

## **1 Introduction**

- 1.1 Now, more than ever, the telecommunication/information and communication technology (ICT) industry is undergoing a profound transformation with far-reaching consequences. The development of new and emerging information and communication technologies (ICTs), the spread of Internet Protocol (IP)-based next-generation networks (NGNs), convergence in devices and networks, the rise of social networks and changing needs of consumers mean that ICTs are now fully integrated into modern lives.
- 1.2 Telecommunication operators, service providers, policy-makers, consumers, civil society and other stakeholders are all responding and adapting to the social, economic and other changes driven by accelerating technological change and convergence in the transformed communications landscape.
- 1.3 Among these technological developments, national and international policies, and the diverse interests of different stakeholders, ITU's vision is to strive to safeguard everyone's fundamental right to communicate by connecting the world. At this time of sweeping transformation of the industry, the Union needs a strong and effective strategic plan to help it respond more closely to the changing needs of its members and to prove its ongoing relevance in an all-IP world.

## **2 The changing telecommunication/ICT environment and its implications for the Union**

- 2.1 Since the last plenipotentiary conference of the Union, many key developments have occurred in the telecommunication and broader ICT environment that have significant implications for ITU as a whole. These developments include (not listed in any special order):
  - 2.1.1 the emergence of key technologies, enabling new services and applications and promoting the building of the information society;
  - 2.1.2 continued growth, albeit uneven across countries, of the Internet and other IP-based platforms and related services, and the deployment of international, regional and national IP-based backbone networks;
  - 2.1.3 the convergence of technological platforms for telecommunications, information delivery, broadcasting and computing and the deployment of common integrated network infrastructures for multiple communication services and applications;

- 2.1.4 the continuing rapid development of wireless and mobile radiocommunications, and their convergence with both fixed telephony and broadcasting services;
- 2.1.5 the rapid growth in demand for ICT services, owing to the development and demand for new devices and bandwidth, which calls for strengthening and promoting regional and worldwide collaboration towards a broadband economy, which should be characterized by appropriate policy and regulatory regimes;
- 2.1.6 the growing effects of climate change, which pose severe risks to the sustainability of global resources and survival of its inhabitants, especially those communities in fragile environments and ecosystems most at risk;
- 2.1.7 the need for high-quality, demand-driven international standards, which should be developed rapidly in line with the principles of global connectivity, openness, affordability, reliability, interoperability and security;
- 2.1.8 the role of ICTs as effective tools to promote peace and economic growth and to enhance democracy, social cohesion, good governance and the rule of law at the national, regional and international levels (as recognized by the outcome texts of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS));
- 2.1.9 the need for confidence of stakeholders in order to allow the successful implementation of telecommunication/ICT infrastructure: end users, suppliers, investors and governments need to have confidence that the telecommunications/ICTs they use in their daily business and social interactions and for the enhancement of their livelihood will be reliable and secure;
- 2.1.10 the need for telecommunication/ICT infrastructure in a broadband economy to be "greener" and more environmentally friendly;
- 2.1.11 the continuing trend towards the separation of operational and regulatory functions, and the creation of independent telecommunication regulatory bodies, as well as the growing role of regional organizations, in order to ensure the consistency and predictability of regulatory frameworks, and encourage confidence in capital investment;
- 2.1.12 the continuing market liberalization, in particular in developing countries<sup>1</sup> including the opening of markets to competition, through licensing of new market entrants and greater private-sector participation, including public-private partnerships;

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<sup>1</sup> These include the least developed countries (LDCs), small island developing states, landlocked developing countries and countries with economies in transition.

- 2.1.13 the trend in a number of Member States to regulate telecommunications/ICTs with less reliance on sectoral regulation in competitive markets, generating different challenges for policy-makers and regulators;
- 2.1.14 the need for effective use of telecommunications/ICTs and modern technologies during critical emergencies, as a crucial part of disaster prediction, detection, early-warning, mitigation, management and relief strategies;
- 2.1.15 ongoing challenges relating to capacity building, in particular for developing countries, in the light of technological innovation and growing convergence.
- 2.2 A continuing challenge facing the Union is to remain a pre-eminent intergovernmental organization where Member States, Sector Members and Associates work together to enable the growth and sustained development of telecommunications and information networks and applications, and to facilitate universal access so that people everywhere can participate in, and benefit from, the emerging information society. In this context, the Union must strive to make itself more responsive to its members' changing needs and should consider the following factors:
  - 2.2.1 the need to encourage representatives of new stakeholders to take advantage of participation in the work of the Union, as appropriate, especially as it relates to the emerging information society;
  - 2.2.2 the need to raise public awareness of the Union's mandate, role and activities, as well as to afford broader access to the Union's activities and programme resources for the general public and other actors involved in the emerging information society;
  - 2.2.3 the need to make optimal use of the established scarce financial and human resources available for the Union's activities and to make every effort to enhance these resources required in order for ITU to meet its responsibilities and challenges for the benefit of its membership, particularly developing countries;
  - 2.2.4 the increasing pressure on the Union to respond creatively to internal challenges by enhancing cohesion in resource planning and utilization, enlarging opportunities for constructive partnerships, and attracting increased international support by strengthening its human resources capacity and revenue base, institutional capacity and ability to manage and share information, as well as meeting the requirement for transparency and accountability;
  - 2.2.5 in light of a greater awareness of good governance among Member States and the public in general, ITU, like many other international agencies, is facing important challenges to become a results-based and accountable organization, and must continue working toward establishing appropriate mechanisms for monitoring and evaluation functions.

- 2.3 The need to build confidence and security in the use of ICTs for the development and growth of the information society will require building upon existing cybersecurity work and partnerships related to building confidence and security in the use of telecommunications/ICTs, requiring international collaboration to fulfil this task.

### **3 Strategic orientations and goals**

- 3.1 The main mission of ITU – as a pre-eminent intergovernmental organization where Member States, Sector Members and Associates work together – is to enable and foster the growth and sustained development of telecommunication networks and services, and to facilitate universal access so that people everywhere can participate in, and benefit from, the emerging information society. ITU can achieve this overall mission by fulfilling the following goals:

#### **3.1.1 Strategic Goal of the Radiocommunication Sector (ITU-R)**

The strategic goal of ITU-R is threefold, and includes:

- To ensure interference-free operations of radiocommunication systems by implementing the Radio Regulations and regional agreements, as well as updating these instruments in an efficient and timely manner through the processes of world and regional radiocommunication conferences.
- To establish Recommendations intended to assure the necessary performance and quality in operating radiocommunication systems.
- To seek ways and means to ensure the rational, equitable, efficient and economical use of the radio-frequency spectrum and satellite-orbit resources and to promote flexibility for future expansion and new technological developments.

#### **3.1.2 Strategic goal of the Telecommunication Standardization Sector (ITU-T)**

The strategic goal of ITU-T is threefold, and includes:

- To develop interoperable, non-discriminatory international standards (ITU-T Recommendations).
- To assist in bridging the standardization gap between developed and developing countries.
- To extend and facilitate international cooperation among international and regional standardization bodies.

### **3.1.3 Strategic goal of the Telecommunication Development Sector (ITU-D)**

The strategic goal of ITU-D is threefold, and includes:

- To promote the availability of infrastructure and foster an enabling environment for telecommunication/ICT infrastructure development and its use in a safe and secure manner.
- To provide assistance to developing countries in bridging the digital divide by achieving broader telecommunication/ICT-enabled socio-economic development.
- To expand the benefits of the information society to the membership in cooperation with public and private stakeholders, and to promote the integration of the use of telecommunications/ICTs into the broader economy and society as drivers of development, innovation, well-being, growth and productivity globally.

### **3.1.4 Strategic goal of the General Secretariat (GS)**

Effectiveness and efficiency in the planning, management, coordination and delivery of services to support the Union<sup>1</sup> and its membership, ensuring the implementation of the financial and strategic plans of the Union and coordinating intersectoral activities as identified in ITU basic texts.

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<sup>1</sup> As defined in Article 7 of the Constitution.