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| Background:  |
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RESOLUTION 73

Information and communication technologies and climate change

(Johannesburg, 2008, Dubai, 2012)

The World Telecommunication Standardization Assembly (Dubai, 2012),

recalling

the relevant ITU resolutions relating to Climate Change, in particular

- Resolution 35 Telecommunication support for the protection of the environment (Plenipotentiary 2006 Antalya)

- Resolution 54 Information and communication technology applications and climate change (WTDC 2006 Doha)

- Council Resolution 1307 (Geneva 2009) on “Information and communication technologies (ICTs) and climate change”

- Resolution 73 (Johannesburg 2008) of WTSA on Information and Communication technologies and climate change

- Opinion 3 (Lisbon, 2009), of the fourth World Telecommunication Policy Forum on ICT and the Environment

- Resolution XX ICT and Climate Change (Plenipotentiary 2010 Veracruz)

a) the outcome of the United Nations conference on the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP17) in Durban.

b) that there are other international forums that are working on Climate change issues that the ITU should co-operate with

c) the role of ITU-T SG5 as the lead SG on Climate Change

d) the Dynamic Coalition on Internet and Climate Change

considering

a) that the issue of climate change is a global concern and requires global collaboration;

b) that the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) estimated that global greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions had risen by more than 70 per cent since 1970, having an effect on global warming, changing weather patterns, rising sea-levels, desertification, shrinking ice cover and other long-term effects;

c) that ITU, at the United Nations Conference on Climate Change in Bali, Indonesia, on 3‑14 December 2007, highlighted the role of information and communication technologies (ICTs) as both a contributor to climate change, and an important element in tackling the challenge;

d) the work being undertaken following the outcomes of COP17 in Durban including the decision by Parties to adopt a universal legal agreement on climate change as soon as possible, and no later than 2015, and progress in the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Durban Platform for Enhanced Action (ADP);

e) the role that ICTs and ITU can play in contributing to the implementation of such an agreement;

f) the importance of promoting sustainable development and the ways in which ICTs can enable clean development;

considering also

a) the ITU Telecommunication Standardization Sector (ITU-T) Technology Watch Briefing Reports highlighting the issues of climate change and the role of ICTs, ICTs and Food Security, ICT as an Enabler for Smart Water Management, and using Submarine Communications Networks to Monitor the Climate;

b) in addition to the work in ITU-T, the ITU Radiocommunication Sector (ITU‑R) and ITU Telecommunication Development Sector (ITU‑D) initiatives in considering climate change and the role of ICTs;

c) that ITU Recommendations that focus on energy-saving systems and applications can play a critical role in the development of ICTs;

d) the leadership of ITU-R, in collaboration with the ITU membership, in identifying the necessary radio-frequency spectrum for climate monitoring and disaster prediction, detection and relief, including the establishment of cooperative arrangements with the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) in the field of remote-sensing applications;

e) the standards‑development activities on ICTs and climate change by, for example, relevant ITU-T study groups in work related to ubiquitous sensor networks (USN), which allow the detection, storage, processing and integration of situational and environmental information gathered from sensor devices connected to telecommunication networks;

f) the outcomes of the Symposia on "ICTs and Climate Change", held in many places in the world between 2008 and 2012, including the Cairo roadmap;

g) the establishment of a Joint Coordination Activity (JCA) on ICTs and Climate Change by the Telecommunication Standardization Advisory Group (TSAG)

in 2009,

recognizing

a) that ICTs can make a substantial contribution to mitigating and adapting to the effects of climate change;

b) that ICTs play a vital role in monitoring and addressing climate change by supporting basic scientific research, which has helped to bring the issue of climate change into the public domain and to raise awareness of future challenges;

c)that a future high-bandwidth, lower-carbon information society offers a platform for economic, social and cultural development that is sustainable;

d) that the adverse effects of climate change may be uneven in their impact and may fall disproportionately on the most vulnerable countries, mainly the developing countries[[1]](#footnote-2), given their limited capacity to adapt;

e) that ICTs contribute approximately 2-2.5 per cent of GHG emissions, which may grow as ICTs become more widely available;

f) that ICTs can, however, be a major mitigating factor in efforts to moderate climate change and to limit and ultimately reduce GHG emissions through, for example, the development and introduction of energy-efficient devices, applications and networks;

g) that the use of ICTs as a key component of energy-efficient work methods could include the reduction of emissions through, for example, paperless meetings, virtual conferencing, teleworking, etc., which in turn would be beneficial in terms of reducing the need to travel,

resolves

1 to continue and further develop the ITU-T work programme initially launched in December 2007 on ICTs and climate change, as a high priority, in order to contribute to the wider global efforts to moderate climate change, as part of the United Nations processes;

2 to take into account the progress already made in SG5 on ICTs and climate change since 2009 by making the Recommendations available as widely as possible;

3 to increase awareness and promote information sharing on the role of ICTs in combating climate change, in particular by promoting the use of more energy-efficient[[2]](#footnote-3) devices and networks and more efficient working methods, as well as ICTs that can be used to replace or displace higher energy consuming technologies/uses;

4 to work towards the reductions in emissions of GHGs arising from the use of ICTs that are necessary to meet the goals of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC);

5 to work towards a reduction of the adverse environmental impact of environmentally unfriendly materials used in ICT products (including batteries),

instructs the Telecommunication Standardization Advisory Group

1 to consider further changes to working procedures in order to meet the objective of this resolution, including extending the use of electronic working methods to reduce the climate-change impact, such as paperless meetings, virtual conferencing, teleworking, etc.,

invites all ITU-T study groups

1 to co-operate with SG5 to develop appropriate Recommendations on climate change issues within the mandate and competency of ITU-T, including telecommunication networks used for monitoring climate change, for example signalling and quality of service issues, taking into account any economic impact on all countries and in particular on developing countries;

2 to co-operate with SG5 to identify best practices and opportunities for new applications using ICTs to reduce the impact of climate change;

3 to liaise with the relevant ITU-R and ITU-D study groups and promote liaison with other standards development organizations in order to avoid duplication of work and to optimize the use of resources,

instructs the Director of the Telecommunication Standardization Bureau, in co-ordination with the directors of the other Bureaux as appropriate

1 to report on progress on the application of this resolution annually to the ITU Council and to the 2016 world telecommunication standardization assembly;

2 to organize, in close collaboration with the Directors of the Telecommunication Development (BDT) and Radiocommunication (BR) Bureaux, workshops and seminars for developing countries, to raise awareness and identify their needs in this domain, as they are the most vulnerable countries affected by climate change;

3 to demonstrate how the ICT sector contributes to annual reductions in GHG emissions, as part of an overall reduction of 20% of GHG emissions by 2020, against 1990 levels;

4 to commit to a progressive and measurable reduction in energy intensity and GHG emissions of all processes involved in the lifecycle of the ICT equipment and components,

invites the Secretary-General

1 to take further steps to achieve climate neutral status for the ITU,

invites Member States, Sector Members and Associates

1 to continue to contribute actively to the ITU-T SG5 work programme on ICTs and climate change;

2 to continue or initiate public and private programmes that include ICTs and climate change, giving due consideration to relevant ITU-T Recommendations;

3 to share best practises and raise awareness of the benefits associated with the use of green ICTs;

4 to promote the integration of ICT, climate, environment and energy policies to improve environmental performance, tackle global warming, enhance energy efficiency and resource management;

5 to integrate the use of ICT into national adaptation plans to make use of ICTs an enabling tool to address the effects of climate change;

6 to support and contribute to the wider United Nations process on climate change, such as the UNFCCC Doha Climate Change Conference in November 2012 (COP18).

1. These include the least developed countries, small island developing states and countries with economies in transition. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. With respect to efficiency, promotion of efficient use of materials used in ICT devices and network elements should also be a consideration. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)