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SIGNING CEREMONY and NINTH PLENARY

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>> MARIO CASTRO GRANDE: Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen:

We will commence in a few moments the signing ceremony. May I please ask you to take your seats.

>> MARIO CASTRO GRANDE: Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen:

Good afternoon, and welcome to the Signing Ceremony of the Host Country Agreement Between the Government of the United Arab Emirates and the International Telecommunication Union, concerning the holding, organization and financing of the 2023 Radiocommunication Assembly, World Radiocommunication Conference and the first Conference Preparatory Meeting for the 2027 World Radiocommunication Conference.

For today's ceremony we have with us the Secretary‑General of the International Telecommunication Union, Mr. Houlin Zhao;

His Excellency, Engineer Majed Sultan Al Mesmar, Director General of the Telecommunications and Digital Government Regulatory Authority of the United Arab Emirates;

His Excellency Engineer Mohammed Al Ramsi Deputy Director General of telecom sector of TDRA;

Mr. Mario Maniewicz, Director of the Radiocommunication Bureau of the ITU.

To begin with our program, it is my pleasure to invite the Director of the ITU Radiocommunication Bureau, Mr. Mario Maniewicz to make some introductory remarks.

>> MARIO MANIEWICZ: Good afternoon, everyone.

Engineer Majed Sultan Al Mesmar, Director General of the Telecommunications and Digital Government Regulatory Authority of the United Arab Emirates;

His Excellency Engineer Mohammed Al Ramsi, Deputy Director General of telecom sector of TDRA;

ITU Secretary‑General, Fellow elected officials, Excellencies, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen:

I'm delighted to welcome you to this brief but very important event on the hosting of the next Radiocommunication Assembly, the World Radiocommunication Conference of 2023 and the Conference Preparatory Meeting CPM27/1 in the City of Dubai in the United Arab Emirates.

Dear friends, it is not the first time that the UAE hosts a major Conference of the United Nations specialized agencies of ICTs such as the ITU. Four years ago many of us attended the Plenipotentiary Conference of 2018 in the Emirates. Personally, I must say that I have very good memories of the beautiful reception in the desert, the world class Conference facilities in Dubai and the Plenipotentiary Conference itself. At that time I was elected for my first term as Director of the Radiocommunication Bureau.

Today on behalf of all members of the ITU Radiocommunication Sector I would like to thank very much the Government of the United Arab Emirates and the UAE Telecommunications and Digital Government Regulatory Authority for their generous invitation to host WRC‑23. Dear colleagues, the World Radiocommunication Conference provides ITU Member States with the opportunity to obtain regulations, international treaty, it governs the use of the request of spectrum and the associated satellite orbits. The international regulatory framework provides a solid foundation for introducing new, innovative technologies while simultaneously ensuring that all radio systems can coexist without receiving harmful interference.

The four years of the Plenipotentiary, of the WRC preparatory process, extensive studies and technical discussions for WRC‑23 will have taken place almost entirely during the period of the COVID‑19 pandemic. I must commend all ITU Member States, ITU‑R sector member, associates, academia, supported by my colleagues in the Radiocommunication Bureau for their hard work and perseverance in keeping the preparatory work to WRC‑23 on track. Many ITU‑R delegates attended meetings in the wee hours of the morning and late into the night. I thank you for your dedication.

Ladies and gentlemen, we are all very much looking forward to being back in the land of the visionary Sheikh Mohamed bin Zyed, a land where diplomacy has proven successful, a place that unites people of different nationalities and where people are known for their enormous hospitality. I am sure that we're in very good hands and I am confidence of the success of WRC‑23. I look forward to seeing you all in Dubai next year.

>> MARIO CASTRO GRANDE: Thank you, Director Maniewicz, for your remarks.

Before we commence with the signing ceremony, I invite Ms. Maitha Al Jamiri, Officer of International Affairs for the Telecommunications and Digital Government Regulatory Authority of the United Arab Emirates to come the podium and introduce the video we have for you on this occasion.

>> HAITHA AL JAMIRI: Distinguished Delegates, ladies and gentlemen, with this, we announce the agreement of the UAE hosting of the World Radiocommunication Conference 2023, we will harness all capabilities to make this important event a global success and reach its results.

Ladies and gentlemen, I now invite you to watch a short video in which we reveal the logo of the WRC‑2023.

Thank you very much.

>> MARIO CASTRO GRANDE: Thank you.

I now invite the ITU Secretary General to deliver his remarks.

Houlin Zhao, you have the floor.

>> HOULIN ZHAO: Excellencies, dear guests, dear friends, ladies and gentlemen, good afternoon. This time next year I will tell the states to head to Dubai to affect the Radio Regulations and shape the future of the Digital Transformation for all.

I want to thank the President of the United Arab Emirates, His Highness, Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed and the TDI Director General, Engineer Majed Sultan Al Mesmar, my dear friend for bringing WRC2023 to Dubai.

The UAE is a pioneer in Digital Transformation, putting innovation and creativity at the hearts of the national agenda through initiatives such as United in Knowledge, four major ITU Conferences have already taken place in Dubai and all four were very successful. The UAE has a strong commitment to Digital Transformation coupled with the efforts in welcoming the ITU family and an outstanding host for our upcoming World Radiocommunication Conference and at a most fitting venue for forging the pathways of future digital communication.

With this invitation, the UAE becomes the first country of our family to host all major activities of our major Conferences.

Congratulations!

Let me take this opportunity to congratulate my dear colleague Mr. Mario Maniewicz in his reelection as Director of the Radiocommunication Bureau. I know that BR under his leadership and the UAE are working hard together to ensure WRC‑2023 meets the needs and expectations of our members and all the people we serve around the world.

I found it nice, the logos.

I wish you a very nice WRC‑2023.

Thank you.

>> MARIO CASTRO GRANDE: Thank you, Secretary General.

I now invite the His Excellency, Director General of the UAE's Telecommunications and Digital Government Regulatory Authority deliver his remarks.

>> MOHAMMED AL RAMSI: Thank you.

In the name of God the merciful, His Excellency, Houlin Zhao, Secretary‑General of the ITU, Your Excellency, Mr. Mario Maniewicz, head of the Radio Regulations Bureau, your Excellency, dear delegates and participants, may God's blessings be upon you.

We're very happy today to officially sign the agreement to host the WRC in 2023 in the City of Dubai, in the period from 20 November to 15 December, 2023 and to announce this very important meeting.

We have been determined, as has been the case always, to prepare all the components of success, hoping that this will be yet another occasion to renew relationships with our friends from all countries of the world for the benefit of the community of telecommunications in general and the Radio Sector in particular.

I would like to seize this opportunity to profusely thank the Secretary‑General, Engineer Majed Sultan Al Mesmar, Director General of the Telecommunications and Digital Government Regulatory Authority of the United Arab Emirates, His Excellency Engineer Mohammed Al Ramsi Deputy Director General of telecom sector of TDRA, and the Director of the Radio Sector and the officials in the ITU for their great support and efforts in preparing for the hosting of this Conference.

I would also like to thank all countries for their trust in the state of the UAE and its ability to host the global activities. We promise you that we will be at the level of expectation.

By hosting the WRC in 2023 the UAE would be the only State that hosted all the Conferences of the ITU and hat's a source of pride and pleasure to serve humanity, Sustainable Development through that vital sector and through our strong ties with the ITU.

I would like to renew my thanks and appreciations to you, and I hope that the WRC in 2023 to be a distinguished stop for more prosperity for mankind.

Thank you and may God's blessings be upon you.

>> MARIO CASTRO GRANDE: Thank you, Director General.

We will now proceed with the Signing of the Agreement between the Government of the United Arab Emirates and the International Telecommunication Union, concerning the host country agreement for the holding of the 2023 Radiocommunication Assembly, the 2023 World Radiocommunication Conference and the first Conference Preparatory Meeting for the 2027 World Radiocommunication Conference.

May I invite the Director General and Secretary‑General Zhao to sign the Agreement.

Thank you, Director General, thank you Secretary General. May I please request you to stand and hold your respective signed agreements for a photo.

Thank you.

Let us now invite the other ITU Elected Officials present to join us for a group photo.

Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen, this brings our programme to a close, we thank you all for joining us on this momentous occasion and we wish you a good day.

Thank you.

>> CHAIR: Welcome back, Distinguished Delegates, please take your seats so we can start our 9th Plenary meeting.

Before starting, I would like to congratulate as well UAE. I wish all the best of organizing such a wonderful event.

Thank you to China and Greece for the beautiful lunch they organized and the wonderful reception also.

The Draft Agenda for the 9th Plenary meeting was published as ADM/23. I'm seeking for approval.

Agenda is approved.

We'll proceed with one policy statement.

I invite Fiji to take the floor, represented by the acting permanent secretary in the Ministry of communications.

>> FIJI.

Thank you, Mr. President.

Honourable Ministers, Your Excellencies, Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen:

I bring you warm greetings and well wishes of the Fijian people. It’s wonderful to be in Romania and I would first like to thank our hosts for their warm welcome and hospitality. We would also like to offer our heartfelt congratulations to Secretary‑General Elect, Doreen Bogdan‑Martin and Deputy Secretary‑General Elect, Tomas Lamanauskas.

An open, secure, stable, accessible, and peaceful cyberspace is crucial to fully realize the Sustainable Development Goals and to ensure long term financial security and prosperity.

A mere ten years ago, the consequences of a global pandemic would have been far more severe for our people and economy. But as part of a forward‑thinking, strategic, decade‑long effort to modernize our economy and develop our telecommunications, we have made historic strides in bridging the digital divide in our society. In a way, we were unsuspectingly adapting to this crisis long before anyone had ever heard of the coronavirus.

Today, 95 percent of all Fijians have access to mobile internet connectivity through 3G, 4G, and 4G+ networks. We’ve also deregulated the telecommunications sector and brought in competition that has driven down prices and improved the quality of services on offer by giving consumers more choice in the marketplace. Today, call charges, text and broadband rates are the lowest they have ever been at the highest speeds we’ve ever seen. It costs approx. FJ$2/USD$0.94 for 10 GB of data. Our access to the Southern Cross fibre optic network, which we have connected our two largest islands to ‑‑ provides high‑speed, direct, resilient and secure connectivity. We also established our national Internet Exchange Point in 2017.

Connectivity is the greatest equalizer however, if connectivity is not ubiquitous, it can be the greatest dis‑equalizer. That is why as a matter of priority, the Fijian Government is working to bridge the remaining 5% of our population who live in the deep interiors of the two largest islands nestled between mountains, or in remote and maritime communities. These are areas outside the reach of the infrastructure of the telecommunication providers.

Through our universal service access fund, we will be connecting the 240 unconnected sites. Our 26 “telecentre” project is bringing digital technology into Fijian classrooms in under‑connected regions. It is through initiatives such as these that Fiji is transforming itself into a digital economy.

With these significant investments in ICTs, it has become crucial to protect our information infrastructure from the threat of cybercrime. Fiji has a Cybercrime Act 2021 which is aligned to the Budapest Convention on Cybercrime, and we are working towards our accession to the Budapest Convention as we received an invitation last December. We are currently working on reviewing our National Cybersecurity Strategy due to evolving threats and are in the process of establishing the national CERT (Computer Emergency Response Team).

Resilient infrastructure is required for sustainability and given our heightened vulnerability due to adverse climatic events. We are particularly mindful of the urgency of ensuring that ICT infrastructure is climate resilient. Since, 2014, we have endured 14 cyclones. It is not difficult to imagine a severe storm destroying critical infrastructure and crippling our increasingly digital economy.

To ensure domestic and regional connectivity resilience, we are in the process of doing a feasibility study to build a second fibre cable landing station in Fiji.

In closing, all these efforts, including this Conference, positions us to bridge the global digital divide‑‑ 2.9 billion people that remain totally shut out of the online world‑‑ and build trust in the digital economy. As always Fiji remains committed to this collective vision to build a more digital inclusive –– and more resilient –– world.

Vinakalevu and Thank you.

Thank you, Fiji.

We will now proceed with the second round of elections for the post of BDT Director.

Before that, I would like to inform you that the candidature of Mr. Jean Philémon Kissangou of the Republic of the Congo has been withdrawn.

I will pass the floor to the Secretary to explain the election process.

>> SECRETARIAT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The Working Group that's to meet at 4:00, it is canceled.

Now let's start with the information regarding the voting process.

As it was the case this morning,

The room has been divided into 5 blocks, numbered ‑‑

>> CHAIR: We have a request for the floor from Cameroon.

>> CAMEROON: Just to announce that Cameroon, the candidature of Mr. Alexander Ntoko has been withdrawn also. Thank you.

>> CHAIR: As I said, thank you for your announcement.

As I said in the previous Plenary, the candidature had to be withdrawn before this Plenary meeting, the deadline was 2:30.

I think the ballot papers are already prepared, but just allow me to see. I will hand again to the Secretariat.

>> SECRETARIAT: Mr. Chairman, please give us 10 minutes. We are going to print new ballot papers for this round of election.

Thank you.

>> CHAIR: Thank you, Secretary of The Plenary. We'll have a 10‑minute break to bring new ballots for the vote. We'll start again at 10 before 4:00.

Thank you.

(Break).

>> CHAIR: The ballot papers are printed, please take your seats so we can begin the proceedings.

May I kindly ask you to take your seats so we can start with the explanation of the process of voting because we have the ballot papers.

Thank you.

Secretariat of the Plenary, I give you, again, the floor.

>> SECRETARIAT: Okay. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. Let's start again.

As was the case this morning,

The room has been divided into 5 blocks, numbered

1 to 5. Each block has a voting station.

Document 110(Rev.3) lists all Member States having the right to vote within each block. Please look at the floor plan on the screen to find your voting station. There was no change this morning, there was no change regarding the transfer of power or transfer of votes either. I refer you to that for

Documents 98, 99, 100, 102, and 113 of our Conference. For the second round, the Member States with the transfer of power of vote, will therefore cast two ballots are requested to cast the ballots at the voting station of the respective Member State. Please bring your badge to the voting station for verification and scanning. The five tellers will oversee the election and are already in place.

The teller representing Region A is at ballot box 1; Region B at 2; Region C at 3; Region D at 4; Region E at 5.

Once the voting has begun, it cannot be interrupted, unless a point of order has been raised in connection with the way in which the vote is being taken. The election will begin as soon as the Chair announces it and will end when the Chair announces the results of the vote.

Security, could you please close the doors to the Plenary room?

Thank you.

The doors are now closed.

I confirm that the quorum is met.

The doors of this meeting room will remain closed and will be opened again once the casting of ballots has been completed and the ballot boxes are moved to the green room for counting. You may not leave or enter the room.

I will now ask the ushers to start handing out a ballot paper to all delegations having the right to vote and present in the room. The ballot paper for this second round is white.

Ushers, could you please start distributing ballot papers?

Delegations having received a transfer of powers or vote from another delegation will receive two ballot papers. One again, please carefully look at the instructions for filling out the ballot paper, Delegates should mark the ballot with an X and only with an X. Please do not use a check or a tick.

Look fully at the screen.

If a delegate makes a mistake when completing a ballot paper once the vote has started, the delegate should raise the point of order paddle.

The yellow one with the black square in the middle.

In that case, the Secretariat will collect and destroy the ballot paper and will give you a new one.

If you have received two ballot paper, please complete them at the same time.

You are now familiar with the process. I will call out the French short name of the Member States having the right to vote by groups of 15.

If you do not hear your Member State name in the first batch, please wait for a second call or a second batch. And once I have finished, I will call the Member State for a second call for those that have not yet voted.

Following this last call, the Chair will declare the casting of the vote of the ballot closed.

Before starting the vote, all delegations having the right to vote should have a ballot paper, and those with a transfer of power or vote should have two. If not, please identify yourselves.

Please, usher, we have two delegations. Yes.

Mr. Chairman, I believe all delegations having the right to vote now have a ballot paper.

You have the floor.

>> CHAIR: Thank you, Secretary of the Plenary.

As this is the fourth round of votes, I think there are no questions. If there are any? No questions,

I now declare that the voting has begun and I pass the floor back to the Secretary.

>> SECRETARIAT: Thank you.

I will ask colleagues at the voting stations to hold the ballot boxes in the air. You will see that they're empty. Please,

Box 1, Box 2, Box 3, Box 4, Box 5.

I will now start with voting station 1. I will call

Afghanistan.

Albania.

Algeria.

Germany.

Andorra.

Angola.

Argentina.

Australia.

Austria.

Azerbaijan.

Bahamas.

Brazil.

Brunei Darussalam.

Bulgaria.

Burkina Faso.

I now move to voting station 2 for the first batch.

Micronesia.

Moldova.

Monaco.

Mongolia.

Montenegro.

Mozambique.

Myanmar.

Namibia.

Nepal.

Uzbekistan.

Pakistan.

Panama.

Papua New Guinea.

Paraguay.

Qatar.

I now move to voting station 3.

Guinea Bissau.

Indonesia.

Kenya.

Lao.

Lesotho.

Mauritius.

Mauritania.

Mexico.

Oman.

Uganda.

Peru.

Poland.

Portugal.

Syrian Arab Republic.

Turkiye.

I now move to voting station 4.

Comoros.

Croatia.

Cuba.

Denmark.

Djibouti.

Dominican Republic.

Dominica.

Egypt.

United Arab Emirates.

Russian Federation.

Fiji.

Finland.

Guatemala.

Guinea.

Guyana.

I will now move to voting station 5.

Saudi Arabia.

Armenia.

Bahrain.

Bangladesh.

Barbados.

Belarus.

Belgium.

Belize.

Benin.

Bhutan.

Plurinational State of Bolivia.

Bosnia Herzegovina.

Botswana.

Cabo Verde.

Cambodia.

I am now moving back to station 1 with the second batch.

Burundi.

Colombia.

Republic of Congo.

Republic of Korea.

Costa Rica.

Cote d'Ivoire.

Eswatini.

United States.

Ethiopia.

Gambia.

Ghana.

Greece.

Grenada.

Islamic Republic of Iran.

Iraq.

I will now move to voting station 2 for the second batch.

Democratic Republic of Congo.

Kyrgyzstan.

Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

Slovakia.

Czech Republic.

Saint Lucia.

St. Kitts and Nevis.

San Marino.

Saint Vincent and Grenadines.

Solomon Islands.

Samoa.

Sao Tome and Principe.

Senegal.

Switzerland.

Suriname.

I will now continue with voting station 3 for the second batch.

Romania.

United Kingdom.

Rwanda.

Serbia.

Seychelles.

Singapore.

Slovenia.

Somalia.

Sudan.

South Sudan.

Sri Lanka.

South African Republic.

Sweden.

Thailand.

Tonga.

Let's continue with voting station 4 for the second batch.

Haiti.

Honduras.

Hungary.

India.

Italy.

Jamaica.

Japan.

Kazakhstan.

Kiribati.

Madagascar.

Malaysia.

Malawi.

Maldives.

Mali.

Malta.

Let's continue with voting station 5 for the second batch.

Cameroon.

Canada.

Central African Republic.

Chile.

China.

Cyprus.

Vatican.

El Salvador.

Ecuador.

Eritrea.

Spain.

Estonia.

France.

Georgia.

I will now start the call for the third batch for voting station 1.

Ireland.

Iceland.

Israel.

Jordan.

Kuwait.

Latvia.

Lebanon.

Liberia.

Libya.

Liechtenstein.

Lithuania.

Luxembourg.

North Macedonia.

At voting station 2, third batch.

Tadjkistan.

Tanzania.

Chad.

Timor Lester.

Togo.

Uruguay.

Vanuatu.

Viet Nam.

Yemen.

Zambia.

Zimbabwe.

For voting station 3, third call.

Trinidad Tobago.

Tunisia.

Turkmenistan.

Tuvalu.

Ukraine.

For voting station 4.

Morocco.

Marshall Islands.

Nicaragua.

Niger.

Nigeria.

Norway.

New Zealand.

Netherlands.

Philippines.

DI will now proceed to a second and last call for the Member States having the right to vote who have not yet voted.

I will call out voting station 5.

Bosnia Herzegovina.

Chairman, I have now concluded my list. I will pass the floor back to you.

Thank you.

>> CHAIR: Thank you, Secretary of the Plenary.

I now declare that the casting of ballots is closed. Now, the Tellers and ITU staff, please proceed to the Green Room with the ballot boxes.

Under the supervision of the tellers in the Green Room, the ballot boxes will now be opened and the ballot papers will be counted. The results will be announced as soon as they are available.

Meanwhile, I invite Algeria to take the floor. I think that Algeria wants to announce a coffee break.

Please.

They already did this morning.

We'll have a coffee break, but before that I give the floor to Romania.

>> ROMANIA: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Just to remind colleagues about the trips that are planned by the Romanian government for tomorrow and next weekend, if you haven't registered yet, please do so. They are just day TRIP, for tomorrow, if you don't go tomorrow, maybe for the next weekend.

On Sunday, the 2nd of October, you are all invited to explore Romania traditions and history at the national village museum, transportation will be provided from two collection points, the departure is from 10:00, 10:30 and 11:00 and return at 15: 30, 16: 00 and 1630. If you prefer, you can go by taxi. Please wear comfortable shoes and we will see each other there to enjoy the traditions of Romania.

Another piece of information, transport for colleagues coming to the venue tomorrow is provided from 7:00 until 6:00 in the afternoon, shuttle buses as usual. Also, if you will want to eat or grab coffee here, the cafeteria will be open.

Thank you.

>> CHAIR: Thank you, Romania.

The doors are now open, we can go to the coffee break and we'll meet back here at 5:00 p.m. sharp for the announcement of the results.

Thank you very much.

(Break).

>> CHAIR: Please take your seats and we'll announce the results.

Thank you, and please take your seats.

Announce the results in only a few seconds, minutes. So please take your seats. I would like again to the tellers for the work they did. It was a difficult day for that. Thank you very much for this.

This is the moment when everybody wants to stay for the results.

I will start by reading the teller's report for election of BDT Director, the second round.

Ballot papers deposited, 181.

Invalid ballot papers, 0.

Abstentions, 0.

Delegations present and voting, 181.

Required majority, 91 votes.

I'll announce now the results in descending order of the results.

With 15 votes, Anusha Rahman Khan.

With 26 votes, Muhammodou M.O. Kah.

With 59 votes, Stephen Bereaux.

With 81 votes, Cosmas Zavazava.

Congratulations to all of you. As you can see, the required majority was not reached. None of the candidates obtained the majority quite for in this round.

We, therefore, have to proceed to a third round, which is going to be on Monday morning starting from 9:30. Please be in time on Monday starting from 9:30 to the Plenary meeting.

The candidates that will decide to withdraw their candidature can submit this to the email address, PPelections@ITU.int, saying it again, the candidates that chose to withdraw candidature should send an email to the email address, PP elections@ITU.int until 7:00 a.m. Monday morning, or the same time at the Chair office as well.

As we have 20 minutes more, I will give the floor to the countries that are going to organize this today, tomorrow, Sunday reception, or any events.

So I'm inviting South Africa, Italy, UAE, France, Ghana.

The first country I will give the floor to is South Africa.

>> SOUTH AFRICA: Thank you, Chair.

A very good afternoon to the distinguished Ministers and honorable delegates.

Chair, on behalf of the Minister of Communications and Digital Technology and Administration of South Africa we're proud to invite all delegates to tonight's reception taking place at 6:30. We will be able to see the signage.

As typically in South African spirit, please bring on your dancing shoes and we look forward to welcome you to South Africa.

Thank you.

>> CHAIR: Thank you, South Africa.

I give the floor now to United Arab Emirates.

>> UNITED ARAB EMIRATES: Thank you, Chairman.

On behalf of the United Arab Emirates I would like to invite all delegates present at this Conference to a dinner that will be organized at 8:00 p.m. We will be delighted to receive all of you for this occasion.

Thank you.

>> CHAIR: Thank you, UAE.

Just again for a bit of clarity, I read again the results, they're the same, I read again the numbers, the votes.

Anusha Rahman Khan, 15 votes.

Muhammodou M.O. Kah, 26 votes.

Stephen Bereaux, 59 votes.

And Cosmas Zavazava, 81 votes. These are the results.

I give the floor now to France.

>> FRANCE: Thank you, Chairman.

I have the honor to remind you of the invitation on Saturday, 1st of October, at 18:30 in the French residence in Romania hosted by the Heads of Delegation and Heads of Delegations plus 1. Thank you.

>> CHAIR: Thank you very much Italy, you have the floor.

>> ITALY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Italy has the honor and pleasure to invite all the delegations to the Italian dinner this evening in Marriott Hotel. I will inform all of you that there will be some shuttle bus at the main entrance down the street from 7:30 to 9:30 to go to the Marriott Hotel and from 10:00 we will have some other bus to come back to your hotel.

I hope you can enjoy the Italian style this evening with Italian food, Italian wine and Italian music.

Thank you.

>> CHAIR: Thank you very much.

I invite now Ghana to take the floor.

>> GHANA: Chair, Distinguished Delegates, colleagues.

We're delighted to invite all to our reception on Sunday at 8:00 p.m. right here in the centre. We promise you it will be a seated reception and for Caribbean colleagues, we'll be serving rice and peas Ghana style. I'm sure you will enjoy the music and come with your dancing shoes. We promise it will be a treat.

Just before we go in for our Marathon elections on Monday, let's let our hair down.

Thank you very much.

>> CHAIR: Thank you, Ghana.

Jordan, you have the floor.

>> JORDAN: Thank you.

I cannot compete with the invitation from Ghana, she did a great job to invite everybody.

I'm very honored and delighted to have you all attend our dinner reception on Sunday evening at 6:30 here in the parliament building. We will be honored to invite everyone, the delegates, our friends, ITU staff.

Thank you so much.

>> CHAIR: Thank you very much, Jordan.

I will forward the invitation from Romania, if you want to go on any of the trips, they're all amazing, we have a side event, here a wonderful side event, we invite you to take part of that event.

Now, considering that we still have 12 minutes left for this Plenary meeting, I will invite only ‑‑ I repeat only ‑‑ the Regional Coordinators if they want to take the floor to say congratulations to the Directors of the Bureaus that were elected today.

Please only the Regional Coordinators to deliver messages, because we don't have enough time to allow all the countries to deliver congratulation messages.

I start with Papua New Guinea. You have the floor.

>> PAPUA NEW GUINEA: Thank you, Chairman.

The APT is very pleased and welcomes the reelection of Mr. Mario Maniewicz as head of the Radiocommunications Bureau, regional members have worked very closely with Mario Maniewicz over the last four years and welcome the opportunity to do so again.

We also are very pleased to be working with one of our own regional representatives, Mr. Seizo Onoe in his new role as the head of the Standardization Bureau and we very much applaud that achievement.

Thank you.

>> CHAIR: Thank you very much.

I now give the floor to Nigeria.

>> NIGERIA: Hello. Thank you, Mr. President.

We appreciate the way and manner you have managed the conduct of the election for today, starting with Directors, the first one, the second one, the third one has been inconclusive so far.

We want to make a submission, even though you have earlier announced the postponement of the election until Monday, we are of the opinion that if you can consider going for the third round today, it would be better so that this one can be concluded today.

Next week we can go for the Council members.

Many delegates travel before then, since we're here today, and it is not late, we would appreciate if ITU could consider going forward with the third round today so that we'll be able to go through and take the final decision. I do hope our request will be considered.

This is the opinion of our African countries.

Thank you very much.

>> CHAIR: Thank you, Nigeria.

I take the other region to say congratulations messages and I come back to your statement in a few minutes.

I invite now Romania to deliver the message.

>> ROMANIA: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you for the opportunity to congratulate the Director of BR, Mr. Mario Maniewicz, for his election for a second term.

Mario, we know we're in your amazing hands so you have our full confidence ahead.

I take the opportunity to also thank the outgoing TSB Director and to thank him for all his work, to congratulate Mr. Seizo Onoe for his election and also thank the other two candidates for their submission of candidatures, Mr. Thomas Zielke and Mr. Bilel Jamoussi.

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

>> CHAIR: Thank you, Romania.

I give now the floor to UAE.

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

On behalf of the Arab Group I wish extend all our congratulations to Mr. Mario Maniewicz for the reelection to head up the Radiocommunication Bureau. We wish him every success in his new term.

Mr. Mario Maniewicz over the last four years has done many things. He has made many achievements and one of them was the preparations for the last WRC. We know that he'll be very successful.

We wish also to congratulate Mr. Seizo Onoe from the TSB. We wish him every success and wish to extend our congratulations and thanks to Dr. Bilel Jamoussi from Tunisia and also Mr. Thomas Zielke from Germany. We hope that they will have better luck next time, and we hope that their careers will be grand with success and we count on their support.

The Arab Group assures Mr. Mario Maniewicz and Mr. Seizo Onoe of our full support.

Chair, since you have given me the floor, please allow me to say a few words regarding the question of the African Group or would you like us to do it later? Perhaps we'll do it later. Thank you.

>> CHAIR: Thank you, UAE.

I will give you back the floor for the issue mentioned by Nigeria.

Now I give the floor to the Russian Federation.

>> RUSSIAN FEDERATION: Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

On behalf of the countries of the regional Commonwealth in the field of communications we would like to congratulate Mr. Mario Maniewicz on his election as the Director of the BR. We have known Mr. Mario Maniewicz for all these years. He took over from the Directors of the BR who were reluctant to run for a second term in office and whenever they had other competitors running against them. No one could exceed the achievements of the Bureau of The Director of the BR. In this sense, Mr. Mario Maniewicz has done excellent work in extremely difficult times during the COVID pandemic.

He ensured the preparation and the work of the sector at the highest level. We fully support Mr. Mario Maniewicz in his next term in office, in the next four years.

Please accept our sincere congratulations and our sincere support for your work.

We would also like to express gratitude and to congratulate Mr. Seizo Onoe on his election as the Director of the TSB. We would like to point out that our region will always support and work together with the Director of the TSB on this issue.

Furthermore we would like to point out that elections were held, remarked with an interesting struggle against two other candidates who I'm sure will continue their work in the ITU and in the standardization sector.

Mr. Chairman, like my colleague from the Arab Group, I can make a statement on the proposal submitted by the African states.

Thank you.

>> CHAIR: Thank you, Russian Federation.

I give the floor now to Canada.

>> CANADA: Chairman, briefly on behalf of CITEL, we would like to start by congratulating Seizo Onoe for his election to the Director of the Standardization Bureau and recognizing the great campaign of Mr. Bilel Jamoussi and Thomas Zielke, recognizing Dr. Bilel Jamoussi's extraordinary work over the last few years at the ITU‑T sector and, of course, I'm going to be switching to Spanish.

To our dear friend and colleague from the region, Mr. Mario Maniewicz, heartfelt congratulations on behalf of all of your colleagues from the Americas region and we want to reiterate our supportive and our thanks for all of the work that you have been doing.

You can count on all of us.

Thank you very much.

>> CHAIR: Thank you.

I think all of the regions took the floor with the congratulatory messages to the Directors that are elected today.

I come back to proposal by Nigeria.

When I made the proposal for Monday, from 9:30, it is because that's how it has happened usually, it is unusual to have three rounds of elections in the same day as far as I know. From logistical perspective, it is not easy. We will have this evening five receptions, most of us wouldn't be able to attend there, but the decision is up to you, up to the Plenary. The Plenary can decide to have even immediately if it is possible compromise from a logistical perspective another round of elections.

I now give the floor to the United Arab Emirates.

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

We know that it is not usual at all to have three rounds of elections the same day. The fact is that the results of the first round were exceptional and the holding of the second round, they were exceptional, normally we should have waited six hours between the two rounds. We heard the proposal of Nigeria, the proposal to hold the third round today. The reason mentioned by Nigeria is the departure of several delegates before Monday. If the delegates office Conference did not have any objections, we could indeed hold this third round of elections now.

Of course, Mr. Chairman, I'm speaking on behalf of the Arab Group rather than the representative of the UAE.

As representative of the Arab Group, we support the proposal of Nigeria if others do not object.

Of course, this is if logistical ‑‑ if logistics allow this. We know that there are many receptions being held, but if we could hold the third round now, it would be better.

Thank you.

>> CHAIR: Thank you.

I'm giving now the floor to Russian Federation.

>> RUSSIAN FEDERATION: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

On behalf of the regional Commonwealth in the field of communications I too would like to express our support for considering and accepting the request of the African countries, they have certain financial difficulties and difficulties linked to the fact that on Monday they will not be present, some of the Delegates will not be present at this meeting. We, too, believe that if in terms of logistics this is possible then we should consider the proposal and hold the third round of elections today so that we can complete these elections today.

Thank you very much.

>> CHAIR: Thank you.

I apologize to the interpreters for not asking for additional time if you can provide us with at least ten minutes more and we'll decide later.

>> Yes, Chairman. Certainly.

>> CHAIR: Thank you very much for this.

I now give the floor to Canada.

>> CANADA: Thank you, Chairman.

This time it is Canada, not CITEL, we fully understand the needs of many countries, particularly of our African friends and colleagues. The question that we would have is of a procedural nature, Chairman: First, the traditional number of hours that have to elapse between one and another round is six, this time we had two. The question would, number one, whether we're going to have two hours for the third round?

Secondly, you had previously announced that there was a deadline for the submission of any withdraw from the candidates. We would like some clarification on those two questions with the understanding, of course, that we fully agree with the needs of our African colleagues and we would need some clarification on those two questions that I have asked.

Thank you, Chairman.

>> CHAIR: Thank you, Canada.

I will come back with an answer to your questions, which are very good questions.

I give now the floor to Gambia.

>> GAMBIA: Thank you very much for giving us the opportunity.

As the Minister of communication and digital economy of Republic of the Gambia, I'm here with the rest of the delegates from Africa and other regions. The Gambia has put the interest of Africa first before the Gambian interests and we're going to withdraw. I make that executive decision. Thank you.

>> CHAIR: Thank you. Thank you very much.

Please allow us to have a 5‑minute break so that I can talk with the Secretariat to see if logistically it is possible. I assume with interpreters it is okay hopefully. We have to ‑‑

>> Yes, Chairman.

>> CHAIR: We have to check with the voting stations, with the preparation of ballot boxes, and to answer to Canada, according to the Constitutional Convention, we have 6 hours in between two rounds of actions, but if the Plenary decides otherwise, we can have them earlier.

Regarding the withdraw ‑‑ regarding any withdraw of the candidature, I give ‑‑ if the Plenary decides to have the elections earlier, I'll provide another deadline for candidates to withdraw in case they want to do so.

Thank you very much. Allow us to have a 5‑minute break and we'll be back here at 5:45 and we'll decide together if it is possible how to move on.

Thank you very much.

(Break).

>> CHAIR: From a logistical perspective, it is possible, but not right away is it possible, from 6:30. My only concern is that some delegation might already leave the Plenary room because I announced earlier that we'll have the next round on Monday from 9:30. Hopefully, at least one representative, the head of delegation is here and they can vote.

I kindly invite ‑‑ I see a request from the floor from Nigeria, please, you have the floor.

>> NIGERIA:

At this moment we have 144 countries in the room out of 182 countries that were present at the second round of votes. I think this is important as well.

I'm opening the floor now to Nigeria.

You requested the floor. Nigeria, please, you have the floor.

>> NIGERIA: Thank you very much, Chairman, for the consultation and your feedback. We appreciate the ITU for considering our request to look into the possibility of going for the third round today.

Mr. Chairman, I want to still insist ongoing for the third round. You see, earlier you mentioned the challenge of logistics, but now you confirm that it is possible. You came up with another observation that some colleagues ‑‑ this is just an assumption, look at the capacity of the hall, look at each and every country, you will discover that most are represented.

Secondly, Africa confirmed its presence, also Arab countries did, Canada did not complain about being here. I think we cannot just make an assumption to leave. Let us, if you need, maybe you can do a count to ensure which countries are available or not. Looking at the capacity of the hall, if it is announced there is no problem.

Chairman, I came here today with the intention of leaving by 12 noon. The time extended for the second round and I remained behind because this is what brought me here to Bucharest. It is better for me to stay here to ensure that the election is conducted successfully.

I don't want to just make an assumption. Looking at the capacity, the way they're applauding, it is a clear indication that the congress is in support of the election to go ahead. I insist on that. I'm speaking the voice of many. I do hope that the leadership will consider our request and our position. We are part of ITU, we are loyal members of ITU, we are contributing members of ITU, we are part of the Congress of ITU. I believe our request should be considered. I insist on that, Mr. Chairman, I do hope that you will honor our request.

Thank you very much.

>> CHAIR: Thank you, Nigeria.

Of course your request is strongly considered and I will go with the decision of the Plenary because according to the Constitution you can, if you agree on this, we can change ‑‑ reduce the number of hours between the elections or rounds as I said.

Also I have the numbers from the Secretariat in front of me, which are updated and I can see now that out of 182 countries, that were present at the election before, the second round, now we have in the room ‑‑ one country has come back. This is something that you have to know and I have to inform the Plenary about this.

Now I give the floor to Romania.

>> ROMANIA: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Just to mention, CEPT countries are present, we checked during the break, and the break that you gave. Also CEPT country, they're present in the room.

What I wanted to propose as a host is to maybe make an announcement on the screens in the other rooms that there will be ‑‑ if the Plenary decides so, that there will be a vote so maybe we can get colleagues to come back, because as you said, you announced earlier that we would have a vote on Monday. Maybe we can do that in order to have more colleagues coming back or also a message via email that could also work.

Thanks.

>> CHAIR: Thank you, Romania.

In case the Plenary, we stay with the assumption, we'll use all means to inform everybody by email, by delivering the message in all of the rooms in the parliament so that everybody can be back.

Now I give the floor to Gambia.

>> GAMBIA: Thank you very much.

I'm going to reiterate what my colleagues from Nigeria stated. We as leaders in representing for our countries, we are asking you as a leader of ITU to take the consideration, we have 144 countries here out of 181. The fear is that if we have to leave it tomorrow or day after tomorrow, other colleagues have other engagements, they won't be here, it will be less than even 144. Hence we're here, so let's take the tough decision and make the ‑‑ do the right thing for everybody. We appeal to you as Gambia sacrificed for the sake of Africa, we cannot let this go just like that to say because we have less countries here, we cannot vote today.

We appeal to you, sincerely, if you could kindly, the leadership of ITU to consider our request, we would highly appreciate it.

Thank you very much.

>> CHAIR: I take just only one request from the floor, from Pakistan.

>> PAKISTAN: Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen, delegates, Excellencies, Chair, thank you very much for all the support that came down.

Yes, it is very important that developing countries continue to have support on such an important directive. This directive is for development and indeed the developing countries are the ones who certainly need to be given the leadership of this directive. Believing that, if it is not a matter of concern, yet it is such a thing that one has ‑‑ that one is being seen, that very few positions are being given to developing countries in the upcoming election. Although this may not be something that would be of concern in terms of the fact that the leadership would be not providing the support to the developing countries, however, it is necessary that their actual representation is there in the form of the leadership and therefore, in the spirit of the developing country, in the spirit of reaching out to the girls and to the women, to the disadvantaged segments, those that are unconnected, those who are unserved, those who need the empathy of the people who go through it every day, we are withdrawing our candidature in favor of Mr. Cosmas Zavazava.

I certainly hope that his experience and his presence in the ITU for the decades that he's been here is going to be now fully focused towards the needs that are identified already by the developing countries. It's not about the what needs to be done, we all know what needs to be done. It is about the how we're going to reach out and make this begging hand into a giving hand for the girls of tomorrow.

>> CHAIR: Thank you.

>> PAKISTAN: We connect the unconnected together.

Thank you so much, my good wishes for all the newly elected teams and the ones that will be elected again on Monday.

Thank you very much.

>> CHAIR: Thank you very much, Pakistan.

Considering the strong support for the proposal of having a third round of election today and considering that we have no opposition to this, I propose to you to have the third round of election for BDT today. This is from 6:30, so in half an hour, but before that I would like to ask any country if there is one that wants to withdraw to say now?

So I'm seeking your approval for having the next round of elections in half an hour, from 6:30 if there is no opposition. Okay. We'll have a break of half an hour and we'll meet back in a half hour here at 6:30.

Please announce to all delegates throughout the building that we have another round of election today.

Thank you very much.

(Break).

(Captioner had to exit meeting at 1800 EEST)

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