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ITU COUNCIL

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>> CHAIR: Good afternoon, distinguished councilors, distinguished Delegates. Since we are resuming our discussion, we'll check the interpretation channels. (Interpretation testing).

We have one concern, technical concern, one concern. Thank you for coming back. Thank you for your patience this morning.

We will now listen to the report of the Chair of the Ad Hoc group on the discussions that took place this morning. Not just this morning, in fact, yesterday evening, this morning, and then throughout the morning.

Madam Harris is here with us. Go ahead, you have the floor.

>> Good afternoon, Chair.

I first want to say thank you to you for the time that you extended to our group this morning. It was very much appreciated. At the request of Council, I Chaired an Ad Hoc group on building the headquarter premises. We met last night until become 8:00, 80:00 and we met again this morning from 8:00 to 12:00.

I do not have a document. I will say that there is a limited distribution document posted. However, I will not be presenting a document to your group, Chair.

The discussions were extremely difficult, however I believe that they were crucial. It provided members and councilors the ability to have frank, candid conversations, about the different ideas on the ITU headquarters. While we were all in a conference room, we may as well have been in different rooms of a conference room. It could have been partitioned because the definition of fit for purpose for the ITU headquarters is very different for Member States. Proving to get to a common understanding, we were not able to do. I'm sorry for that.

I do think that we were able to have, like I said, crucial, fruitful conversations that I would encourage Member States to come back to the Council Working Group of HR based on the chart that's posted on options 1 and options 2. Option 1 is we expand the headquarters and we ask for an additional funds for the Swiss loan.

Option 2 is we will rescope, redesign our headquarters. Both would be fit for purpose, but like I said, we do not have an agreement on what a definition of what is fit for purpose.

What we all agree, we need a new building, and that additional information. I think given time that we could get to a place that we could provide Council with the guidance that Council is seeking. In this interim period, it would be extremely helpful if the Secretariat could reach out to the existing bidders to see if there is any movement in the December 31st, 2023 date. It would also be helpful if our Management Team, the Secretary‑General reaches out to continue collaboration and dialogue with our Swiss colleagues.

Chair, that's my report.

Thank you.

>> CHAIR: Thank you very much. I have to say that you have accomplished enormous work. Without you, the situation would have been much more difficult for the group of the discussion on the building, the discussion would not happen as a fruitful, of course, the fruits are limited but there are some.

I would like to applaud you for your commitment.

Thank you very much. I think we shouldn't have a lengthy discussion on what you have proposed. I think it is sufficiently vague, and have been inviting Member States to think about this issue so we'll continue this discussion during the working ‑‑ the Council Working Group, FHR, in January, I don't think we will continue the discussion here.

Nonetheless, I see that Saudi Arabia would like to take the floor.

You have the floor, Saudi Arabia, please.

>> SAUDI ARABIA: Thank you, Mr. Chairperson, and I delegates.

I would like to first highly appreciate Ms. Harris on her transparent, diligent, balanced work with all the Member States. The topic is highly contentious and difficult, she has done a great job.

Mr. Chairman, we have been able to discuss in the last two days the matter in great detail. As laid out to us, two tables with first option, the second option and in discussion with the host country, all of the Member States it was clear to us that the redesign cannot be covered with the current loan, and the Swiss government will not provide any additional funds in order to resort to a redesign. It was clear to us, there are 22 million Swiss francs that will be lost, gone without return. We are faced with two option, either go forward, seek 40 million from the Swiss government, and we thank them for having a positive signals with regard to the acceptance of this proposal, taken into account the statements that should be submitted by the ITU and looked at by the parliament.

However, to look forward with the next session is requiring closing the current loan and looking at a mechanism to pay off the 22 million. This is an amount we do not accept it should be deducted from the budget of the ITU.

The budget of the ITU, we have a going project in ongoing countries which are more deserving of being implemented, rather than wasting this amount of money.

Therefore, Mr. Karen, I do not believe that it would be appropriate to reopen the discussion at the FHR. However, this has to be discussed at the level of the Council, or maybe we can also hold another extraordinary Council session following the Dubai conference maybe.

Every day of delay, there will be a lost amount of 100,000 Swiss francs, and therefore we need to bear responsibility against vis‑a‑vis the Member States.

Thank you.

>> CHAIR: Thank you, Saudi Arabia.

United Arab Emirates, you have the floor.

>> SAUDI ARABIA: Thank you, Mr. Chairperson. I would like to also thank Her Excellency, the Chair of the Ad Hoc group who remained with us until a very late hour last night and started early this morning in a very difficult discussion in order to sort out this.

There is one thing that you have mentioned, Mr. Chairperson, I'm not sure it will be appropriate to postpone the discussion until the next session of the FHR had. Maybe this is something that is best discussed at the earliest possible opportunity, postponing now would not be solving the issue until May, especially during the discussions of yesterday and today we were able to reach a document or an outcome that was submitted by the Chairperson with regard to the options and the pros and cons of the options. Overviewing these options now would enable them to have a better understanding of the situation, including as what the colleague from Saudi Arabia had just mentioned, the risk of using the 22 million Swiss francs. Therefore, it would be important to reopen the discussion and to look what's been agreed upon, what's not been agreed upon in a clear manner, based on the outcome document and to have a very clear discussion.

Thank you.

>> CHAIR: Thank you very much.

Argentina, please, you have the floor.

>> ARGENTINA: Thank you very much, Chair. I would also like to convey our attitude to the efforts undertaken by the Chair of the WG‑FHR and all of the efforts undertaken by the delegation Brazil by coordinating with different countries helping with the good rapport on the definition, this is a very complex manner and is still indeed.

We would like to raise a few concerns pertaining to the deadlines. We had requested further information pertaining to State of accounts, and the implications of the options. Deputy Secretary‑General yesterday was very clear on the numbers in the counties. We don't have ‑‑ we don't have any other dates but what we think this is going to change between now and December and the 31st and December, in fact, the deadline in, fact, as set out.

In our view, it's really difficult to go back to our countries without a decision on this matter. In particular, understanding that the extension of the deadline means more expenditure. I think in this instance I do align myself with what was said by the Saudi Arabia delegate had said, we need to take a decision as soon as possible, it is always calling for consensus, the ITUs and the organizations, which is based upon consensus‑based decision making.

When the consensus cannot be found, this, therefore, means more expenditure will be wasted on the very tightened budget. If we cannot find a consensus, we perhaps should move to a vote and then to finally make a decision and push back further, whatever the decision is. Both options have their merits and their disadvantages. We are responsible here and now as Councilor, we shoulder the responsibility to take these decisions back home to capital.

Therefore, I would like to call upon us to take a decision on this matter.

Thank you.

>> CHAIR: I did mention that I didn't want a lengthy discussion on the topic here in the ADM meeting. The first phase, we need to at least limit the time that we spend discussing this. I will try to close the list of speakers at present and I have given the floor to countries and I would like to ask you to request the flurry if you would like to take the floor. Then I'll close the floor ‑‑ close the list.

Canada, China, United States of America, United Kingdom, Brazil, Ireland, South Africa.

South Africa is the last speaker on the list. Philippines, you will be the last speaker on the list.

Canada, you have the floor.

China has been given the floor, not Canada. I have asked for Canada to be given the floor.

>> CANADA: Thank you. I have spoken too much. That's why they read it wrong.

Just a quick question, we have spent considerable amount of time. Thank you for your unbelievable efforts, hard work and patience. I'm an early riser, I went to Room A this morning at 7:15. You were already there working. We spent endless hours, and my question the result of that work, if I understood correctly triggered additional questions that may be answered by the Secretariat in due time allowing us more clarity to take a decision. Was that the purpose of our meetings over two days in Room A? Is there something that I'm missing in terms of any steps forward? Maybe the Secretariat can help us clarify if the outcome of that meeting, late interventions, table, option 1, pros and cons, option 2, pros and cons, hopefully the support of the slide that blah bra grill had prepared for the deadline for taking a did he goes decision. Are we faced with only the decision is here and right now no answers to the additional questions that we carefully talked about for almost two days. Can we have some clarification from the Secretariat? If such is the case, it is confusing. If we don't have another session, the decision has to be taken here and now. It is not entirely clear following all of the efforts made, all of the questions asked, and all of the points raised during the extraordinary job handled by the Chair over the last 48 hours.

Thank you.

>> CHAIR: Thank you, Canada.

United States of America.

>> UNITED STATES of AMERICA: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Thank you again also to the Chair of the Ad Hoc group for helping to guide us through looking through the pros and cons of the different choices. I know it is a difficult issue.

I think when we started, this we realized there was no good choices. We wanted to probe and understood so that we as a Council could make the most informed decision to put the ITU in the best financial organizational footing.

I want to support Canada's intervention. I think we did spend a lot of time, but also we netted some questions that needed answers. We all here ‑‑ we know we have no agreement. I think I would agree with that, that option A and option B have some strong differences where we have some concerns about taking on additional cost of the loan to the ITU and others feel like the less expensive option, less risky option so to proceed with the path at hand. There are also some questions underneath there.

I think it would help us to make sure that we're taking that final decision as the most informed manner as we can.

Perhaps we could get some clarity on the timelines of when we expect that additional information.

I think that this body should make sure that we have all of the information that we need to decide.

I also would agree, we can't wait forever to make a decision.

I think additional guidance would be welcomed.

Thank you.

>> CHAIR: Thank you.

China, apologies. Apologies for the change in order of the countries that should have taken the floor early.

China, you have the floor.

>> CHINA: I thank you, Chairperson.

My thanks also go to you for the tireless effort since yesterday on this highly complicated, difficult topic. However, if we delay all our discussions until January at the CWG‑FHR next year, then there will be a further negative impact on this project. At least I believe certain amount of work can be carried out from now on, for example, we can invite the Secretariat to consult with the bidders to see whether they can agree on the deadline of the delay of the bidding, and secondly, we could also perhaps seek the source of income on non‑direct costs, or further sources from sponsors.

There is a critical issue at hand and this issue is also the foundation for differences between us. That is to say that whether administrations are willing to pay for the 22.7 million Swiss francs without any results of the project for the next four years, or are we more willing to increase the loan such as the 40 million Swiss francs loaned to continue to support our project.

We need to seek more feedback from administrations on these two questions.

Furthermore, MSAG can also consider discussions on this topic, it was a hope that the Secretariat can inform the Member States of the relevant progress.

This project as related to whether we have gone beyond the mandate given by the PP resolution, upon legal, procedural matters as well and thus by posing a vote at the Council may not be ideal or the result we would like to see at the Council. However, given the fact that the time is pretty urgent, these urgent matters must be taken actions against to address the issue.

For the Chinese delegation, we believe that since we have already approved the current design of the project, therefore more effort should be made to address the series of financial procedural and legal matters at hand and see a better solution to the problem so that we can have a building project of the ITU that's fit for purpose of the ITU in the future.

I thank you.

>> CHAIR: Thank you, China.

United Kingdom, you have the floor.

>> UNITED KINGDOM: Thank you, Chair.

I will be brief and just to thank Tomas and the Secretariat and team, and also the Chair for the hard work.

I think we had some good discussions and made some good progress. Those discussions did reveal that we're not in a position to take a decision today because I think there are some immediate steps to clarify matters that are still unknown.

As my colleague who is have spoken have also noted.

I think consulting with the bidders and the Swiss government are essential next steps to understand the flexibility around the deadline and also around the loan.

I think we would support the Council meeting to take a timely decision once we have that information.

Thank you, Chair.

>> CHAIR: Thank you. I now give the floor to Brazil.

>> BRAZIL: Thank you very much, Chair.

If you allow me to first speak as Chair of MSAG and then as the delegate of Brazil. I will be very brief.

As the MSAG Chair, I have learnt many lessons in the last few day, not only yesterday and today but also during the last week during the CWF‑FHR. I must continue to work in order to increase the role of MSAG and so that MSAG continues to be an instrument for solutions. We haven't quite made it so yet. But we have continued to work on this, and been very open to members and to observers and to hear from everyone. To try the next occasions to bring to bear solutions.

Now, as Brazil, we have already presented pour significance in the group last week. This was a very clear position against any compromise that the original value of the loan increase and Resolution 212 because one of the decisions here is that the loan would not exceed the value as set out in the PP. In this delegation, we are not ‑‑ we are not independent. It seems that we are, but we do all the time, we're trying to find consensus and I think that in the next sessions, and here I'm talking as Brazil, not as MSAG Chair to try to reconcile. I feel it won't be this time, so let's follow instructions from country and move to a vote. The Brazilian authority, we're trying to find a solution, but we cannot guarantee that this would continue for many more weeks or many more months indeed. Thank you, Chair.

>> CHAIR: Thank you very much, Brazil.

Thailand, please, you have the floor.

>> THAILAND: Thank you very much, Chair.

First thing first, I would like to thank the Working Group on FHR who also is kind enough to be Chair of the Ad Hoc group on this and I can say that you were great, that's all I can say.

I have to say that the decision is not viewed as successful in getting immediate decision from it, it is very useful, and we had a discussion, we had laid out on the table the pros and the cons which hopefully will help everyone and have more information on it.

It seems that we can wish that the decision, there's been a strong view on either option A or option B.

I think some of you, an option is realistic, some view it as the best scenario we could get from the new building. Everybody was ‑‑ again, I have to say that all opinions are valid and, you know, everybody is aiming to do the best for the Union.

I think that the best thing right now, the most important, it is that we really need to make a decision.

I think that the important point is what is the way forward, what would happen if no decision it would have been made and what would be the deadline. I think we need to see what is the deadline that the decision has to be made so that we have a clear timeline on it and I think you can all agree that it will be very difficult to reach any agreement today and I would like to ask the Chair or possibly the Secretariat about what is the option in this scenario and if what is an option, if at all, should it be happening now or later when we have more information at hand so the timeline is what we need to know and we need to have the clear direction.

Thailand is of the view that it will be best at no more additional cost this year. We have been making a lot of travel and even though I really love seeing the world, I think, you know, it may not be good to have an additional one, this position is joined by my friend from Korea who couldn't ask for the floor at this time and asked me to send out this message too. And also if we talk about additional costs, I believe many of us would not be there because it may be done by our spectrum people. That is another position that Thailand would like to point out. We're of the view to sum up that, until all of the information is available to make the decision we will wait until we have all available information, but we should have a clear timeline of when that information will be needed and when the decision is made and whether ‑‑ what is the option and if it is, when it should happen. Thank you very much, Chair.

>> CHAIR: Thank you, Thailand.

South Africa, please.

>> SOUTH AFRICA: Thank you very much, Chairperson.

I think we should start by expressing our appreciation to the Chair of the Council Working Group FHR for spearheading the informal consultation. Chairperson, I think certain things should be stated so that we are all on the same page.

There was a report which was presented from the Council Working Group FHR which presented two options for Council to consider. That was an indication that to the Council Working Group, there was no consensus, and the matter was then referred to Council.

It will not be appropriate, Chair, to then refer the matter back to the country Working Group FHR while they were not able to resolve the issue. It simply means that it is for this Council to then make that decision and this is the appropriate forum to then make that decision.

Chair, the second point that I want to raise is you have requested the Chair of the Council Working Group, FHR to go and spearhead the informal consultation.

The report that you have received was that there was a document which was produced. Unfortunately, that document was not introduced formally to this meeting.

Chair, I should hasten to indicate that we spent a lot of time last night, they will morning, this afternoon working on that document. I think it is the case that it is not everyone who is in this room who was part of that meeting. It, therefore, means that it was then appropriate, for that document to be formally introduced in your meeting so that those who were not privy to the discussion, the arguments, the disagreements can then be appraised with what happened that informal consultation.

I will tell you, if that document is not introduced and there is a decision that I'm not in agreement with, to refer this meeting back to the Council Working Group of FHR, the same discussion will reoccur and we will be going around second, around second, I don't know we'll stop that second.

Chair, our request is as prior request, you have requested the team led by the Chair of the Council Working Group FHR to go and look into the matter. Let the document be properly introduced. Let us have the observation by all those who are part of this meeting because not everyone was part of that consultation.

Chair, the third issue is this: If we decide not to decide, that is a decision to decide.

If we're going to take a decision, we have been advised by Secretariat that for every month we are going to incur 17 to 100,000 Swiss francs of costs until when? We don't know.

So if we decide not to decide, we decided to incur additional costs. That's the decision. However, you cannot Chair, expect the Member State to decide to continue to incur the additional cost until unknown date. That's a very dangerous situation, Chair.

So we need to understand what are the financial and legal implications of Council deciding not to decide.

Everyone should be on the same page because we cannot just say refer the group to Working Group FHR, refer this matter to additional Council. What are the financial implications? We have been told, Chair, by Secretariat, that there is an amount already of 20 million, that is a sound cost, if we are to decide to then go with option B, which is the option of risk.

Is that the amount that the members are willing to throw away, I would say no.

Because we cannot be losing money or we cannot have fruitless expenditure in this when we can avoid it. There is a way that we can avoid that. What is the way? It is option number one, we continue and with that request, additional loan, so that we do not lose already the money that's already been incurred we submit, Chair.

Thank you.

>> CHAIR: Philippines.

>> PHILIPPINES: We thank the Chair to going the extra mile. We thank all of those that participated actively in the rigorous discussions. We echo the good points raised by our colleagues on understanding the purpose of the man hours that all Member States, members of the Council exerted in the CWG and in this additional Council session.

Deadly and humbly I assume that the CWG and new member will lead to concrete outputs given the length of time and the amount of time spent to travel to this meeting.

For example, in the Child Online Protection CWG, we almost reach a really good consensus and a very simple matter to push ITU's agenda. This would wait for 2024, so another several months wasted.

We humbly wish to understand how we can move forward, and at the same time respect the process moving forward so we know and see the value of our time spent in these session, reiterating the points already mentioned by some of our coleads, we want to be clarified on the next steps today.

If as mentioned, there was not a consensus both in the working group and impasse in the Ad Hoc groups, should the Council decide the next steps, let us note that a decision and indecision will both have consequences whether in decision or decision. We just need to know the way of which consequences we want. I express reservation about too much focus on just financial implications, I hear too much focus on the financial implications.

I think that implications will never just be limited to financial. There will be a lot of implications.

The stand of the Philippines is to help make ITU more relevant in the complex landscape now of many international organizations, not only ITU but many international organizations taking both steps to also champion the digital transformation. I just wish to see an ITU that's relevant and I think that can be done with an innovative, transformative Council.

The goal is not only to focus on what we do as an organization, but how we do it, to create more outcomes and impact in the less amount of time.

Mr. Chair, I thank you very much for giving me the last word.

>> CHAIR: Thank you, Philippines. there are no more questions raised, proposals put forward, decisions. ADM, we must address these, need to review the proposals and study them so let me begin as I said yesterday, the good news, is that there is consensus to replace Varembe, we have consensus there.

I think an important point to make is that the Ad Hoc group and the discussions were certainly quite weighty, polarized views were shared and what we call option yes and option no. A conscience choice not to submit this document for further discussions and to present it here, that was a conscience choice because we would have just done through a repetition of what was discussed previously, so I can reassure those countries who said this is lost work, this is not the case. This is not lost work.

This document is being published as a DL. Any administration who would like to cloud it and to use it for future study, this document is there, it is there at your disposal to follow‑up on the discussions of the matter.

Then there were questions, perhaps we should move to a vote. I think everyone is aware that we are confronted with a decision which has enormous financial ramifications and as the Philippines said, there are other different aspects to address, one is the number of years, decades in fact, for the reorganization, it is very difficult to decide upon this by vote, in particular given that currently vote would have a quite ‑‑ would have a quite fluctuating vote because it would be absent and there is not enough information to make an informed choice. A vote wouldn't really lead us anywhere. It wouldn't be in the tradition our organization.

Moreover, there were proposals from China, one of these was to contact the bidders to ask for an extension to the deadline and I think given that won't cost us anything, we can ask them in the spirit that this would lead to something that we could use, that wouldn't cost us to take any decision to invite the Secretariat to get in touch with the bidders and the other proposal from China was to invite the Secretariat to begin to present the options to finance the undirect costs given, that these indirect costs will be financed, whether we decide on option yes or no, in both cases, there will be indirect costs, and the question will have to be answered either way so that we ask the Secretariat to begin to articulate options and ways forward.

I think that makes sense. To do so, to inform MSAG, of course, that MSAG has another man date, that's different from the CWG‑FHR, there is a different makeup to that so it is an important contact for the Member States MSAG.

So the work on the CWG‑FHR, now a request has come up quite O a timeline, a deadline, as to what are the next steps on this matter.

I'm not sure that we would be able to set out this timeline in the coming hours that remain. What is certain, I think that the next meeting, which is going to address this matter with Member States is the CWG‑FHR meeting in January, I understand this a number of administrations say that they cannot travel to Geneva again for a one, two‑day meeting. The next opportunity would be the January meeting, and at that moment, to have a timeline to be studied by the Member States and the Secretariat can put forward a proposed timeline being mindful that the ideal situation would be a decision that the Council then would have all of the required information in order to take a decision if possible by consensus. In June of 2024.

There is a question about the cost, the costs for the Council and the monthly costs, so having been mentioned by the Secretariat there are pros and cons to that, perhaps the Secretariat can give us a way forward. On how we can address these costs, which are quite substantial. On the other hand, the document, the DL, the discussions which took place in the Ad Hoc has said that there are a number of requests for information which are going to require expert assistance over the coming months. The Secretariat will undoubtedly need assistance and it wouldn't be advisable, therefore, to discontinue these contracts immediately here in this Council.

Perhaps the Secretariat could give us a way forward. I hope with that that I have covered all of the questions raised, and I gave satisfying answers to those questions to this very difficult matter.

>> Thank you. Yes, the Secretariat continues to lyase with the Swiss authorities on these issues, on the issues of this issue. Of course ‑‑ I'm just going to go back into French.

>> CHAIR: Does the Secretariat have a proposal to make pertaining to the contracts to continue these contracts for a number of months. I think that is a necessity given that there are a number of questions linked to costs. One of the options is technical assistance, how we may continue with that collaboration for a few months.

South Africa said this would be a conscience decision, we would consciously decide to continue with this collaboration, not implicitly. I think there is good reason to do so, perhaps the Secretariat can give you further clarifications on this, few require it to follow‑up on this collaboration.

I think it is justified currently for the coming months, at least until January I'm sure. Yes. Very well.

Have I covered all of the questions or the suggestions satisfactorily.

Saudi Arabia, please, you have the floor.

>> SAUDI ARABIA: Thank you very much, Chair.

I do feel that you have covered all the items satisfactorily. This should be done in written format in our view so then the different steps are then very clear, what the Secretariat must do and what the states must do to show their support. Thus, we would hope then to be able to have a very clear, precise written text on this matter.

Thank you.

>> CHAIR: Thank you.

Snows people who are taking the minutes of the meeting are covering my proposals and your proposals in the report stemming from the Committee in a very detailed manner, based upon the captioning. Very well.

So with that, I would like to close this agenda item.

Saudi Arabia, please.

>> SAUDI ARABIA: Thank you very much, Chair.

I think that the discussion which took place expressed everyone's opinions and it also expressed Member States' preferences pertaining to one option or another. However, the Secretariat does need to have clear guidelines from Council.

This is not to reflect what Saudi Arabia, Canada, U.S., any other country said, it is not that.

I think you're in agreement with me, Chair, saying we have to have clear guidelines from Council for the Secretariat to execute over the next three months.

Thank you.

>> CHAIR: Thank you.

Canada, you have the floor.

>> CANADA: Thank you, Chairman. I think we're in the right direction. We thank you very much for your guidance. You're leading us in the right path.

Just a question for further clarification: We are agreeing that there is path forward by means of the output of the meetings that were held by the Ad Hoc group, there were questions associated with the output document. That's the basis upon which the Secretariat will be working to provide an answer to questions carefully elaborated for 48 hours that. would lead us to a situation in January, by then we will have clear information on the extension of the bids to hopefully we'll have already the external auditors report and then at that session of the Council Working Group, and this is the question that I have, Chairman, would there also be an Extraordinary Session of Council tied to the Council Working Group during which we would take the decision that we are not in a position to take right now.

Thank you.

>> CHAIR: Giving the floor to China. I think you answered the question, the Secretariat did, from attending the meetings yesterday evening and this morning, based on the principle, the Secretariat is aware of what's happening, the questions raised and the need for information from Member States and there needs to be ‑‑ that needs to be identified in the DL document and that the Secretariat has a very good understanding of what is expected of it for the Member States.

We can't individually list each question there in the DL. The Secretariat know what is to do.

China, you have the floor, please.

>> CHINA: Thank you, Chair.

Just now you mentioned that the report based on the summary of the meeting of this matter, we have some questions as well as we understand this meeting has not given up on reaching a consensus on this and from this meeting, we need the consensus to provide some further clarifications and needs to carry out the immediate work, concerning the immediate work to be carried out by the Secretariat. I know that the time is very limited now, and I agree with the colleague from Saudi Arabia that before the discussion and agreement of the Plenary on this matter, we would like to see a clear timeline so that we know on what dates, what activity will be carried out and completed.

Thank you.

>> CHAIR: Thank you, China.

Before giving the floor to the Secretariat, United Arab Emirates, please.

>> UNITED ARAB EMIRATES: Thank you, Chair.

Going to take note of the questions put during the session, we have the following session which has not been discussed this morning or yesterday. What about the sponsorships for the building? U.A.E., sponsored a number of works related to the current design of the building. If we support the second option and a new design, is it guaranteed that all of the commitments of ITU with U.A.E. remain as such, will there be changes as we had during the CWG‑regarding certain changes to sponsorships ‑‑ CWF‑FHR ‑‑ we would like specific information on what would be done with regard to the design. Will there be any changes with regard to sponsorships?

>> CHAIR: Very well. I think there's no problem in adding that the Secretariat is invited to discuss closely with the consultive sponsors in order to update on the designs so that everybody is informed at all times about any development related to the design so that they know what's happening with the sponsorship and whether there are any major changes. I think it this can be added, this invitation to the Secretariat so that they remain in close contact with sponsors. I don't think it is a problem at all to mention it explicitly.

Secretariat, regarding the issue of timeline for the next few months, on this issue, as mentioned by China. Do you have a proposal?

>> DOREEN BOGDAN-MARTIN: Thank you, Chair.

I think as you mentioned when we started this discussion, there is some good news and the good news is that we all care a lot about this project which is why there is much discussion because I think you all want the best for this institution. I want to also mention, Mr. Chair, as someone alluded to this before, the leadership and the Secretariat are well aware of our responsibility towards you, our Member States and, of course, we're also well aware of the mandate around this project as defined in Resolution 212.

We do understand and we take great note of the question, the clarifications that are needed and they were raised yesterday, last night, this morning, we will respond to those questions, those clarifications, those indicated in the DL and as raised just now in your meeting, we will aim to do that by January as was also referenced I think by you, Mr. Chairman and we will continue liaising with the Swiss, as you have also referenced, Mr. Chair, in terms of how much definitive information we can get from our Swiss colleagues. I think certainly out of the Secretariat's hands. We will do our best in liaising with them to come back with a comprehensive timeline that also indicates how things will evolve on their side. Certainly as you mentioned, we can extend the bids, there is no cost in making that effort. We would also certainly continue to engage with MSAG and to the last point that was raised on the sponsorship, our understanding, of course, if action one were chosen, I think there is no change, if option 2 were pursued, obviously we would focus on that and come back‑check to you and engage directly with each sponsor so make sure that the interest and the arrangements that were made, entered into with the sponsors were respected.

So with that, again, Mr. Chairman, this is a very important project, of course, for us as the Secretariat as well, and we hope that we can come back to you very quickly so that this Council feels empowered to take the right decision.

Thank you.

>> CHAIR: Saudi Arabia, please.

>> SAUDI ARABIA: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

We would like to thanker Madam Chair Secretary‑General for the importance given to this project.

As you said, this is a strategic, very important project indeed.

I echo what was said by my colleague from the United Arab Emirates. We all agree that this project is strategic and important and it also has financial implications.

Of course, it is a completely adequate to have a written agreement during the Council. We cannot leave the question open and come back to it in January.

What are we going to do in January? We cannot leave it open Mr. Chair. We have 100,000 Swiss francs each every month, 100,000 every month will be spent by the Union, what are the answers that will be given in three months what, will be done in three months, who will pay the 22 million Swiss francs. We have a document that's been presented to us for the Chair of the ad hoc group, it is not appropriate not to consider this document and to not take measures., and to come back to it, to the same issue and discover that we have lost a huge amount of Swiss francs.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

>> CHAIR: Thank you, Saudi Arabia.

I think it is clear as we're the ADM Committee, we cannot take a decision here. We can at most recommend something to the Plenary.

If I understood your intervention, you were proposing that we should recommend to the Plenary to take a decision on this issue.

The discussion we had yesterday on the report, of CWF‑FHR, I had 20% of countries more or less saying yes option and 20% no option, and 60% requested more information.

I think in this situation forcing a decision does not make sense. I don't think that countries obtained awful the information they needed, the discussion in that ad hoc group, it made it possible to have some discussion to agree on certain terms and then to also have a list of questions that Secretariat would need to provide an answer to.

This cannot be done in the next few hours.

I do understand your request, and unfortunately given the feedback we received yesterday, it does not make sense to force a decision here and to recommend to the Council to take a decision in the next couple of hours.

Canada, you have the floor.

>> CANADA: Yes, thank you. Very briefly, Chairman, to agree with your comments and the way forward. Particularly in light of what I believe there is some agreement in this room that we have questions that are the result of extensive consultations during the last 48 hours, that there is an output document, which is the report of the ad hoc group on, this that could be the basis of which the Secretariat, between now and January will be able to work with us, with MSAG to provide answers that in January would allow us then to take the appropriate decision.

I would encourage you in your report to reflect that there is movement forward on a positive note to take a decision that could be by the Plenary to convene the next session of Council work meetings and an Extraordinary Session of Council to analyze among other things the result and the report of this Ad Hoc group, MSAG, everything else, to say that by January when you have the ‑‑ when the Secretariat has consulted with the Swiss government and with MSAG, we'll have by then answers to the questions that have been asked.

Again, Chairman, thank you for the efforts. I agree with the way forward.

>> CHAIR: Thank you.

Saudi Arabia, you ever the floor.

>> SAUDI ARABIA: I think there was an issue with the translation, Mr. Chairman.

I did not ask to take a decision by force. Totally understand that you cannot take a decision now. The way forward is the Deputy Secretary‑General will engage in a series of actions. We need to list those activities so they have a clear task to be implemented from now until January. This, we understand, we cannot take a decision by force.

Having the urge, the importance, the situation that we are in, we're losing money every month, around 100,000 Swiss francs, Chair. We want to stop this bleeding of money. We want to save that 20 million that you already spent, but we have to have urgent action. Even the question mentioned by our Distinguished Delegates from Canada, we did not see the questions. What questions will the Secretariat answer? What are the questions? Do we have them? Our ask is very simple, Mr. Chair. To have constructive work from now until January, does Secretariat need guidance from the Council? Otherwise, we will circle back in January with the same result. If this is the agreement of the Council, it is up to the Council, but we as Saudi Arabia, we don't think it is constructive, having the steps to be fulfilled with the engagement of MSAG, Member States, the host country. Thank you so much.

>> CHAIR: Thank you for the clarification. I apologize if I misunderstood your statement.

I would like to suggest to add to the reporter the invitation to Member States to communicate as soon as possible to the Secretariat the questions that have been posed, the request for information so that the Secretariat can develop a timeline and if possible to respond to the largest number of questions possible in January.

We also invite Member States to share all the issues that they are unclear on and to communicate them to the Secretariat.

Very well, thank you very much.

China, you have the floor.

>> CHINA: Yes. I think ‑‑ yes.

Thank you, Chair.

Just now you mentioned that we should invite administrations to ask these questions. However, I believe that in CWG and in this meeting, we have had complete discussion and I think we're very clear about what the questions are from administrations and what are the petitions of different administrations. So what the colleague of Saudi Arabia is, that whether it is possible to publish a clear list of questions today, otherwise we would repose these questions every time.

Thank you, Chair.

>> CHAIR: Very well.

The suggestion is that Member States that require information, request this information before the end of this session of the Council, that they communicate their questions, request information on the points that are unclear to them.

Have I understand you correctly, China, to limit the list of questions to those that will be put to the Secretariat by tonight.

China, you have the floor.

>> CHINA: Thank you, Chair.

In order to avoid any misunderstanding, I will speak in English.

We had very lengthy discussions and very comprehensive discussion. In the last Council and also during the CWF‑FHR and this additional session of the Council as well.

So I would like to request the Secretariat at least to summarize the questions raised by the Member States from these lengthy discussion, and to see some of them, we already have very clear answer from either the Secretariat or Switzerland government, and also there is some question that is pending the answer or pending the activities taken by the Secretariat to answer the question raised by the Member States.

I think this work, you need to ask the Secretariat to do, not Member States, do it again in a cycle and cycle so that we cannot waste this time. That's my request.

Thank you.

>> CHAIR: This is very clear.

United Arab Emirates.

>> UNITED ARAB EMIRATES: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I don't want to repeat what my colleagues have said. I want to refer back to a successful activity that happened in July, in the last session of the Council.

We had informal meeting and within two hours we ended up with a list of questions with milestones and deliverables asked clearly to the Secretariat to be done between that date and last week. They had clear points, they worked on them, they came back with us with the answers. That's what we're asking. Second, what the colleague from Saudi Arabia and others have said, if we have this Action Plan, with the timelines, November, we'll do X on December, we'll do Y, January, we'll do Z, we come to the next session of the Council Working Group with our request and there will not be misinterpretation, misunderstanding. I think that's a simple ask, we have done it satisfactorily in July and we can do it again today.

Thank you.

>> CHAIR: Thank you very much.

I think there is no country here who is asking questions in order to delay the process. There's no desire here to delay the process, to delay decision making. I think that these questions are being put in good faith to us in order to be able to justify the future Council decisions vis‑a‑vis their governments and their authorities so that the aim of the questions is not to delay the process. Our problem is that the information is contained in different documents, sometimes we don't understand certain figures because figures differ between documents.

We need to have one place where all the questions are provided, all of the answers are provided to the questions.

We need to ensure that the Member States submit their questions and that we can refer to the answers given.

Deputy Secretary‑General, you have the floor.

>> TOMAS LAMANAUSKAS: Thank you very much, distinguished Chairman and Delegates. We appreciate the need for additional information here and we want to acknowledge the great work done by the Ad Hoc group and with your support working last night, this morning, to achieve the information. I wanted to ensure to you that we share the view that the view that's encapsulated in that document lists out the information that you are needing and this is information and responses. When I look at the beginning of the document, the last page of the document, option 1 and option 2, for me as a Secretariat, these are exactly the information that I understand the membership wants from us to have. We're happy between ‑‑ I will be happy to be guided by others between ADM, Plenary session, to formally ‑‑ to formulate those steps in the question format, just to extract the questions off of that list and have that one list.

If the meeting agrees, if the room agrees, that in the DL document, the steps and the last page, option 1, option 2, it encapsulates those questions, we can just formally do this in a question format.

We're determined to start the work on the questions immediately, so that we can have the information that depends on us by January meeting.

Some of that information will require third parties to answer to that, to our requests, so, of course, whether we are able or not, to finalize that information to you will depend on whether the parties answer and whether we receive the requests.

However, all of those questions will be in the next few ‑‑ all of those requests for information, it will be issued in the next few weeks to make sure that we get that information.

I repeat, if the meeting agrees that the DL last page option 1 and option 2 steps both of them, and I believe they don't conflict, can form the basis of further responses, then we'll form questions and aim to deliver the responses and the questions for Council Working Group so that you have a fully informed consideration.

Thank you very much.

>> CHAIR: Thank you very much for this clarification.

Saudi Arabia, I will have the last word in the group.

I'm the Chair, I will conclude the debate.

I will give you the floor, of course, but I will have the last word anyway.

You have the floor, Saudi Arabia.

>> SAUDI ARABIA: For sure, Mr. Chairman, you're the Chair, you guide us, you sail the ship, we will guide you. This is for sure, Mr. Chairman. We're not imposing our opinion.

We feel the discussion now being drafted to questions, if you look at the DL, there is no questions. You did not instruct us to go into the Ad Hoc group to write question, Mr. Chairman. You instructed us to go into the group to try to find a solution. If you look at the DL, it has pros and cons I'm unsure how the Deputy Secretary‑General will answer the pros and cons. There is square brackets in that document.

We did not discuss that DL. They will go and discuss and to finish and the ambiguity will continue, Mr. Chairman.

May God help this Union to find a solution for the building.

Thank you.

>> CHAIR: All right.

Let your words be heard.

Bahamas, you have the floor.

>> BAHAMAS: Thank you, Chairman.

I would really like to congratulate the Bahamas, most congratulate the Chair for the excellent work she did and for the Deputy Secretary‑General and the Secretary‑General for the work that they have done. The Bahamas want to echo the position of Canada. I don't want to be regurgitating all that was said.

The Bahamas also supports the way forward extended, Chair. You have our blessings.

Thank you for the great work that you're doing.

>> CHAIR: Thank you very much.

Canada, are you withdrawing your request.

You agree, you support Bahamas, they support you, am I right, Canada?

>> CANADA: I agree with my opinion as well.

(Laughter).

>> CHAIR: Thank you.

We are pleased to echo this point of view.

Rwanda, you have the floor.

>> RWANDA: Thank you, Chair.

Let me also take this opportunity to thank you for the work put in in the last 48 hours to get us to this point and for the contribution.

My simple suggestion may be would be to ask as we go forward with this DL if the Secretariat could help news producing what I would call a decision matrix with these two options that we currently do have. Yesterday our colleague from Ghana put out a proposal in the process. Right there.

Are key questions in this DL around approval for budget, discussion with sponsorship, on the other option around where do we find the funding for the designing, that's what we go for, legal issues, in‑kind donors and some other questions that were raised, other points that were raised.

I would like to ask if we could have a decision matrix that talks about if we were able to extend the bids from the kind contractors that we do have, input the decision from the Swiss parliament and whatever proposal that they can look at. If any other proposal to be within the current budget that we do have, what would be required and the kind of exercises that would be required. I'm not sure ‑‑ I don't think this would be done tonight, today, but I think immediately coming up with that decision matrix, then the Secretariat could work to answer so that when we get to January the Council members would have the visual walk through on what needs to happen with the timeline that most of my colleagues have been asking for.

Thank you very much.

>> CHAIR: Thank you very much.

South Africa, please, you have the floor.

>> SOUTH AFRICA: Thank you very much, Chairperson, for giving me the floor once more. I will be brief. Just to indicate that we would like to associate ourselves with salt the intervention by China, U.A.E. and Saudi Arabia, with respect to the need for the development of the list of activities and the timelines. This was done in the last Council, and the reason for this, it is just to make sure that all of us are on the same page. This is a difficult issue, Chair, and to avoid any misunderstanding or ambiguity, we request a simple page to just outline the activities and the timelines as to what can happen before the next Council Working Group on FHR and Rwanda also had indicated some issues that may need to be in con tense.

That's the request. It will guide the process. Thank you, Chair.

>> CHAIR: It is clearly understood what your request is and it will be taken into account.

Very well, I would like to request that we move on to the report to conclude the item on the premises project. Thank you.

Our report, as you know, the tradition is that the ADM Committee approves its report, Plenary. Time does not allow us to do so. Given that part of the report has to be reflected in the discussions this afternoon. Therefore, I would like to suggest to close our debate for now and that the ADM report is sent directly under my entire responsibility to the Plenary and that the document will be available only in English unfortunately. A good part of it was available yesterday evening and some has been translated. Of course, the recent discussions this afternoon, still has not been available, possible rather to translate these so we will ‑‑ we will accept that we will send the report to the Plenary, will consider it in English only, we would hope that the document should be ready in the next hour in English only.

With that, I will conclude our work.

I would like to thank you for these very intense two days of exchange and I'm sincerely convinced they were extremely useful discussions and I cannot thank enough Venita to ‑‑ through mutual understanding to having produced in depth document on the building and even if there wasn't ‑‑ even though a decision wasn't taken formally, the two days of discussions were not wasted time. So I would like to thank each and every one of you, I thank the Secretariat for your support and convey my gratitude to my site Chair and to the interpreters, of course, thank you very much for your patience.

With that, I would like to close our work and we'll take a 5‑minute coffee break.

Chair of the Council? Can we have a 5, 10 minutes coffee break, please? 1 minute! 1 minute coffee break.

5‑minute coffee break.

Thank you very much, one and all.

Have safe travels back home.

>> CHAIR: Good afternoon, I hope you managed to get a coffee to continue with our work this afternoon. I would like to begin this Plenary session with the agenda where we left off yesterday. Agenda item, I would like to remind you that we did address in two parts, firstly the replacements of the Vice‑Chairs, and now we will address the appointment of the Vice‑Chairs proposed by the CIS region.

The CIS region has nominated four candidates for the position of Vice‑Chair.

Following informal consultations, unfortunately, following these consultations, unfortunately, there was no consensus. Therefore, I would hope that we continue this discussion on this item at the next Council session I hope you can agree with this proposal. I'm not going to list ‑‑ read out the list of candidates since they're under the document under discussion.

I see a request for the floor from Belgium, please, you have the floor.

>> BELGIUM: Mr. Chair, did you say Belgium or Belarus.

>> CHAIR: My apologies for that con viewings.

Firstly, I would like to take the request for the floor from the Member States and then observers who request for the floor.

Thank you very much.

Cuba, please, you have the floor.

>> EGYPT: It is actually Egypt. I should have sat on the left happened side. It is a question since if the discussion is taking place next Council, what will happen during the next Council Working Groups already during this cluster of Working Groups we did not have Vice‑Chairs interest the RCC region. We would have a second meeting, without a Vice‑Chair for the RCC region, but I believe we have to finalize the discussions now to move forward, and for example, the Vice‑Chair, they're there also to support the Chair and the finalization of the report and in other management of the expert group. It would be helpful for us to have a Vice‑Chair by the next meeting. Thank you very much.

We take note of that, Egypt.

China, employees, you have the floor.

>> CHINA:

The offline consultations have led to no result and we regret that the nomination of Chairs and Vice‑Chairs should follow the rules by the PP, paying attention to geographical presentation and competency of the candidates. Candidates are nominated by different regions so I think we should respect the nomination by it the region, if we cannot hey grow on the exact candidates of this position, is it possible that we can allow the colleague from the Russian Federation to participate in the language Working Group? If we have no colleague from working in this Working Group with this, it would be impossible to conduct the Working Group's work.

We think that all parties should fully consider this.

Thank you.

>> CHAIR: Thank you. China.

South Africa, you have the floor, please.

>> SOUTH AFRICA: We align ourselves with the comments made by China, because the role of Vice‑Chairpersons are important in the activities of the work of the Working Groups and we think that also in terms of the Working Groups, there is some aspects that are obvious in relation to the functionality, for example, the language of the Working Group has to be balanced so that it can be able to produce products that are acceptable.

Thank you very much.

>> CHAIR: Canada, you have the floor.

>> CANADA: Thank you very much, Chair. I would like to support your proposal in the absence of the fact that it is clear that there is not consensus, therefore I would like to suggest that we continue with this discussion at the next meeting. Thank you.

>> CHAIR: Thank you, Canada.

Romania, please.

>> ROMANIA: Thank you, Chair. I also want to convey my thanks to you for your efforts with regards to this item. I want to also support your way forward with the matter for the next Council meeting and maybe just to ask a question, if all Member States of the Union can participate fully in the Council Working Groups, because that is my understanding, that all Member States can participate in the works of the Council Working Groups so there are no let's say barriers there. Thank you.

>> CHAIR: Thank you. I would like to confirm to you that all Member States can participate in discussions and in the Council Working Groups. Thank you. Spain, please. You have the floor.

>> SPAIN: Thank you very much, Chair.

At the outset, I would like to thank you for the informal consultations and to all Member States who came to speak over the last few days on this matter. I would like to make the next statement on behalf of the E.U. and Member States. As members of the Council we have discussed over the last few months the extraordinary challenges that the ITU is currently facing, pertaining to achieving the objectives in digital transformation and looking at the budget and issues such as the promises project.

In this situation, the ITU needs meets the solid guideline of the Council, that was critical to support the Council with efficient and functional CWGs in order for it to area out its work.

In order to achieve this, we must base themselves ‑‑ must be based on sincere cooperation, trust, consensual-based focus. In this vein, we see that the list contains candidates from the Russian Federation and we respect the individual technical expertise. Nevertheless, we're of the view as is well‑known by all councilors that in the current context the experts who represent actions ever a country are in lyrics of the actions of this ITU and cannot generate trust and consensus, they cannot be appointed to the roles. Therefore, we cannot support to nominate nationals from the Russian Federation to occupy or Vice‑Chair such an important part of the ITU's work.

We have requested a number of times that the Council to the CIS region, given the broad number of experts who we have in the region, that they find candidates from other countries who can represent the region in the appointments of Vice‑Chairs in the CGs.

These candidates from other countries up to date have not been put forward by this region.

To conclude, I would say that we're in agreement that this matter is addressed at the next Council session and we continue with consultations up to that date.

Thank you very much.

>> CHAIR: Thank you, Spain.

U.A.E., please, you have the floor.

>> UNITED ARAB EMIRATES: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

As you know, Mr. Chair, Distinguished Delegates, the presence of Vice‑Chairs from the official regions of the region is extremely important for this reason we have Vice‑Chairs. On the other hand, we understand that there are reservations expressed on this topic for different reasons. Nonetheless, I would like to reaffirm what was said by China and Egypt as well with regard to the Working Group on languages.

This particular group must have the representation of the six official languages of the Union. Therefore we believe that it is appropriate to move forward, at least from the candidacy of the repetitive of the Russian Federation as the Vice‑Chair of the Council Working Group on languages. And then to postpone the consideration of other candidacies to the next session of the Council.

Thank you.

>> CHAIR: Thank you very much, United Arab Emirates.

Brazil, you have the floor.

>> BRAZIL: Thank you, Chair. Brazil highlights the right for representation from each region in the perspective groups. We also highlight the technical mandate of ITU, Brazil calls upon all members to adopt caution in addressing what could compromise the technical mandate of the organization.

Thank you, Chair.

>> CHAIR: Thank you, Brazil.

>> CHAIR: I have a request from the floor from an observer, Belarus.

>> BELARUS: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

The Republic of Belarus, Kazakhstan and the Russian Federation are convinced that the need to have a professional approach in considering all issues in the work of the ITU, without criticizing and confrontation, in the interest of successful functioning of the Union. The communications has submitted candidacies that have been agreed by the region for the posts of the Vice‑Chairs and expert groups. All candidates are highly specified specialists that have worked in the ITU for many years.

They have many times confirmed their professionalism. They have been supported not only by the Russian Telecommunication Union but also by the entire RCC.

They comply with all of the requirements and the resolution to 208.

We appeal to the Council to confirm and approve of the candidacy put forward.

It is important to respect the decisions of all regions, the texts of this statement on behalf of Kazakhstan, the Russian Federation will be submitted to the secretary to be included in the Chair's report.

Thank you for your attention.

>> CHAIR: Thank you very much, Belarus.

Ukraine, please.

>> CHAIR: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Distinguished Delegates, at the outset, let me subscribe under what's been said by the representatives of Spain and Canada and on top of that, let me also add that Ukraine believes that the country that started the war of aggression against another member of the ITU in a brutal violation of the U.N. culture, the international law, including in the field of telecommunications, Sustainable Development, humanitarian law, basic norms of morality and principles of human co‑existence should be deprived of the right and the privilege to be elected to any Working Party of the United Nations. Let me inform you that as of now, Ukrainian law enforcement launched an investigation into more than 110,000 war crimes and crimes of aggression. They include the killing of more than 11,000, including 508 children and wounding of more than 17,000 civilians, including 1,136 children. The amount of civilian infrastructure damage destroyed by Russia in Ukraine exceeded more than 129,000, including more than 100,000 residential buildings, almost 3,000 educational, 600 medical institutions, 489 cultural and 149 buildings, more than 5,000 water and electricity networks. Russian occupiers damaged almost 2,000 objects of cultural heritage and cultural infrastructure of Ukraine. This number does not include the temporary occupied areas.

Russia's ongoing aggression against Ukraine, including the continuing attacks of Russia on Ukraine's critical telecommunication infrastructure, interruptions in the communication services and mobile works have a devastating impact on the operation of telecommunication facilities and services in Ukraine, and on the exercise of the Ukraine's sovereign right to regulate the telecommunication with its internationally recognized territory.

Since the beginning of the invasion, more than 4300 mobile base stations have been seized or destroyed by the Russian army, more than 30,000 kilometers of fiber optic lines for the Internet have been captured or damaged.

Distinguished Delegates, before taking a decision, especially if it comes to this, we must ask ourselves one simple question, does the aggressor states have a right to hold any position in the ITU. The answer is obvious.

Russia's unlawful actions stand in lyrics to the ITU mission to promote digital connectivity for Sustainable Development worldwide and fails to respect the fundamental principles enshrined in the ITU Constitution. As such, Russia is not presently a credible partner, for the ITU activities and cannot incredibly claim to promote the ITU values. As to mention here highly qualified so, called specialists, I can reply that highly qualified war criminals are now damaging telecommunication infrastructure in Ukraine and killing Ukrainian people. Therefore, I call upon all Member States to take a principle stance against any representatives of the Russian Federation to occupy leadership positions in the ITU.

I thank you.

>> CHAIR: Thank you, Ukraine.

Any other requests for the floor in the room? Therefore, I can see that there is not consensus in what's being said. Therefore I would like to conclude my addressing this next agenda item in the next Council session.

Thank you.

>> CHAIR: Going to the next agenda item, Document 8, contribution from India, please.

India, can you kindly present your Document 8, please? You have the floor. Thank you.

>> INDIA: We thank the ITU for taking proactive steps for publication of ICT development index as per Resolution 131. We extend our gratitude to the Director of BDT for convening the meeting and in response to the con sense raised by India, several other Member States, on the pro as well as earlier meeting of the Council. We are thankful to convey to us that the actual estimated values in response to all of the data points will be made available to all Member States with the deadline of approval of the ADM methodology. This is important as a whopping 21% of data points are being estimated by ITU, which are not available in the database. PP resolution said that ITU should consult and seek agreements from Member States for supplementing data, including from other sources or from estimations to look at this implementation. We're thankful to the Director 689BDT for this clarification.

Chair, Indy's proposal presented in the meeting on 18 of September found favor with many Member States which supported its proposals. The deliberations which are captured in the summary report published by BDT last week confirmed that many Member States expressed the need for further engagement and discussions on the proposal from India.

This included inclusion of indicators for ICT regulation track, inclusion of fixed rebound subscription with speed greater than 10 as percentage of fixed broadband subscription, use of PP as a measure of affordability in place of GNI in U.S. dollar per capita, however going back to the discussion in the only physical meeting we had on IDI on 18, 19 of September, it appears that the priority was to push for publishing the IDI in 2023 itself. Whereas the PP resolution does not put any deadline or obligation on ITU for publishing the IDI in 203.

Distinguished Councilor, I wish to draw your attention to the fact that once we approve the proposed methodology, we're going to be stuck with this week and non‑represented idea for the next four years. Without any scope for any modification methodology during the last ‑‑ during this long period in which data may become available for additional indicators, need realized for inclusion of the new indicators and ICT technologies may change from ‑‑ may change significantly.

This is precisely the reason which is necessary to submit this contribution. The developments are going to be irreversible. Therefore, we ask the Council members to consider three proposals from our side. Our first proposal is to try to finalize an all-inclusive methodology, without being in a hurry to finalize the weak methodology as it will mean that we have to live with a weak I addictions for next four years which has extremely small number of indicators, there are only nine indicators in the index. Extraordinarily high number of missing data points, 21% of the entire data as I pointed out earlier, non‑available data for some very important indicators which are crucial for ICT development, no provision for the ICT technology scenario and lack of transparency in finalizing this methodology. Instead, we propose that we should collectively decide to spend a few weeks more on the methodology and incorporate the suggestions which were not considered by DT‑I on the pretext that considering them will require more consultation.

Chair, our second proposal is that if it is decided by the August gathering, August Council here, to go ahead with this incomplete IDI, we may consider review of IDI methodology all-inclusive to provide opportunity for countries that have concerns to provide ways to make this more inclusive, acceptable. This will facilitate the index to be progressive, dynamic, rather than outdated or frozen in time over the next four years.

Finally, the third proposal, is that the future edition of IDI in 2024 may be considered to be brought out through study group mechanism, wherein proper consultation process is available to Member States. Chair, we are aware that our suggestions on the mechanism of the methodology may be beyond the purview of Council, however we believe that it is our responsibility to bring these issues to the notice of the August gathering of Council to decide on further appropriate mechanism for making IDI methodology more inclusive and transparent. Chair, I would like to conclude by affirming that we fully support the publication of the index, provided the methodology for preparing the index inclusive, progressive, transparent.

I thank you, Chair.

>> CHAIR: Thank you very much, India, for that contribution.

I would like to hear the opinions from the room, please. He.

You have the floor.

We have been participating in this process which we think has been well managed by the Development Bureau, consistent with the PP resolution. We understand the matters were fully discussed by the expert group in September and also that there is a way forward for India's proposals to be further explored by a subgroup to consider the methodology. I think, Chair, as Council, as we do have a broader concern that Council should not be ‑‑ should not function as a court appeal where there are disagreements within the sector work, so I think for that reason we would propose to let this process run its course.

Thank you.

>> CHAIR: Thank you, U.K.

Canada, please.

>> CANADA: Thank you. I thank you for the contribution.

Chairman, after going through the detailed summary report of the last meeting that was held in September, which has a series of conclusions that were reached, it is our understanding that there was clearly a path forward, the document itself doesn't reflect any disagreements on the methodology, Canada has been participating in this with professional statisticians that work for the Department of Statistics in Canada, and they have indicated that the document reflects a positive discussion that's taken place.

Our major concern is, Chairman, we have a resolution and we have been waiting for the release of the index for several years and over and over again we come with hurdles that to a certain extent we impose on ourselves, we have absolute confidence in the professionalism, ex betters and the course of the expert group on these matters, but I don't think how long we need to continue waiting for the release of this document. We are satisfied with the process which we believe has been to our knowledge transparent, thorough, inclusive, which again, to the all-inclusive result of ongoing engagement with Member States which included professional statisticians. We look forward to the final consultation of Member States about the approval of the methodology and we would like some clarification as to when the final consultation or where are we in the process, it is very important for the release of the IDI. Thank you.

>> CHAIR: Thank you. United States, please. You have the floor.

>> UNITED STATES of AMERICA: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Thank you as well to India for submitting the proposal.

We agree with the prior two interventions from Canada, the U.K., that there has been consideration of the document already and a special meeting of the expert group, and it was not agreed or is treated there, and I agree that the Council meeting is not necessarily the right place to raise the topic. We support the intervention as well from Canada, just that we believe that the process of transparent, has been completed and we look forward to the approval of the methodology and the next steps on the release of the report.

Thank you.

>> CHAIR: Thank you, United States.

Switzerland, please. You have the floor. Switzerland (Speaker) thank you very much, Chair.

A large number of organizations in the U.N. system and beyond have need for data that ITU produces and we think that it is awhile or too long, in fact, that this data has not been published by the ITU and as our colleague from Canada had said, if we push back this decision, we'll be on the back foot as the expert group said there is no objection with the quality of data which will stem from this methodology, therefore, in the spirit we support that the consultation should be done on this methodology as soon as possible.

Thank you very much, Chair.

>> CHAIR: Thank you, Switzerland.

South Africa, please, you have the floor.

>> SOUTH AFRICA: Thank you, Chairperson. I would like to recall that in the past Plenary there was a request that an extension be granted of Member States to further consult on some of the concerns that were raised and in our participation the discussion took place and we also said matters raised by I wanted I can't were important and they have advanced the greater need of the IDI. When you look at the resolution and the processes it accommodates the concerns that are raised by India in the process itself in relation to moving forward with the objective.

From South African side, I think looking at what India has put out, we think that it can be addressed in the process that's been undertaken. We just want to appeal that there's been some years that the IDI has not been out and the resolution has indicated that we need to have this process firming up. We want to appeal to India that the concerns raised will be addressed within the process itself and they have our full support.

Thank you. Chair.

>> CHAIR: Thank you, South Africa.

>> We wish to thank the BDT for the significant work in reviewing the methodology with the objective of establishing the structure line with the PP Resolution 131.

We also thank India for the contribution on the issue. We understand that the suggestions put forward aim at ensuring that the revised methodology is inclusive, acceptable to all Member States which should not lose sight of the relevance for policy formulation. In fact, the IDI should enable Member States to identify gaps, but need policy intervention in regard to promoting, facilitating, fostering the universal access to telecommunications and ICTs.

This is why we want to stress the importance of establishing a methodology for IDI based on reliability and openness. The suggestions put forward by India, in our view are meant to provide the clarity to Member States in terms of awareness of the information and in respect of the missing data. To expedite the acceptance process of a revised majority by Member States, and to enable the broader consensus on the finalization. Mauritius supports the proposal by India, because we don't want to delay the process.

Thank you.

>> CHAIR: Thank you.

Tanzania, please.

>> UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANSANIA: Thank you very much, Chair. Thank you to India for presenting this proposal.

We agree that we need the report on this and support the proposal to be progressive so that we can have the data on IDI as we really need them to be able to view them to measure where we are and also to give the stakeholders who use this data for various applications are not quite critical in progressing the digital work that we are promoting.

Thank you.

>> CHAIR: Thank you.

Philippines, please.

>> PHILIPPINES: To echo the points of the colleague, we thank you for the transparency, inclusivity, the effort put into the ongoing process to create the IDI. Hearing the intervention from our colleagues from India, I think they also mentioned and highlighted the transparency. And in fact, we all appreciate the fact that many Member States have different means of participating in the process.

However, I would like to he can wow the points of other states about the need for this process to help us and to guide us in obtaining data so that you can steer the national strategies coming from the benefits of having the information and technology development index.

We clearly anticipate and appreciate the early release of this initiative.

At the same time, we truly appreciate the initiative of India in ensuring that we have clear and relevant matrix. I agree with the point of our colleagues, that concerns, as part of the process is imparted in the process.

For example, the second proposal, to review the methodology in 2024, as mentioned by India. I think candidly and humbly, there should be an ongoing work of all methodologies and identification that ITU leads. So I think this is already embedded, and I agree as well that we will have continuing oversight for regards to the IDI.

Overall, we believe four years is a long enough period to be waiting for this ITU programme that we need to put out there, again, going back to the point of making ITU very relevant in helping Member States.

Thank you, Chair.

>> CHAIR: Egypt, you have the floor.

>> EGYPT: Thank you very much, Chair.

At the outset, I would like to thank India for having friend this proposal, as colleagues have said, this was also presented to the expert group in September, and we adopted the last draft methodology to be in the index to be published this year. We would like to thank India for the initiative and for the important proposal suggested and, of course, this should be part of the agenda of the expert group. We do feel we should not push back on the index any further. Thank you.

>> CHAIR: Thank you, Egypt.

Algeria, you have the floor. This is a remote intervention.

>> ALGERIA: (Echoing).

(Audio quality too poor for captioning.)

Let me remember you, that after difficult times of years, the PP Resolution 131 on measuring information and communication technologies for integrating, inclusive Information Society was approved by total consensus in October of 2022, during the PP, after that approval, we were waiting for the kickoff of the implementation in order to participate within the expert group as stipulated to 131, by the beginning of the process, of implementing, in 22 February, 2023, we were very surprised and worried and preoccupied by the process adopted by the Secretariat and also by the content.

We have raised and expressed at every occasion, including at the last Council in good faith our deep concerns, worry, preoccupations about the process and approach taken by the Secretariat in implementing Resolution 131 which is in our opinion that could lead us to new developed and we have invited the Secretariat to return to the right way, and in implementing this resolution in an inclusive approach in order to have consensus, we're sorry to reach this stage which we reached with these conditions.

Chairman, during the last Council, the Distinguished Delegate from Canada asked about the problems in the IDI. Is it statistical, others? We did not want it raise the problem at that time hoping that the Secretariat comes back in its behavior. The Council concluded other times that the subject remains open and that the Council has taken note of the developments and that the Secretariat is available to organize another meeting on the subject, but in the invitation letter of the meeting, we have noticed that the Secretariat was still on its position.

Accordingly, effectively, change what's accepted during the meeting. Coming back to the problem, let me expose them shortly because the timing, it is not enough, it will take more than one minute.

From one side, the problem of the process which is selective, also led by the Secretariat which is in fact the only secretary in all of meetings attended by us in the ITU, the only Secretariat that decides instead of Member States, so the process was and still until now not fully conformed to the provision of Resolution 131. From the other side, the Secretariat put us in a difficult position now, whether the IDI will be published or no. Why? Because from the beginning, they brought a conceptual framework from another project with a concept developed as well by the leadership of the ITU. The work started in December of 2020 and was led by the ITU, ICT data and analytics division with other parties but without the involvement of the expert groups, even for only information purpose.

They brought the result of this work with the indicators to be commented, discussed, adopted by the expert group and let's say the Secretariat had proposed, even after some modifications.

So they ‑‑

>> CHAIR: Kindly, we ‑‑ (multiple speakers).

>> CHAIR: I would like you to be very brief, please.

>> It is not suitable to bring the work of other competence work to be judged within another group and it may lead to problems. Indeed, now we're facing two scenario, one is worse and the other is worse. Going to the worse, in the approving of the methodology and the majority of the Member States, so we will have worked less and weak ideas with 10, 9 indicators among the 15 of the UNC.

>> (Multiple speakers).

‑‑ in the case of the IDI supported by PP resolution, it is weak, another same concept that is from another ‑‑ (multiple speakers). ‑‑ 3 million euro project, entitled promoting and measuring the universal, meaningful digital connectivity.

Also you can imagine the IDI among other international indexes by the way that the image of our organization, at least in the U.N. I didn't in the worst scenario is in case ‑‑

>> (Multiple speakers). ‑‑ without consulting Member States. We're in the case that two efforts of measurement based on the same conceptual frame work ‑‑

>> CHAIR: Thank you very much. I would like to give the floor to Brazil.

For concluding, Mr. Chairman. I'm sorry to belong, we at this stage, we're not against the publication, but if the majority wants that, in case of failure, we invite every stakeholder, and every Member State to be responsible. Thank you.

>> CHAIR: (indiscernible).

>> CHAIR: Before that, I would like to limit the list of speakers, and these are Kuwait, Canada, Brazil. The last speaker, and then the Dominican Republic as observer, four further interventions. Thank you for your understanding.

Japan, please.

>> JAPAN:

Thank you for giving me the floor.

We also would like to echo U.K., Canada, and we think that this topic should be discussed in the expert group because this topic is detailed and very, very specific for the expert group.

And we think that the process of the discussion of the new IDI has been transparent so we are looking forward to the updated method.

Thank you.

>> CHAIR: Thank you, Japan. Kuwait, please.

>> KUWAIT: I will be extremely brief.

We have discussed this proposal previously within the expert group. We are of the view that that is the right place to discuss this matter and, therefore, we would like to thank India and we don't think that this should be discussed within the Council, because this will only delay the publication of the index which we're all awaiting with baited breath and therefore we would like to support our colleagues who spoke previously and who have expressed the same view as us.

Thank you.

>> CHAIR: Thank you very much, Kuwait.

>> KUWAIT:

Canada, employees.

>> CANADA: Thank you, Chairman.

Briefly, just to clarify, our distinguished colleague who made the previous intervention from Algeria. As I said, that to the extent possible, we should leave the decisions on the methodology to professional statisticians, of course, coordination and cooperation, consultation with Member States. Professional statisticians. That said, and this is more of a question, having seen summary report, I understand that there is a consultation that could be released, that if 70% of the respondents agree with the consultation, then the index would be released. I would like from the Secretariat if possible to have some clarification in order to hopefully end this discussion and to be able to either release the consultation, release the IDI, or enter again into another lengthy process to determine with methodology which methodology should be used.

Thank you, Chairman.

>> CHAIR: Thank you, Canada.

Brazil, please.

Thank you, Chair. Brazil is pleased with the inclusive process that was undertaken to establish ensuring transparency and endurance to the Resolution 31. We express sincere gratitude to the experts group as well as all Member States, especially India whose valuable contributions enriched the process, and we have appreciation to the BDT Director and ITU‑T Secretariat. We agree with other delegates that the Council is not the appropriate place to discuss this topic and that it should remain in the expert group and BDT. Brazil appreciates the contributions and they're welcome in the next meeting. We hope that the BDT Director will promptly initiate the consultation process with Member States. Thank you.

Thank you very much Brazil.

The last speaker, Dominican Republic, please. You have the floor.

>> DOMINICAN REPUBLIC: Thank you, Chair.

At the outset ‑‑ can you hear me clearly asks the speaker?

>> CHAIR: Clearly please, go ahead.

>> DOMINICAN REPUBLIC: Good afternoon, Councilor, I thank you for giving us the opportunity to speak as an observer state.

And we thank India for the proposals and we're in alignment with the intervention and concerns raised by the delegate of Canada, the first and second, and we would take this opportunity to express our considerations pertaining to the IDI methodology which was discussed in the recent session in September before this meeting. This is an important consultation process undertaken which we think was very positive and we certainly are satisfied with the outcome. We understand that we need to begin with the new methodology and as discussed in previous months, this methodology can continue to be finessed, improved, we're aware of the difficulties of standardizing and simplifying the reality which is very different in different countries. We must not lose sight of the outcome which is to achieve and to look at measure of how we're achieving universal connectivity. In this vein, Chair, we would like to convey our trust and faith in the BDT and the expert group as discussed this matter and the new methodology and we would like to undertake the consultations with Member States for the approval of this new methodology with the new version which is version 3, which is proposed within the expert group.

Thank you very much, Chair.

>> CHAIR: Thank you, Dominican Republic.

I would like the BDT Director to take the floor, please. You have the floor, Director, please. Thank you.

>> BDT Director: Thank you very much, Chair.

Excellencies, dear Councilor, I thank the Government of India for the documents under consideration.

I also want to thank them for their contribution to the ordinary session of the Council in July of 2023.

I would like to thank Dr. Sharma who at very short notice, when there was going to be submission to this session, put aside his commitments and met with me and the team for two hours to discuss and clarify any issues and I think that meeting was very productive. Further, I want to thank the Member States here present and not in the room for making available their experts and I'm grateful to inputs coming from ‑‑ the contributions coming from the experts who tirelessly have been working with us and our team. The IDI is serious business and IDI is controversial, as I said during the last Council meeting. We all want to be number one, of course.

This does not refer to India, but to all of the countries.

I can confirm that member who is are here, also participated during the expert group meeting, the special session that we have held in September and I would like to thank them.

The Revision of 131 describes the process for developing the IDI, this process is that last February, with extensive involvement of the two expert groups on ICT indicators, expert groups on indicators and expert group object household indicators. In a formal presentation of the Member States who were invited to comment on the early drafts of the IDI methodology, for more information on the early stages, you can refer to the I addictions work page with all of the details in the process and relevant documents. I would like to give you, Mr. Chairman, if you can bear with me so that I can take time to fill the gaps of those that we have not done in the process. In the interest of time, our focus is on the most recent development, the virtual joint meeting of EGTI, expert group on indicators and the expert group on household indicators, on the IDI, from 13 to 15 June from 2023, was an invitation to the membership, it was under singular letter, that was on the 21st of March, 2023, started to address the outstanding issue, on the IDI methodology. The meeting was to ensure that all those that wanted to participate would have an opportunity to do so. Following the June meeting, the Secretariat updated methodology to reflect the outcomes of the meeting and produce what's been referred to as version 3 of the methodology which was initiated in early August. In July, during its ordinary session of Council, while discussing it, the Council noted the developments that had been made. As the Distinguished Delegate of India, they stated at the meeting that more time was needed, I informed the Council that would exceptionally organize an additional and final meeting to provide Member States with an opportunity to further discuss and address any issues that may have required more time and thank God we managed to get resources to support that meeting. Accordingly, an extraordinary meeting on the idea was held in hybrid format, on the 18th up to the 19th of September. During the meetings with the aim of concluding the elaboration of the methodology. It was both in person and virtual, to ensure that it was inclusive as possible.

The call for submissions for agenda items for the session was met, and ITU Secretariat received one submission, which we thank the Government of India, and the representatives, and during that meeting, the items raised by India were assigned to each agenda item and the co‑Chairs, the Chairs of the two expert groups from Member States and they represent the Member States, invited representatives of India to present each item one by one, after which the floor was opened to give the opportunity to the experts to discuss, comment, express views.

Unfortunately, none of these proposals were successful.

At that meeting, a total of 347 participants attended, this included regulators to telecommunication operator, ministries, the national statistical offices, sector members, other U.N. agencies, regional organizations, and a total of 105 countries were represented.

The summary report of this meeting has been shared with you and the Council information document number 3.

As you will note from that document, the conclusions of the meeting were clear, and confirmed the broad support of the EGTI and the EGH experts for version 3 of the methodology. That is there is no change arising from the extraordinary discussions, and that was the document that was kindly submitted by Delegation of India, I would like to mention, prior to the additional meeting, we took an extraordinary step, this is important, to engage an independent organization to conduct an independent assessment of version 3 of the IDI, this organization is a joint one of the European Union, they have a special unit, competencies on the indicators and the scope, who are international organizations like ours to develop composite indicators. For example, WIPO, and others. They notably conduct independent statistical assessments of indicators on a pro bono basis and we have not paid for that. They have done dozens of indexes and the audits were presented in the extraordinary September meeting and concluded that, I quote, "version 3 of the methodology was a statistically sound and robust ." This I believe provided additional assurances that the methodology could be submitted to Member States.

Based on successful outcomes of the September meeting, in accordance with Resolution 131, the methodology was ready for submission to Member States and it had to be delayed when it came do our attention that a document had been submitted to Council of this matter.

We should extend this two days ago, however, we put it in abeyance, awaiting discussion in Council. I should add that a number of countries, they have been calling, inquiring why the singular letter has been the case with the Distinguished Delegate of Canada. Why it has not yet been done, this is where we stand. Respectively, it is our considered view in data protection, that some of the requests or proposals contained in the documents submitted by India will need revisions to Resolution 131, as they're outside of the scope and provisions of the said resolution.

On this, we already knew that a PP resolution could not be amended, except if it’s by a subsequent PP.

However, this was confirmed by the ITU legal advisor. This is a key point that I would like ‑‑ there is one key point that I would also like to make. Some key provision in the resolution is the methodology would be adopted with 70% of responding Member States approve the methodology, further should the methodology be approved, any Member State will have the possibility to opt out of the 2023 edition of the IDI, but remains legible to take part in subsequent years. Before concluding, let me briefly touch on the question of data.

Used to work on the IDI, the of Secretariat collected data from administrations through at least five annual questionnaires. When data is missing, for certain indicators, data estimates is physical.

As it has been the practice every year since 2009, even during when there was no IDI, estimates would be shared with the statistical focal points of all Member States, prior to publication, and our databases and prior to using the data in the IDI. I know estimates could be, of concern to some.

However, the topic was discussed throughout meeting in September.

And the presentation to this effect, it was met.

Force interested, the summary report, it is Annex on the estimation which includes a link to an extent active 50‑page document on the methods that are used.

This material will hopefully provide further reassurance on the rigor and the professionalism applied by the ITU Secretariat in this exercise benefiting from are the experts, of course, from your countries.

In conclusion, I should say at this meeting, that at this moment, we are ready to send out the singular letter. It will have a deadline. Well before that deadline is reached, we are going to send, and that will be in the coming few days, to all Member States, as always has been the practice, all data including the data reported, not to be available by Member States, if any of the Member States focal points need clarification on the estimates or explanations, the Secretariat will be available to explain and to clarify to ensure the data.

I should add that this has always been the practice in the past. Thank you very much. I would like to again thank the distinguished representative of the Government of India, it assures that there is passion and enthusiasm and support for of the agenda that we have.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

>> CHAIR: Thank you.

Before opening the floor, I would like to in fact conclude here, we do not have much time, and we still have a lot of important aspects to cover.

I would like to conclude that in spite of the concerns of India, there is strong support for the current ongoing process, and the application of the 131 resolution, and that we should continue with the process that we are undertaking as mentioned by the Director of the development office.

Thank you.

We will open up the floor. Would you like to continue with requests? You can take the floor if it is brief. Thank you.

Saudi Arabia, you have the floor.

>> SAUDI ARABIA:

We thank the representative of India for the presentation. Having heard what the Director said, we are satisfied and we are pleased to see the efforts rolled out by this office. So we would like to thank the office, the Director, all of the staff, for ensuring that this index will be trans parents and global and, of course, improvements are always possible in the future versions and we would like to call on India to participate in the expert group.

Thank you.

>> CHAIR: Thank you, Saudi Arabia.

To continue, I will give the floor to the Secretariat.

You have the floor. We would like to ask the Chair of the ADM Committee to post his report for consideration that the Plenary.

>> Thank you I apologize, I was holding consultations with regard to the report actually.

The report will ‑‑ could be ready in around 5 minutes time, if you have something else to do, during that period, perhaps you could go get a coffee, that would be great for me.

>> CHAIR: I would like to hold a 5‑minute pause and then we will continue until 6:00. I understand that we have limited time, that is why we would like you to all be back here in 5 minutes max. Thank you.

>> CHAIR: Thank you very much. Let's start with the presentation of document ‑‑ the report from the Chair of the ADM. The Chair of the ADM, would you like to come up here to the roster? Would you like to stay seated where you are.

>> ADM CHAIR: I think to save time, I will make the report from where I'm sitting right now if that's okay by you.

, the document is Document 9, we're getting it published on the website. (Secretary).

The document is published now, you can go to the website, Document 9.

>> CHAIR: Go ahead, Chair. You can present your report.

>> ADM CHAIR: Thank you, Chair.

To begin, I would like to say that this report hasn't had time to be a examined or approved by the permanent Committee itself.

It is a version that the room still hasn't seen. The members of the permanent Committee have not earth, all errors are due to me, please send any comment to myself or the Secretariat.

The errors contained in are entirely down to me.

There are two main topics to be examined, within the permanent Committee, the new building project at the headquarters of the organization and the actual accounts of the organization that haven't been able to be audited so we have to ask ourselves what the next steps would be regarding this matter.

On the first topic, on the headquarter, I will continue in English, it will be easier for me to read parts of the document in English remember than to try to translate them.

I'm not as talented a as our interpreter, I will continue in English.

>> With respect to Union medicine quarters premises project, we had two documents to examine, Document 5 Revision 1, and which was a contribution from Secretariat, and Document 7, which was the report from the Council Working Group FHR.

The information document, where you will see, document information 2.

We have the presentations of the documents and it is an update by the Chairman of the Member States of the advisory group.

After having listened to the interventions, the ADM Committee decided to set up an ad hoc group, with a broad mandate that's acknowledged to see how we could work on as the discussions that have taken place in Council Working Group FHR, taking into consideration inputs made to the Council session.

So the ad hoc group worked hard yesterday evening, worked through this morning, the whole morning starting at 8:00 to 12:00 with a break, and unfortunately, no consensus emerged out of the work of the Ad Hoc Group and so there was no output document or any recommendation to the permanent ‑‑ to the ADM Committee that could be submitted to the ADM Committee. However, I would like to draw the attention that there is minimal distribution document which reflects the work in progress, and the stage of the Ad Hoc Group decided to stop its work so that the document can be consulted by Member States.

Based on that we had a discussion in the permanent Committee this afternoon, starting at 2:30 and I would like to concentrate on the conclusions of the ADM on the matter that we recommend to the Plenary to adopt, or endorse. This is paragraph 1.26, exactly.

So the Committee, recommends to the Council to invite the Secretariat to first to contact the bidders under the general contracted tender with the view to extending the validity of the bids, with the understanding that if they agree to an extension, it should be for free, it shouldn't have financial consequences for the organization. Second, we recommend that the Secretariat identifies possible ways of financing the direct costs associated with any of the options, maybe this may be a bit misleading, but what's meant with it, of course, that both options were examined in the ad hoc group, will have ‑‑ will entail indirect costs so it makes sense already now that the Secretariat identifies ways to finance this indirect costs as they will anyway occur.

We recommend that the Secretariat engages further with MSAG and we recommend that the Secretariat identifies all additional information and actions required for the Secretariat as they would flow out of document DLOM, and we recommend also that Secretariat catalogues the requests for information from Member States and this request can be made ‑‑ can still be made after the Council session and this request would be published as well as responses of the Secretariat in the form of a repository available to all of the Member States.

Further, we recommend that Council invites Secretariat to establish a clear Plan of Action with timelines, including if possible a decision matrix that can be examined by Council Working Group FHR at the next meeting. We recommend that Council invites Secretariat to continue to lyase with the Swiss authorities on possible ways forward and the ADM Committee recommends that Council invites Secretariat to consult with the sponsors, identify them in Resolution 212 with the view to ensuring that the interests are protected, will be protected in the event of a new project demand and as the ADM Committee recommends that Council conditions the collaboration with the external consultant at least until the Council Working Group FHR meeting of January, 2024.

The Committee further recommends that Council invites Member States to submit any further requests for information to the Secretariat that was mentioned already before.

This is our recommendation as an output of Council, of the Council session on the topic of the headquarters of the headquarter project. With your permission, I would move the less contention part of the report, which is an update on the next steps to complete the audited accounts so we listened to explanations of the external auditor, about the reasons for the delay.

We also took good note of the explanations of the Secretary‑General and as well as her commitment to ensure as quickly that Council, as quickly as possible, will be able to approve the audited accounts for 2022 and we listened to some questions and I would say that's in the conclusion that we received useful information and that we're now patiently awaiting the audited accounts.

With that, Mr. Chairman, this concludes my report. I would again like to thank everybody for their contributions to the discussions, to the Secretariat for the swift work, and I will put this report now into your hands. I remain available in case of questions.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

>> CHAIR: Thank you very much, Chair of the ADM.

We recognize your excellent work over the last few days as well as the rest of the ad hoc group.

Can we adopt the report and the recommendations?

I don't see any objections.

Yes, Saudi Arabia. You have the floor.

>> SAUDI ARABIA: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

We thank you for the wonderful job. We don't have an objection, hour, the point on the consultation with the sponsor identified in the resolution, I think that the end of the sentence implies a direction of the options that we have. We would like to stop the sentence after protected. If you can show that on the screen.

1.26. Consult with the sponsors, end the sentence after the word protected.

A question for clarification, what do we mean by a catalog request of information? Thank you.

Can you respond to the questions? Saudi Arabia, Chair of ADM.

>> Thank you, Chair, thank you, Saudi Arabia, for the questions.

With regarding the concern raised, whereby we spend our time continuously going over and over the same question that we are in this type of situation.

The idea with this catalog, it would be to have an overview of the status of information and to have responses available from the Secretariat. This would be available from May 1st, acting as a database on all of the questions raised, and that have been sent to the Secretariat by the Member States and that catalog could also afford the Secretariat itself in order to quickly have answering to the questions and do not have to start a clarification process progressions which they had already replied in the past. That's the idea of the catalog that would be open to Member States.

Once the answer has been given, that information would be available on that catalog available to the member, and to the Secretariat.

I hope that answered the question, Chair. Thank you.

>> CHAIR: China, you have the floor.

>> CHINA:

Thank you. I propose modifications so I will speak in English.

We have the timing issue, we want to add in some text after this Heading text. In light of the Secretariat to take the following actions in a timely manner, not later ‑‑ no later than maybe ‑‑ no later than maybe the end of this year.

>> CHAIR: Thank you.

Thank you, China.

I don't see any other requests for the floor from the Plenary. With those modifications and clarification, can we then adopt the report.

It is so decided.

Thank you very much, everyone.

That is the end of our reunion, our meeting. Before that I will give the floor to the Secretary‑General.

>> DOREEN BOGDAN-MARTIN: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

I will be brief. It has been an intense two days, before you head home, I just wanted to really thank all of you for coming together to discuss important topics for this Union, from the building, to the financial accounts, the leadership of the Council Working Groups, the next Plenipot, and I do want to thank you all for being engaged, for being constructive, I thank you, Mr. Chair, your Vice‑Chairs, the ADM Chair, Vice‑Chair, our Ad Hoc Chair and we're very grateful to all of you for that good guidance and your hard efforts to move us forward.

As I conclude, Mr. Chair, I wanted to end on a happy note, on Wednesday evening the ITU formally accepted its latest Emmy Award wonderfully the ITU for developing a standard for HDR TV, I think, Mario, that's our third award, so very exciting, received by Joanne Wilson, Mario wanted to be with you will all of you and she was slighted to go in his place, this award, it is a powerful symbol of what we try to achieve together, strong collaboration that ultimately enhances global technology by elevating its quality and accessibility across the world.

With that, safe travels home, have a nice weekend, we welcome you back for the cluster in January and look forward to that. Of course, we hope to see you then at the RA, at the WRC, maybe at Partner2Connect in January, again, a huge thank you to you, Chairman, and a big thanks to all of you.

Thank you.

>> CHAIR: To conclude, I would like to say a few words. Secretary‑General, Deputy Secretary‑General, Chair of the ADM, the Vice‑Chair, the Vice‑Chairs beside me, Ministers, distinguished members of the Council, I would like to express my gratitude to all of the Councilor for your dedication and engagement that's been the background of the work of the ITU well, we still have a lot of work ahead of us, and I would encourage you to double done on work so that in the next meetings you continue with that W the constructive, collaborative spirit so that we can achieve consensus to have better dynamism in our work.

It would be an honor to Chair the Council and to be part of the incredible community.

I would like to sincerely thank all of you being part of this collective effort to the interpreter, to the technicians and to all of the staff that worked hard with us to ensure the success of our meetings and to ensure that our meetings were carried out in record time.

I would like to particularly thank the Government of Paraguay for believing in our work and for supporting us from the very start of our work.

I would like to thank all the people that supported me virtually and I thank the Secretariat and Beatrice and all of her collaborators who were particularly important for the success of our meetings.

So thank you very much. The meeting is now adjourned.

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