

RESOLUTION 13 (Rev. Sharm el-Sheikh, 2014)

Resource mobilization and partnerships for accelerating telecommunication/information and communication technology development

The World Telecommunication Development Conference (Sharm el-Sheikh, 2014),

recalling

World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) outputs concerning the mobilization of financial resources and potential partnerships with those involved in information and communication technology (ICT) development,

considering

- a) that the development of ICT in many developing countries¹ suffers from a shortage of financial resources;
- b) that traditional methods of funding have not yet eliminated the digital divide between developing and developed countries,

noting

- a) that this conference has reaffirmed, in its declaration and resolutions, a commitment to enhance the expansion and development of ICT services in developing countries and to harness capacity for the application of new and innovative services;
- b) the adoption and implementation of the Sharm el-Sheikh Action Plan, incorporating key chapters on global telecommunication/ICT infrastructure development through diverse programmes,

recognizing

- a) that in some countries the ICT sector is not accorded due priority in budget allocation;
- b) that the telecommunication sector offers a high rate of return on investment and these returns are obtained more rapidly than in other sectors, yet financing from financial institutions in the telecommunication sector is relatively low;
- c) that practical and quick approaches are required for mobilizing funds for the telecommunication/ICT sector;
- d) that partnerships should be mutually beneficial in order to narrow the digital divide,

observing

- a) that funding mechanisms and partnership schemes employed within policy and regulatory contexts that allow for the physical layer to be vertically integrated with the higher level information services provided by incumbent network providers may differ markedly from those that would serve to support competitive access at the physical layer;
- b) that funding mechanisms and partnership schemes to support competitive access at the physical layer should be developed, given the dynamic of the Internet platform, whereby autonomous providers create a platform that is naturally neutral and open because each network provider cannot predict the design of applications on other networks as they interoperate with each other;
- c) that telecommunications contexts wherein infrastructure installed at the physical layer is allowed to be treated chiefly as a private asset serving as a supply to the higher level information products and services of network incumbents do not open the physical layer to autonomous and competing network providers and thus represent local intranets rather than an Internet platform;

¹

These include the least developed countries, small island developing states, landlocked developing countries and countries with economies in transition.

d) that the distinction between networks implemented within vertically integrated telecommunications contexts, and the network of networks produced among competing providers readily entering the physical layer and interoperating among themselves, should be recognized in the developing of funding mechanisms so the different characteristics and advantages of the types of networks that result can be understood and readily compared against each other;

e) that public-private partnerships may be better designed to support development of an Internet platform among competing autonomous providers if they incorporate explicit recognition of the role of public oversight as a feature that applies inherently to shared resources such as the public right of way,

recognizing further

a) the success of the partnerships achieved by the Telecommunication Development Bureau in cooperation with government partners and partners from the ICT sector in various countries;

b) the success of the global flagship initiatives in encouraging Member States, Sector Members and other stakeholders to support actions at regional level related to the regional initiatives, initiatives and programmes determined by WTDC-10;

c) the Geneva Plan of Action and Tunis Agenda for the Information Society of the WSIS, which recognize the importance to countries of according the necessary priority to ICT development,

resolves

1 that the main players in the field of ICT should continue to act in a way that encourages investments and innovative partnership schemes, and that joint ventures should be explored for financing ICT development, both for vertically integrated telecommunications contexts and for contexts that support competitive access at the physical layer;

2 that administrations should continue to take the necessary steps for making the ICT sector more attractive for investment;

3 that there should be continuous dialogue among telecommunication operators, service providers, funding agencies and other sources of finance for preparing projects where BDT can play a catalyst role;

4 that efforts should be made to reduce delays in the funding and implementation of project cycles,

welcomes

1 different innovative financial mechanisms of a voluntary nature open to interested stakeholders with the objective of transforming the digital divide into digital opportunities for developing countries and addressing specific and urgent local needs;

2 the ITU Telecommunication Development Sector (ITU-D) initiative to hold the Connect summits for Africa, the Americas, the Arab States and CIS countries,

instructs the Director of the Telecommunication Development Bureau

1 to act as a catalyst in the development of partnerships among all parties, since ITU-D's involvement should ensure that initiatives and projects attract investment;

and to act as a catalyst in the following functions, among others:

- encouraging regional ICT initiatives and projects;
- participating in the organization of training seminars;
- signing agreements with national, regional and international partners involved in development;
- collaborating on initiatives and projects with other relevant international, regional and intergovernmental organizations;

- 2 to promote human capacity building in developing countries relating to various aspects of the ICT sector, consistent with the mandate of ITU-D, related to both networks producing an Internet platform among themselves, and other types of IP-based networks;
- 3 to promote, particularly with the ITU regional offices, the conditions required for a successful knowledge-based enterprise incubator process and other projects for small, medium and micro enterprises (SMMEs) in and among developing countries;
- 4 to continue to assist developing countries to respond to global telecommunication restructuring, especially regarding financial issues;
- 5 to encourage the international financing agencies, Member States and Sector Members to address, as a priority issue, the building, reconstruction and upgrading of networks and infrastructure in developing countries;
- 6 to pursue coordination with international bodies involved in the development of information and telecommunication technologies (ICTs), with a view to mobilizing the financial resources needed in the implementation of projects;
- 7 to take necessary initiatives to encourage partnerships which have been given high priority pursuant to:
 - i) the Geneva Plan of Action of the WSIS;
 - ii) the Tunis Agenda;
- 8 to hold the remaining Connect summits for Asia and the Pacific, in the light of the success achieved by the other summits in terms of providing a suitable environment for attracting investment to finance various national and regional projects.