

ITU 2022 Overview

Report on Internet related discussions at the ITU

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Introduction

This paper discusses the three major events hosted by the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) and attended by ICANN in 2022. The ITU World Telecommunication Standardization Assembly 2020 (WTSA-20) was held in Geneva, Switzerland, from 1 to 9 March, the ITU World Telecommunication Development Conference (WTDC-22) was held in Kigali, Rwanda, from 6 to 16 June, and the ITU Plenipotentiary Conference was held in Bucharest, Romania, from 26 September to 14 October. Delays caused by the COVID-19 global health pandemic resulted in the events taking place in the same year.

ICANN's mission is to preserve the security, stability, and resiliency of a single, interoperable, global Internet through the management of unique identifiers, the domain name system (DNS), and domain name registration services. To achieve this mission, ICANN identifies and addresses global challenges and opportunities for a single interoperable Internet, including at intergovernmental organizations such as the United Nations (U.N.) and the ITU. Our participation at these meetings is critical for us to learn more about the developments affecting the Internet ecosystem, of which ICANN is a part, and to be able to explain ICANN's role and mission in this ecosystem as appropriate.

ITU World Telecommunication Standardization Assembly (WTSA-20)

The ITU Telecommunication Standardization Sector (ITU-T), which develops technical standards for telecommunications and information and communication technologies (ICTs), follows a four-year work plan established by WTSA. WTSA essentially defines the work that ITU-T will perform and which study groups they will work in, as well as how they will collaborate inter/intra sectorally, and with external organizations. WTSA also appoints management for the study groups and the Telecommunication Standardization Advisory Group (TSAG). WTSA can also discuss a range of topics and explore potential new areas of work within its mandate. In 2020, WTSA was postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and the ITU-T Study Group period (2017 to 2020) was extended to March 2022 based on a continuity plan approved by Member States. Given some WTSA tasks, such as revising study group questions, could be completed at the ITU-T study group level, the duration of WTSA-20 was shortened, and decisions at the Assembly were mostly made on consensus items. It should be noted that the working procedures agreed upon by Member States at WTSA-20 were that where consensus could not be reached on resolutions and recommendations, a 'No Change' would result.

WTSA-20 considered revisions to several Internet-related resolutions and others that ICANN was closely monitoring. We monitor the Internet-related resolutions because they deal with Internet Protocol (IP)-based networks and critical Internet resources, and depending on the outcomes at WTSA, they have the potential to touch on ICANN's mission.

Main Outcomes of WTSA-20

RESOLUTION 20, PROCEDURES FOR ALLOCATION AND MANAGEMENT OF INTERNATIONAL TELECOMMUNICATION NUMBERING, NAMING, ADDRESSING AND IDENTIFICATION RESOURCES (NNAI)

While NNAI has no bearing on the Internet, WTSA-20 considered expanding the ITU's scope to include "Internet resources" in the proposed modification to Resolution 20 by the League of Arab States (or Arab States). In the operative section, the director of ITU-T was asked to ***“to encourage all relevant study groups to study the impact of the new and emerging technologies on the allocation and management of international telecommunication NANI and Internet resources, and the potential of AI and other new emerging technologies to enhance the management of these resource.”***¹ Within the ITU's remit on telecommunication/ICTs, the standardization sector has developed numbering, naming, and addressing systems that are critical to facilitate international telecommunications as well as standards for telephone numbering systems. Furthermore, the ITU's management and administration of resources, which are defined in specific ITU-T recommendations (standards), deal with telecommunications (e.g., telephone numbering plans and international country codes, etc.) and not the Internet. The ITU-T's scope of work on NNAI is essentially limited to telecommunications.

Outcome: The proposal to add Internet text was met with counter arguments that the ITU is not in the business of creating procedures on Internet topics. Furthermore, it was stressed that the NNAI, when discussed in the context of the ITU, refers only to telecommunication/ICTs, which was another rationale for excluding the Internet. This clarification on NNAI was significant. The proposal to include Internet resources was not accepted.

RESOLUTION 48, INTERNATIONALIZED (MULTILINGUAL) DOMAIN NAMES

The discussions on Internationalized Domain Names (IDNs) at WTSA-20 were on a proposed change to Resolution 48 by the European Conference of Telecommunications Administrations (CEPT) that sought to highlight the importance of IDNs in enabling a more inclusive Internet and the progress made on the implementation of IDNs. Furthermore, rather than ITU-T focusing on studies, emphasis was placed on raising awareness and promoting IDNs, as well as collaborating with other stakeholders on the promotion and implementation of IDNs. The Arab States proposed leaving Resolution 48 unchanged. While the ITU standardization sector creates technical standards for telecommunications/ICTs, other standards bodies develop Internet standards. IDNs, for example, are an Internet standard developed by the Internet Engineering Task Force (IETF).² In 2009, the IETF, through its advisory body, the Internet Architecture Board (IAB), informed the ITU-T that the IDNs standard was developed and maintained by the IETF and that cooperation with the IETF was essential to avoid duplication of effort and for the success of the internationalization of the Internet.³

¹ ARB/36A14/1, RESOLUTION 20 (Rev. Geneva, 2022), Procedures for allocation and management of international telecommunication numbering, naming, addressing and identification resources, March 2022, see, <https://www.itu.int/md/T17-WTSA.20-C-0036/en>

² Internationalized Domain Names: Relevant Standards, IAB Statements, Reports, See: <https://www.icann.org/resources/pages/rfcs-2012-02-25-en>

³ Liaison Statement: IAB Review and Recommendation for IDNs, See: <https://datatracker.ietf.org/liaison/267/>

Outcome: Consensus could not be reached on the CEPT proposal resulting in no substantive changes. Only editorial changes, such as updates to resolutions made since the WTSA 2016, which are mentioned in the preambular section, are reflected in the revision to the resolution.

RESOLUTION 50, CYBERSECURITY

Study Group 17 (SG-17) is responsible for ITU-T's security-related work, and WTSA-20 evaluated several proposals to modify Resolution 50 with varied objectives. CEPT sought to highlight the importance of coordinating on cybersecurity-related activities with the ITU development sector, which is primarily focused on capacity building and cyber resilience. Further, the Inter-American Telecommunication Commission (CITEL) promoted a risk-based approach to cybersecurity and importance of external expertise in this field. The Arab States and the Africa Telecommunication Union (ATU) wanted to expand SG-17's work to include digital forensics for security incident management while the Regional Commonwealth in the field of Communications (RCC) wanted to include the security of critical information infrastructure, generally deemed too broad and defined by national governments. The Asia Pacific Telecommunity (APT) wanted SG-17 to take an intrinsic security approach throughout the development phase of networks, applications, and data. Intrinsic security is a term connected to Huawei's "New Internet Protocol" or "New IP" system. New IP proposals were not accepted at the ITU-T study group level in 2020, and thus were not accepted at WTSA-20.

Outcome: WTSA-20 expanded the security scope of SG-17 to include all information technology sectors, as well as studies for new services and emerging applications for telecommunications/ICTs. While several proposals were rejected, a compromise was reached in which WTSA-20 recognized that security by design was an ideal goal and charged SG-17 with defining *"a general/common set of security capabilities for each phase of information system/network/application lifecycles, so that consequently security by design (security capabilities and features available by design) could be achieved for systems/networks/applications from day one."*

RESOLUTION 64, INTERNET PROTOCOL ADDRESS ALLOCATION AND FACILITATING THE TRANSITION TO AND DEPLOYMENT OF INTERNET PROTOCOL VERSION 6

Resolution 64 was revised at WTSA on the basis of proposals by CEPT and APT. Both drew on the scarcity of IPv4 addresses and the need to migrate to IPv6, which was agreed. CEPT's suggestion, however, to promote collaboration with relevant organizations like the Regional Internet Registries (RIRs), the IETF, and others to promote the deployment of IPv6, was rejected. APT also attempted to characterize IPv6 as an *"advanced protocol for Smart Cities,"* but this definition was rejected as well. It's worth noting that IPv6 is an Internet standard developed by the IETF, which according to RFC 2460, *"...is the protocol that will support the next generation of the Internet."* *"...IP version 6 (IPv6) is a new version of the Internet Protocol, designed as the successor to IP version 4 (IPv4) [RFC-791]. The changes from IPv4 to IPv6 fall primarily into the following categories..."*⁴

Outcome: It has been more than six years since the last WTSA, and the revision to Resolution 64 reflects the state of the Internet landscape, in terms of its growth and progress achieved in IPv6 deployment since then. The revision focuses on promoting and building capacity for IPv6 deployment.

⁴ See: <https://www.icann.org/resources/pages/ipv6-initiative-2017-02-28-en>

RESOLUTION 75, THE ITU TELECOMMUNICATION STANDARDIZATION SECTOR'S CONTRIBUTION IN IMPLEMENTING THE OUTCOMES OF THE WORLD SUMMIT ON THE INFORMATION SOCIETY, TAKING INTO ACCOUNT THE 2030 AGENDA FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

With the WSIS+20 Review, expected to take place at the U.N. in 2025, interest in the ITU's activities on implementation of WSIS action items have received much attention, including the ITU's WSIS-related proposals. Changes in Resolution 75 would subsequently trigger similar updates in corresponding resolutions at WTDC and Plenipotentiary. WTSA-20 considered a proposal by the Arab States to expand the ITU-T's security work to include data protection and the cybercrime (detection, prevention, and response) on the basis of the ITU's facilitator role on WSIS actions lines C2 on Information and communication infrastructure, C5 on Building Confidence and security in the use of ICTs, and C6 on Enabling Environment. Cybercrime is an issue that is considered a national matter and outside the scope of ITU.⁵ This proposal was not accepted.

Outcome: Resolution 75 was modified with few updates that included a reference to Least Developed Countries (LDCs) and Small Island States (SIDs) added to the footnote as regions where participation in Internet Governance discussions requires greater promotion. Additionally, it recognizes that in 2019 the ITU Council modified several resolutions on the ITU's role in the implementation of the WSIS outcomes and the CWG-Internet. The proposal by the RCC to remove the invitation to stakeholders to participate in open consultations of the CWG-Internet was not accepted, and therefore the invitation was retained.

RESOLUTION 98, ENHANCING THE STANDARDIZATION OF INTERNET OF THINGS AND SMART CITIES AND COMMUNITIES FOR GLOBAL DEVELOPMENT

Since WTSA 2016 adopted this resolution, Study Group 20 on Internet of Things (IoT) and Smart Cities and Communities was established, and its scope has expanded. Attempts to explore IoT policy implications in areas like the security and privacy of big data have tested the limits of the study group's mandate. Its work includes studies on IoT use cases and requirements, including IoT identification. There have been proposals over the years to standardize identifiers for IoT security, such as the Digital Object Architecture (DOA), as well as suggestions for IPv6 addressing plans for IoT. DOA is an overall architecture for managing digital objects with an associated unique persistent identifier. DOA specifies mechanisms for storing and retrieving digital objects.⁶ These proposals in SG-20 have been rejected. DOA was discussed at WTSA-20 in the context of WTSA Resolution 96, ITU Telecommunication Standardization Sector studies for combating counterfeit telecommunication/ICT devices, where the main source of contention was the inclusion of the following text referencing DOA: "further recognizing, b) that, as stated in Resolution 188 (Busan, 2014), Recommendation ITU-T X.1255, which is based on the digital object architecture, provides a framework for discovery of identity management information." The official proceedings of WTSA-20 reflect a multicountry statement objecting to the reference.⁷

Outcomes: The revision promotes IoT skills and capacity building, especially for developing countries, and coordination in this area with the ITU development sector.

⁵ See, Resolves 3, Plenipotentiary Resolution 130 (Rev. Dubai 2018) on "Strengthening the role of ITU in building confidence and security in the use of information and communication technologies," https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Cybersecurity/Documents/RES_130_rev_Dubai.pdf

⁶ See Durand (2019), "Digital Object Architecture and the Handle System," for more information. <https://www.icann.org/en/system/files/files/octo-002-14oct19-en.pdf>

⁷ See, page 529, Proceedings of the WTSA-20: Part V - Reports and Documents for the multistate statement on the DOA https://www.itu.int/dms_pub/itu-t/opb/reg/T-REG-LIV.1-2022-PDF-E.pdf

ITU-T AND OTHER ISSUES

New Internet Protocol (New IP)

New IP is a concept proposed by Huawei and Futurewei, a subsidiary of Huawei, and was submitted as a set of proposals to ITU-T Focus Group on Technologies for Network 2030 (FG Net-2030) in 2019.⁸ **It should be noted that New IP is not a standard nor even a set of proposed implementable technologies. There is hardly any publicly available technical documentation to describe it, and, as such, should be seen more as a research proposal than an actual technology.** Huawei's New IP-related proposals, supported by China Telecom, China Unicom, and the Ministry of Industry and Information Technology of China, sought to introduce new standardization work for a new Internet Protocol design system to replace the current network architecture. According to Huawei, several issues needed to be addressed such as variable length IP addressing, "better than best effort networking," new security frameworks such as intrinsic security, binding with digital objects, and novel privacy protection mechanisms. Huawei also proposed "ManyNets," in which the Internet would become a patchwork of networks connected by gateways rather than a single network. **A number of technical concerns have been raised in an ICANN OCTO paper analyzing New IP**⁹. Perhaps one of the most significant is the potential for ubiquitous surveillance by allowing intermediary systems to become control points in end-to-end communications.¹⁰

Outcome: ITU-T Study Group 13 was unable to reach consensus on new work items or questions related to the New IP proposals for the ITU-T Next Study Group period (NSP) - February 2021 to March 2022, resulting in no further consideration of the New IP-related proposals in the NSP. Unless the proponents decide they want to discuss it at WTSA, which can also consider proposals for study group questions outside the NSP process.

Summary

WTSA-20 successfully completed its tasks with few setbacks. The decision early on by Member States to reach consensus on items efficiently and avoid debating contentious issues helped. Some proposals were not discussed due to time constraints, and others were advanced to the agenda of either the WTDC or Plenipotentiary 2022. For example, WTSA recommended the ATU draft proposal for a new question on OTTs be taken up by the relevant study group. The Arab States' new draft resolution on the "Development of Open Networks including Standardization of Open Access Networks" WTSA-20 noted its importance in digital divide discussions and invited members to submit proposals on the topic to WTDC. Delegates were also cognizant that the next WTSA would be held in two years, with preparations set to begin in late 2023. Any outstanding issues could also be addressed at that time. Overall, the results were favorable for the open Internet.

⁸ ITU-T FG-Network 2030 was an activity of ITU-T Study Group 13 on Future Networks and concluded in 2020. The Webpage is here: <https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-T/focusgroups/net2030/Pages/default.aspx>

⁹ See, Durand (2020), "New IP" <https://www.icann.org/en/system/files/files/octo-017-27oct20-en.pdf>

¹⁰ This is contrary to the design goal of Internet interconnectivity across heterogeneous networks. The IETF believes this design goal, which we would commonly express as a requirement for interoperability, is critical to the evolution of IP and the Internet..." (<https://datatracker.ietf.org/liaison/1677/>)

ITU World Telecommunication Development Conference 2022

WTDC is the quadrennial conference that sets the ITU Telecommunication Development sector's (ITU-D) four-year work plan (2021-2025). ITU-D was established to address the needs of developing countries amid the rapidly evolving telecommunication landscape, where developing countries needed more technical assistance for the development of their national telecommunication infrastructure. WTDC-22 was held in Africa for the first time in the sector's more than three-decade history and in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic, in which digital technologies played a critical role. WTDC-22 was significant for the region, where digital divides are far more pronounced than in other parts of the world and were further exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, which prompted governments to redouble their efforts to close the digital divide. Preparations for WTDC took place over a two-year period, leading up to the conference, with ITU Members working together to progress much of the statutory conference work in advance in order to allow discussions to focus on development topics. WTDC prepares the Action Plan, which consists of the regional initiatives and new and revised resolutions that guide the work of ITU-D, the Declaration and ITU-D's contribution to the Strategic and Operational Plan (2024 to 2027), which is endorsed by the Plenipotentiary. WTDC outcomes were positive for the Internet, and an important aspect of the conference was the partnerships formed to address the digital divide. ICANN, for instance, joined the ITU Partner2Connect Digital Coalition, a multistakeholder alliance aimed at promoting meaningful connectivity and digital transformation, and pledged to provide capacity building support to ten African country code top-level domain (ccTLD) registries in order to prepare them to compete in the domain industry.¹¹

ICANN is a Sector Member of ITU-D and participates in various forums that this sector conducts on a regular basis, including WTDC-22. Part of WTDC's work includes considering new and modified WTDC resolutions, some of which touch on Internet issues. ICANN followed these discussions closely.

¹¹ Press Release: ICANN Commits to Training in Best Practices for African Internet Registries, June 2022. <https://www.icann.org/resources/press-material/release-2022-06-07-en>

Main Outcomes of WTDC-22

RESOLUTION 63, INTERNET PROTOCOL ADDRESS ALLOCATION AND FACILITATING THE TRANSITION TO AND DEPLOYMENT OF INTERNET PROTOCOL VERSION 6 IN THE DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

WTDC's thematic focus on connecting the unconnected includes discussions on the potential provided by IPv6 deployment for the continued growth and extension of the Internet, especially in developing nations, and its role in digital transformation. The ITU regional telecommunication organization's proposals to amend resolution 63 were diverse. ATU stressed the need for ITU support for capacity building. CITELE emphasized best practices and the role Internet Service Providers (ISPs), businesses, and governments could play in promoting increased IPv6 deployment. One of the more controversial discussions at WTDC was over a new concept introduced by China in its proposal on resolution 63, describing it as an upgraded version of IPv6, IPv6+. However, IPv6+ does not appear to be a new technology or new set of technologies, but simply a specific deployment type of IPv6 using already defined extensions.

Outcome: WTDC-22 revised Resolution 63 to emphasize the current state of IPv6 deployment and encouraged all stakeholders to promote wider IPv6 deployment. Further, the revision recognizes that environments where business and industry are developing new technologies and innovations are seeing rapid IPv6 deployment. WTDC-22 did not accept the proposal to include IPv6+. Some of the counterarguments were that it was an undefined standard, and that the focus should remain on promoting the deployment of IPv6, particularly in developing countries.

RESOLUTION 23, INTERNET ACCESS AND AVAILABILITY FOR DEVELOPING COUNTRIES AND CHARGING PRINCIPLES FOR INTERNATIONAL INTERNET CONNECTION

The conference considered a proposal by CEPT to suppress Resolution 64 and incorporate elements into Resolution 23. The Arab States proposed that no changes be made to Resolution 23. CEPT emphasized the role of IPv6 in expanding Internet connectivity, as well as the need to ramp up promotion efforts. Furthermore, they encouraged collaboration with Internet ecosystem organizations such as the Regional Internet Registries (RIRs) for the deployment of IPv6.

Outcome: Resolution 64 was retained by the conference and consequently revised. Consensus was not achieved on CEPT's proposal. The revision primarily consists of editorial changes.

RESOLUTION 30, ROLE OF THE ITU TELECOMMUNICATION DEVELOPMENT SECTOR IN IMPLEMENTING THE OUTCOMES OF THE WORLD SUMMIT ON THE INFORMATION SOCIETY AND THE 2030 AGENDA FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

The Arab States' proposal to have ITU-D study groups use outcomes from various WSIS-related activities in their work and to have the ITU-D analyze how new and emerging technologies contribute to the implementation of the U.N. Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) fueled many of the discussions around Resolution 30. Where the conference came to an agreement was that the ITU-D study groups should contribute to activities related to WSIS and the SDGs.

Outcome: There were no major changes to the revision. To begin with, CEPT proposed that no changes be made to the resolution. The conference did, however, agree on mostly editorial updates, with one key addition encouraging all ITU Members (not just Member States) to collaborate in implementing the WSIS outcomes in ITU-D Study Groups and the ITU Council Working Group on WSIS and the SDGs; and this should be done within the ITU's mandate.

RESOLUTION 45, MECHANISMS FOR ENHANCING COOPERATION ON CYBERSECURITY, INCLUDING COUNTERING AND COMBATING SPAM

Cybersecurity was a prominent topic at WTDC. However, disagreements regarding the ITU's role and responsibility remain, making this a contentious issue. Some want the ITU to maintain its facilitator role as defined by the WSIS Tunis Agenda, while others want the ITU to respond to the evolving security threat landscape, regardless of its role. Some of the proposals made at WTSA-20 earlier this year resurfaced. The Arab States and ATU wanted to elevate the ITU's role in cybersecurity and within the U.N. system. Their proposals referenced ongoing U.N. cyber-related processes, with suggestions that the ITU serve as a potential platform for regular international dialogue on these issues. Concerns were raised that such a proposal would expand the ITU's role. Another proposal by the Arab States to incorporate data protection into the ITU's cybersecurity activities was discussed but not accepted. Spam received some attention as well. Emerging technologies were identified as contributing to the propagation of spam. Alongside it was a proposal for the ITU to assist Member States, especially those in developing countries, in combating various forms of spam using both legal and technical measures. The proposals on spam were not accepted; however, the conference heeded the concerns raised by developing countries.

Outcome: The revised resolution emphasizes a range of activities to assist Member States in developing countries. The update requests that the Development Sector assist developing countries with capacity building and improving cyber resilience capabilities for critical telecommunication/ICTs infrastructure, as well frameworks for developing incident response capabilities, and training materials to address challenges of spam. While some of these activities are already being carried out by the Development Sector, their emphasis in the revision allows for more focused activities in gaps or areas identified by developing countries as needing more support.

RESOLUTION 46, ASSISTANCE TO INDIGENOUS PEOPLES AND COMMUNITIES THROUGH INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES

Digital inclusion of indigenous communities was a goal of the CITELE proposal, which sought to have them included in connectivity discussions. Furthermore, CITELE called for “the generation of linguistic variations” to facilitate their participation in capacity building and training.¹²

Outcome: Consensus was achieved on the latter proposal. Linguistic diversity would require the use and or support of IDNs — a goal of the Universal Acceptance Steering Group (UASG), which promotes IDNs. Secure implementation of IDNs would allow individuals, businesses, organizations, governments, and others to access the Internet using domain names in local languages and scripts.

RESOLUTION 82, PRESERVING AND PROMOTING MULTILINGUALISM ON THE INTERNET FOR AN INCLUSIVE INFORMATION SOCIETY

The Conference debated modifications to Resolution 82 put forward by CITELE and ATU. ATU encouraged promoting Universal Acceptance with IDNs to encourage Internet use. The changes proposed by CITELE focused on encouraging capacity building and digital skills to enable the development of local digital content, as well as the inclusion of indigenous communities recognizing that these efforts should not undermine the traditional autonomy of these communities.

Outcome: The conference approved several of the proposals. It's worth noting that the revision includes indigenous communities, rural and underserved communities, and minority groups in the promotion of multilingualism on the Internet and a suggestion to build initiatives aimed at these groups.

Summary

WTDC-22 outcomes were positive for the Internet and ICANN's mission. The conference made progress in cultivating partnerships through the ITU Partner2Connect Digital Coalition to address the digital divide, which led to the approval of a new resolution (Resolution 88 on the ITU Partner2Connect Digital Coalition). Importantly, developing countries shaped the agenda and shared their perspectives on what was critical for their countries to address the connectivity gap. The advance conference preparations helped to build consensus prior to and during the conference, particularly on some of the connectivity topics. The conference also sent a clear message that proposals to update the existing Internet Protocol should be submitted to the appropriate standards body, and that technical topics are best discussed at the WTSA.

¹² See WTDC Final Report, page 332, 2022; <https://www.itu.int/en/publications/ITU-D/Pages/publications.aspx?parent=D-TDC-WTDC-2022&media=electronic>

ITU Plenipotentiary Conference 2022

Summary

The ITU Plenipotentiary Conference 2022 (PP-22) took place in Bucharest, Romania, from 26 September to 14 October. Revisions to several Internet-related resolutions were approved by the conference. Technical Internet Governance and the multistakeholder governance model were a central theme, with some proposals having the potential to touch on ICANN's mission. Since 2010, discussions around the Internet at the Plenipotentiary Conferences have been challenging, and PP-22 was no exception. However, agreement was reached in many difficult areas, and the outcomes were relatively positive for the current Internet governance model. PP-22 also elected the first woman to lead the institution as Secretary-General, marking an important milestone in the Union's 157-year history, and adopted an annual schedule for the future ITU forums and conferences. Several new resolutions were also adopted, including one on artificial intelligence, which would have seemed inconceivable four years ago, but pressure to pass such a resolution had mounted recently, including at the other major ITU conferences earlier this year. Member States on both sides of the AI debate submitted proposals for a new AI resolution, which builds on existing work in the ITU Telecommunication Standardization Sector. PP-22 was not without controversy. Sharp disagreements arose over whether to include references to youth and gender in the context of digital inclusion, as well as the ITU's Global Cybersecurity Agenda, and their removal was followed by statements for the record. As with any multilateral discussion, there are both gains and losses, but as was the case in Bucharest, the pursuit of a united front trumps the need to maintain certain positions.

Final Acts Adopted

The Final Acts were adopted by PP-22 and signed by 157 Member States. The Final Acts reflect the decisions and resolutions that were suppressed, adopted, or revised by the conference, including declarations by the Member States.

New ITU Leadership Elected

PP-22 chose new ITU leadership for the next four years. Doreen Bogdan-Martin (USA), formerly the Director of ITU-D, was elected as the new Secretary-General with 139 votes, while her opponent, Rashid Ismailov (Russia) received 25. Tomas Lamanauskas of Lithuania was elected Deputy Secretary-General. Mario Maniewicz of Uruguay was elected for a second term as Director of ITU-R. Cosmas Zavazava of Zimbabwe was elected Director of ITU-D, and Seizo Onoe of Japan was elected Director of ITU-T. PP-22 also held elections for the Radio Regulations Board and the ITU Council, which governs the ITU between Plenipotentiaries.¹³

¹³ Full results of the elections are published here: <https://pp22.itu.int/en/elections/elections-results/>

Outcomes of the Internet-related resolutions

ICANN was monitoring discussions on four resolutions that dealt with the Internet Protocol-based networks and critical Internet resources, and others such as cybersecurity. The revisions do not impact the Internet or ICANN's mission.

RESOLUTION 101, IP-BASED NETWORKS (REV., BUCHAREST, 2022)

This resolution focuses on coordination and collaboration between the ITU, and relevant organizations involved in the development of IP-based networks and the future Internet. The Arab States proposed that the ITU Council "*support and engage in efforts that lead to sustainable, secure, and stable IP-based networks critical infrastructure in order to ensure the continued growth of these networks.*" The main disagreement was that the proposed text was seen as an attempt to expand the ITU's role in Internet Governance, including in the management of critical Internet resources. The ITU, as an intergovernmental organization, plays a facilitating role in Internet public policy matters, as outlined in Article 35 of the Tunis Agenda, as opposed to what was proposed. Concerns were raised that the proposal would create a new function for the ITU Council, whose role is clearly defined by the ITU Convention as examining and implementing the broad telecommunications policy matters brought to it by the Plenipotentiary Conference. The proposal was met with criticism from a number of Member States and was not accepted.

Another source of contention was the resolution's footnote, which since PP-2010, includes a list of relevant organizations involved in IP-based networks, including ICANN. The Regional Telecommunication Organization for Europe — the European Conference of Postal and Telecommunications Administrations (CEPT) — proposed embedding the list of organizations in the operative section of the resolution and also including the UASG. Those against the proposal argued that it was not exhaustive or inclusive of other organizations involved in IP-based networks. The proposal was not accepted, so the default was 'no change' (NOC), and the footnote remained. While there were several other proposals, much of the modified resolution remained unchanged.

Outcome: The revision reflects 'stakeholders' where relevant organizations are mentioned, includes "*new and emerging telecommunication/ICT services and technologies*" along with IP-based services, and calls for an annual report by the Secretary-General to the ITU Council detailing the resolution's implementation.

RESOLUTION 102 ON THE ITU'S ROLE IN INTERNATIONAL INTERNET PUBLIC POLICY MATTERS

The ITU Council Working Group for international Internet-related public issues (CWG-Internet) was established on the basis of Resolution 102 and the decisions adopted at Plenipotentiary define how the CWG will work. The Plenipotentiary determines whether it wants the CWG-Internet to continue or not. While the CWG-Internet holds open and physical consultations with stakeholders twice a year, its meetings are open to Member States only. In Bucharest, among the main points of contention was the participation in the CWG-Internet and whether to maintain the status quo or open its meetings to stakeholders and sector members. CEPT proposed opening "*the first half of the CWG-Internet meeting to all stakeholders and the second half to Member States, Sector Members, and Associates.*" CITELE proposed that the CWG-Internet be open to both Member States and sector members. The Arab States proposed that the CWG-Internet produce outcomes or deliverables, and that the Secretary-General "*contribute to international efforts and initiatives on Internet governance, including resource management.*" Furthermore, the CWG-Internet should provide "*recommendations leading to sustainable, secured and stable Internet critical infrastructure in order to avoid Internet fragmentation.*" ATU proposed that the ITU "*support and collaborate in ensuring that all domain names, including new top-level domains and*

IDNs, are treated equally and accessible to all." CEPT also proposed embedding the references to relevant organizations from the footnote to include the UASG. All these proposals were hotly debated and ultimately rejected.

Outcome: The revision recognizes the CWG-Internet's contribution to the discussions on international Internet-related public policy issues, and that it should strengthen its work to address these issues. Additionally, the revision emphasized that decisions affecting ccTLDs by governments in their respective countries should be respected.

RESOLUTION 133, ROLE OF ADMINISTRATIONS OF MEMBER STATES IN THE MANAGEMENT OF (MULTILINGUAL) IDNS

Universal Acceptance and IDNs were extensively discussed at Plenipotentiary, with some wanting the ITU to play a more active role, particularly in the development of technical solutions. In their proposal, the Arab States attempted to define multilingualism, stating that *"the concept of multilingualism covers domain names, emails, and e-applications and required software to enable interoperability across the various components of the resolution process."* They also requested that ITU-T develop technical solutions while also considering security concerns. Given that ITU-T is the ITU's standards arm, some believed that the World Telecommunication Standardization Assembly (WTSA) was the appropriate venue for discussing proposals for new standardization work, while highlighting that similar efforts were underway in the USAG. Additionally, while CEPT proposed embedding the footnote with the list of Internet organizations and adding the USAG in the operative section, the Arab States proposed their deletion. The compromise reached was for a NOC and the footnote was maintained.

Outcome: The revised resolution emphasizes the benefits of a multilingual Internet; additionally, that efforts should continue in developing technical solutions to support IDNs implementation. Member States and sector members are encouraged to consider ways to further promote universal acceptance. Finally, the ITU should report on its activities related to IDNs more consistently, as well as annually, to the ITU Council.

RESOLUTION 180, PROMOTING THE DEPLOYMENT OF IPV6

In view of other major ITU conferences held earlier in 2022 there was a concerted effort by some of the regional telecommunication organizations to align Resolution 180 with outcomes achieved on this issue. ATU's modifications sought to reflect the current state of IPv6 deployment. As a result, the title was changed to remove the emphasis on the transition from IPv4 to IPv6, as well as the adoption of IPv6. APT's proposal for ITU-T to develop technical standards within the context of this resolution, which implied an IPv6 standard, raised some concerns. While supported by China, ATU, and the Arab States, this proposal was deposed by CEPT and CITELE on the grounds that the IETF develops the IPv6 standard, and any updates should be done at the IETF.

Outcome: The revision emphasizes the current state of IPv6 deployment and has no impact on the Internet or ICANN's mission.

Cyber and Other Issues

RESOLUTION 130, STRENGTHENING THE ROLE OF ITU IN BUILDING CONFIDENCE AND SECURITY IN THE USE OF INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES (BUCHAREST, 2022)

The main stumbling block of Resolution 130 was the issue of the Global Cybersecurity Agenda (GCA) in the operative section. Launched in 2007 by the then ITU Secretary-General, Hamadoun Touré, the GCA is a framework for international cooperation aimed at enhancing confidence and security in the Information Society. The framework includes five Pillars: Legal Measures, Technical and Procedural Measures, Organizational Structures, Capacity Building, and International Cooperation. The GCA has been a source of contention since PP-18, with some Member States viewing the framework as a potential vehicle for a cybersecurity treaty and others viewing it as a guide for ITU's cybersecurity initiatives that are important to developing countries. Brazil, the Arab States, and ATU backed the retention of the GCA in the resolution, while CITEC and CEPT opposed it. The compromise reached was the adoption of a recommendation to the PP-22 conference: *"WGPL recommends that the Plenipotentiary conference invites the Council to consider proposals from Member States regarding the GCA, its current use and possible future elaboration."*

Outcome: The revision's main changes are the focus on building cybersecurity skills and global resilience, as well as encouraging women to pursue careers in cybersecurity.

RESOLUTION 146, PERIODIC REVIEW OF THE INTERNATIONAL TELECOMMUNICATION REGULATIONS (ITRS) (REV., BUCHAREST, 2022)

PP-22 reached a stalemate on Resolution 146, with parties on both sides deadlocked for much of the conference. A potential vote measure was suggested but in the end the parties were able to reach an agreement. Principal disagreements concerned whether to reconvene the Expert Group on ITRs, which had met twice in the previous eight years, or to discontinue it completely. CITEC and CEPT believed that divergent views were too entrenched and that the ITU should agree not to conduct another World Conference on International Telecommunications (WCIT), which is the venue where the ITRs can be updated. In addition, the Arab States and ATU believed that two sets of ITRs posed a reputational risk to the ITU and saw a need for one set of ITRs. They proposed reconvening the EG-ITRs with a *"mandate to present a draft of a new set of ITRs,"* and holding a WCIT between 2024 and 2026.

Outcome: The reference to "revision" in the title was removed in the revised resolution. Furthermore, the update directs the ITU Secretary-General to reconvene the EG-ITRs with terms of reference and working methods established by the ITU Council. The Council is instructed to review and revise the terms of reference for the EG-ITR at its 2023 session, review EG-ITR reports at its annual sessions, and submit the final report of the EG-ITR to the 2026 Plenipotentiary Conference with the Council's comments. The 2026 Plenipotentiary Conference is also invited to consider the EG-ITR final report and take necessary action.

RESOLUTION 214, ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI) TECHNOLOGIES AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS/ICTS

A new resolution on AI was approved by PP-22. The road to this point has been long and difficult, with some countries wanting the ITU to include AI standards work within its remit for several years, and PP-18 rejecting an AI resolution. Subsequent attempts to include AI at WTSA 2020 and WTDC 2022 were unsuccessful. Some believed that an AI resolution was unnecessary given that ITU-T is studying Machine Learning and has multiple AI focus groups already in ITU-T. However, the WTSA-20 final plenary report included suggestions to

hold the AI discussion at Plenipotentiary. The new Resolution builds on existing work underway across ITU, including but not limited to the "AI for Good" platform. The ITU Secretary-General and three Bureau Directors are to identify collaboration opportunities with other relevant organizations and stakeholders. Also, in line with the ITU's mandate, the resolution encourages ITU members to share experiences and participate in international multistakeholder dialogues, capacity building, and AI application studies to help accomplish the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda.

Post Plenipotentiary 2022

Overall, the PP-22 negotiations yielded modest gains and reached significant milestones in several areas including on Artificial Intelligence. Moreover, the existing multistakeholder model and Internet governance structures were preserved. While these are positive outcomes, the recurrence of the discussions reveal that Member States continue to hold divergent views on the multistakeholder model, and the desire for a multilateral approach will continue. In the next four years, we anticipate that several Member States will continue to contribute to the various ITU Council Working Groups and ITU-T and ITU-D study groups; contributions, which will touch on ICANN's mission. We will continue to monitor and report on these issues in support of ICANN's strategic goals.

Future conferences and forums scheduled by the PP '22

(Some concrete dates will be defined by the 2023 Session of ITU Council.)

Year/dates	Conference	Host
2023 20 Nov – 15 Dec	ITU World Radio Conference (WRC)	United Arab Emirates
2024 15 – 24 October	World Telecommunication Standardization Assembly (WTSA)	India
2025 last quarter	World Telecommunication Development Conference	Thailand
2026	World Telecommunication/ICTs Policy Forum (WTPF)	n/a
2026 last quarter	Plenipotentiary	Qatar
2027 last quarter	ITU World Radio Conference (WRC)	Rwanda (pending)



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