastructure, long-term plans, laws, appropriate regulations and such like in place for ICT development,

further considering

a) that the distribution of the benefits brought about by the ICT revolution is not equitable between developing and developed countries, and between social categories within countries, taking into account the commitments of both phases of WSIS to bridge the digital divide and transform it into a digital opportunity;

b) that equitable access to information and the transition of the countries of the developing world into knowledge economies and into the information age will enhance their economic, social and cultural development, in implementation of the aims of the Geneva Plan of Action and Tunis Agenda and of Goal 2 (Bridging the national and international digital divides in Telecommunication/ICTs) in Resolution 71 (Guadalajara, 2010) of the Plenipotentiary Conference on the strategic plan for the Union for 2008-2011, which is expected to be maintained in the new plan for 2012-2015, taking into consideration that such access shall be affordable,

confirms

the importance of approaches to funding for bridging the digital divide in the Geneva Plan of Action, the Tunis Agenda and the strategic plan for the Union and their translation into equitable mechanisms for action, particularly in respect of issues related to Internet management, taking into consideration the special initiatives for full gender equality, with regard for those with special needs, including the disabled and incapacitated and the elderly, the youth initiative, issues related to indigenous peoples, telecommunications/ICTs for disaster relief and mitigation, and the child online protection initiative,

undertakes

to continue to shorten the time-frames for implementation of the Digital Solidarity Agenda, beginning with the Geneva Plan of Action, the outcomes of the Connect Africa summit and the Connect CIS summit, the Tunis Agenda and the strategic plan for the Union for 2012-2015, and to deploy parallel efforts from which all countries may benefit, in order to arrive at international methods and specific mechanisms for increasing international cooperation to bridge the digital divide,

resolves to request the Director of the Telecommunication Development Bureau

1. to continue to follow up its work pursuant to Resolution 8 (Rev. Hyderabad, 2010) of this conference in creating social connectivity indicators for the digital divide, standard indicators for each country and a single index, in cooperation with the competent organizations in the relevant United Nations agencies, using available statistics so that charts can be compiled to illustrate the current situation of the digital divide in each country and region;

2. to continue to encourage the advantages of developing a low-cost high-quality customer computer, that can be directly connected to the legacy networks supporting the Internet and Internet applications, so that economies of scale can be achieved on account of their acceptability at the global level, taking into consideration the possibility of satellite use of this computer;

3. to continue to assist in developing a user-awareness campaign in order to build user trust and confidence in ICT applications;

4. to ensure that special programmes under the centres of excellence continue to address the specific issue of information-technology training for poverty alleviation, and to give top priority to these centres;

5. to continue to replicate innovative models such as the Grameen Village Phone in order to reduce poverty in other developing countries successfully;

6. to continue to identify key ICT applications in rural areas and to cooperate with specialized organizations with a view to developing a standardized user-friendly content format that overcomes the barrier of literacy and language;

7. to continue to assist in reducing access costs by encouraging manufacturers to develop appropriate technology scalable to broadband applications, this having been adopted as a key objective of the Union as a whole and ITU-D in particular, and having a low operating and maintenance cost;

8. to assist and support developing countries to research and assess difficulties and challenges in the operation and maintenance of multipurpose community telecenters in rural and remote areas with a view to advise developing countries on models of multipurpose community telecenter, including digital inclusion, in rural and remote areas in accordance with local circumstances;;

9. to encourage members to provide ITU with telecommunication/ICT rural and remote experiences, which can then be put on the ITU-D website;

10. to continue to assist the Member States and Sector Members in developing a pro-competition policy and regulatory framework for telecommunications/ICTs, including online services and electronic commerce, as well as capacity building in connectivity and accessibility, taking into account the special needs of women and disadvantaged groups;

11. to continue to encourage development of broadcast-mode methods for promoting telecommunication/ICT uses in rural and remote areas;

12. to continue to help in promoting greater participation of women in ICT initiatives, particularly in rural and remote areas.

NOTE – When this resolution is implemented by BDT, the effect of the updating of Resolution 139 on bridging the digital divide by the forthcoming Plenipotentiary Conference ( Busan, 2014) may be taken into account.

**­­­**