ITU Backgrounders

GUIDE TO PP-14 DOCUMENT TYPES

This quick guide is designed to help you understand what the different types signify.

The Plenipotentiary Conference is the event at which ITU Member States decide on the future direction of the organization. Held every four years, the conference enables Member States to amend the Constitution and Convention, set the Union's general policies, adopt four-year Strategic and Financial Plans, and elect the top management team of ITU.

All ITU's 193 Member States have the right to submit documents, called 'proposals', for discussion by the conference. To ensure conference discussions proceed as efficiently as possible, documents are categorized by different document types. This quick guide is designed to help you understand what the different types signify.

Different types and colours of document

A **DOC** *(document)* is the main working document series of the conference. **DOCs** can be submitted by a Member State or group of Member States (proposals for the work of the Conference), the ITU secretariat (for example, reports, or minutes of Plenary meetings) or by the Plenary or the Committees of the conference (for example, notes from the Chair, series of texts submitted to Editorial Committee).

A **DOC** starts life as a **White Document**. As it advances through the conference process, it may be amended one or more times, and eventually, when consensus is reached on the text, it becomes a **Blue Document** – a stable, approved document which is submitted for formal First Reading by the Plenary. If a clear majority so wishes, modifications can still be made at this stage.

When it has passed First Reading stage as a Blue Document, it becomes a **Pink Document**, and is submitted for Second Reading (the final reading). If a clear majority so wishes, modifications can still be made at this stage.

When consensus is reached on a Pink Document it is considered finally approved by the conference and passes into the **Final Acts**, which are presented to delegations for signing onsite just before the end of the conference.

A **DT** *(working temporary document)* is a draft document which is usually created by a Committee or a Working Group either before or during the conference, and put before the conference for discussion. A DT is printed in Green colour.

A **DL** *(working temporary document addressed to a limited group)* is a working temporary document with limited distribution. It is used to agree a text within a smaller working group which has been assigned by a Committee or by the Plenary to focus on a specific area. Once agreed within this smaller group it usually becomes a DT and goes to the larger Committee and/or Plenary for discussion. A DL is printed in **Yellow** colour.

An **ADM** *(administrative document)* is one of various documents which outline the agendas of the Committees and other general administrative documents, such as information for participants. An ADM is printed in **Pink** colour.

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An **INF** *(information document)* is an informative document which provides useful information for delegates, but which is not itself discussed at the conference. An INF is not assigned a colour, since it is never printed.

In line with ITU's commitment to a green working environment, most documentation is provided in electronic format only, via a special app developed to ensure delegates have all the latest versions of all documents at hand in all six working languages of the conference (Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish) at the click of a mouse or touch of screen.

All input documents from Member States are available in all six working languages. However, because of time constraints during the conference itself, DT/DL documents are normally available in English only unless they contain draft treaty texts or draft Resolutions, Decisions or Recommendations. Both ADM and INF documents are available in English only.

Different types of document content

Treaty text: The **Final Acts** of the Conference comprise several parts, including amendments to the ITU Constitution, ITU Convention, and General Rules, along with Decisions, Resolutions, Recommendations, Declarations & Reservations, and a list of Resolutions which have been abrogated by the Conference. Only the amendments to the ITU Constitution, ITU Convention (as international treaty texts) become binding on Member States once they have ratified/acceded/approved/adhered to the new text in accordance with the respective national ratification process. Amendments to the General Rules are binding on Member States by virtue of Articles 32 of the Constitution and of the Convention.

Candidatures – elected officials: Candidates to an elected position (the five ITU elected officials and the twelve members of the Radio Regulations Board) are required to submit a formal document of candidature by **23:59 CET on 22 September, 2014**. This consists of a formal nomination letter from the Administration of the Member State, and the candidate's curriculum vitae with an accompanying photograph.

Candidatures – Council Member States: The ITU secretariat prepares and publishes a consolidated document containing the list of Member States having submitted their candidature for election to ITU Council by the deadline of **23:59 CET on 22 September, 2014**.

Proposals: before the conference, proposals are submitted by Member States to amend the Constitution (CS), Convention (CV), General Rules (GR) and Optional Protocol of ITU. Proposals can also be submitted to abrogate or modify existing Decisions, Resolutions and Recommendations, or adopt new ones. These are then debated in the Committees and in the Plenary. Proposals can be submitted in any of the six official languages of the conference. Submitted proposals are assigned a number and become **DOCs**.

Decisions, Resolutions & Recommendations: None of these instruments has treaty status (they are not, in principle, binding on Member States), and are generally addressed to the ITU as a body, along with its executive arms (such as ITU's governing Council or the Secretary-General). However, when addressed specifically to a subordinate organ of the Union (such as ITU Council or any of all of the ITU's three Bureaux) they do have a binding character on that organ.

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- **A Decision /Resolution** is the standard mechanism by which a conference instructs its subordinate organs (such as the ITU Council or ITU Bureaux) to take some kind of action. There is no hierarchy established between these two legal instruments, nor strict definitions differentiating them. In principle, 'Resolutions' are used for decisions whose effect will be felt long-term, while 'Decisions' have an effect more limited in terms of time frame.

- **A Recommendation** is more like a 'suggestion' – no legal imperative is implied.

When signing the Final Acts, all Member States have the right to lodge a formal 'reservation' on any part/s of the text having treaty status from which they wish to be exempted. Member States also have the option of including Declarations in the Final Acts. All Declarations and Reservations are listed at the beginning of the published Final Acts.

When consensus is reached on a Pink Document it is considered finally approved by the conference and passes into the **Final Acts**, *which are presented to delegations for signing onsite just before the end of the conference.*

What do the document numbers represent?

Documents are assigned a number according to the order in which they were received by the ITU secretariat.

What do the document suffixes refer to?

All documents are labelled with a suffix which indicates the language in which they were originally written: A – Arabic, C – Chinese, E – English, F – French, R – Russian or S – Spanish. As the ITU Plenipotentiary Conference adheres to the UN six-language policy, most documents are translated by the ITU secretariat into all official languages.

What do the suffixes Rev, Cor and Add refer to?

To amend content of a document, there are three possibilities:

A Revision (suffix **.Rev**) to a document completely replaces previous version. It is considered the current working version of a document.

A Corrigendum (suffix **.Cor**) is issued to amend certain parts of a document. It has to be considered alongside the original document.

An Addendum (suffix is **.Add**) is issued to add content to a document. It has to be considered alongside the original document.

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