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TWELFTH MEETING OF THE WORKING GROUP OF THE PLENARY (WGPL)

WEDNESDAY, 12 OCTOBER 2022

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>> CHAIR: We start in the next minute.

>> Recording in progress.

>> CHAIR: Good afternoon to you, and welcome to the 12th meeting of the Working Group of the Plenary. Understandably, we are to reconvene. And as you are aware, we are quite, even when we are supposed to start at 2:30, we are to give room for the ad hoc group on cyber to complete their discussions.

And as you see, we are honored to have the Chair of the conference with us and it's for a reason. We are currently on borrowed time, and we don't know what else the Chair of the Conference has for us. So, over to you.

>> SABIN SARMAS: Thank you for the work you have done so far. You are very, very close, and this is because of the leadership you have here of the working group of the plenary and the leadership of the ad hoc groups, but also because of you, work so long for solutions. Because you are so close, we decided to cancel the plenary for today, to allow Working Group of Plenary to complete their work. And I am very confident that by the end of this afternoon, you will complete your work. You still have time. As I said, you are very close. And I think under the leadership of your Chair, your success.

Another thing I would like to make all aware of is we are stay with the working methods we promoted so far and that were supported by you, by chairs, by vice chairs, for everybody. And there is no time for other discussions tomorrow.

The Committee 4 need your work today so they can prepare everything for the plenary tomorrow. So, probably in the unfortunate situation that you will not be successful in closing all the debates without having square brackets on the resolution, the two resolutions that are not clear at this moment, probably you will have to do this tomorrow in the plenary, exactly as you can do this today. It's gonna be a waste of time. So, please do your best in order to close to finish your work here at the level of Working Group of Plenary today. I know you have the full support of the Working Group for Plenary, the Secretariat. And again, I really think, I really -- I am almost sure that you will be successful in this.

So, you have time. You have more time. It's especially for Working Group for Plenary, but we need to use this time very wisely and to finish our work today. Otherwise, tomorrow is no time for other, I don't know, complicated discussions on the topics that you already are working for, for a while. So, thank you very much, Chair. Thank you for allowing me to say these words. I hope that this is going to encourage you in moving as fast as possible and to solve everything today. Thanks.

>> CHAIR: Thank you very much. If you accept his message, can we give a round of applause. Thank you very much, thank you for this attendance. We relieve you once we consider our agenda and definitely we will use our time wisely with your indulgence and your cooperation.

We have three, as we had this morning on the agenda. We start with 102, go to 139, with such deliberations and a few minutes ago, you can brief. So, we can have agreement on that.

Our agenda is in ADM/47. Any comments on our agenda? I see no one asking for the floor. Is there any objection to the approval for agenda? I see Argentina asking for the floor. Argentina, you have the floor.

>> ARGENTINA: Thank you, Chair. Just to see whether taking into account there are issues which are to be reviewed, and if you can leave it on the screen, resolution fairing to access networks. It wasn't addressed in any of the meetings we have jet had. And I think if it weren't to generate any further debate, then perhaps we can begin with this. Because I don't think it's going to raise any further controversy if we discuss this. Thank you.

>> CHAIR: Thank you, Argentina, for your comments. Because the understanding that we had or 139 is 139 has text on Open RAN. And when we approve it, we do not need the text in DT so it is agreed is our understanding.

However, if it is otherwise, then we may have to consider DT/73. That's, of course, our understanding.

So, if you have no objection, can we approve the agenda? I see no one asking for the floor. So, thank you very much for your understanding.

I see an applause is coming from elsewhere. But we would not be distracted by that. We will focus and move steadily to agenda item 3, which is to revise Resolution 102. And I invite our Chair for internet, kindly give Kenya the floor.

>> KENYA: Good afternoon. Is it on? Good afternoon, Chair. Good afternoon, colleagues. For the third time, Chair, I will not say whether it's final but it's that time for sure. I present to you Resolution 102. I would like to thank you, Chair, for joining us this afternoon and also helping us get through with whatever was remaining or pending of it. And I present your meeting Resolution 102 without square brackets and with a knock on the aspects we agreed on. Thank you very much, Chair.

>> CHAIR: Thank you very much. Also, we have DT/78, Rev 1. As published and also as on the screen. Because this has taken us quite some time, if we want to go through that a little bit, so people will see the updated parts.

Starting with page 1 with the header. Okay. Recalling certain updates.

Recognizing. We have a new G, considering.

Further recognizing.

Emphasizing.

Noting. We have some update in there on the conferences.

Resolves. We have new coming from the text of (?) I suppose. We have new 2. Resolves 2. We have a new 8. Instructs Secretary-General.

Some amendments to instruct 1 and 2.

9, 10 and a new 11.

Instruct Birectors of Bureaux. An amendment, we have a new 4.

Instructs director TSB, amendments 2 and 4.

Instructs director DBT. Remains.

Instructs ITU Council Working Group on international public policy issues.

We maintain the 3.

Instructs ITU Council. We have a lot of cancellation of words in brackets.

Invite member states is maintained.

With a modification at the end. So on, until the end.

I hope this is transferring to everyone. Does this reflect the agreement reached by all regions? Is there any variance to what was reached among all regions this afternoon? I see no one asking for the floor.

Is there any objection to the approval of revised 102 as in DT/78, reg 1? I see no one asking for the floor. So, thank you very much.

(Applause)

>> CHAIR: This is about the closing of the Arab group on internet. Chair, I don't know if you have any words, but I see United Kingdom and Saudi Arabia asking for the floor. I will give the floor to them first. And then I will get to you, the Chair.

You have the floor.

>> UNITED KINGDOM: Thank you, Chair, and thank you all colleagues. On behalf of CPT, I would like to thank our ad hoc Chairman Sharon for all of her hard work and for sustaining all of that hard work over what I think was 30 or 40 plus hours. Thank you so much.

(Applause)

>> CHAIR: Thank you, United Kingdom.

Saudi Arabia, you have the floor.

>> SAUDI ARABIA: Thank you, Mr. Chairperson, for providing me with this opportunity to speak and on behalf of the Arab group, I in turn would like on to thank Madam Sharon, the head of the unofficial group. The discussions were lengthy, fruitful sometimes during the past two weeks we discussed many of the topics that have to do with the internet. We were hoping to deal with certain matters and we were hoping to improve the WTPF. We had high hopes and expectations. However, during the work of this team, we achieved many times consensus on a number of topics.

I can only thank, once again, I thank you, sir, and thank Madam Sharon for her work in this working group and all those two participated in the work the past two weeks. We are looking forward in the future to discuss these topics more actively in order to achieve what is good for everyone. Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.

>> CHAIR: Thank you, Saudi Arabia.

Brazil, you have the floor.

>> BRAZIL: To the amazing work Sharon made during this week, the other week, countless hours of work, also make great compliments to our colleagues that made spirit of the consensus during all the discussions. And I believe that we reach a great final resolution right here. Thank you, Chairman.

>> CHAIR: Thank you, Brazil.

Canada.

>> CANADA: Thank you, Chair. Just to echo my colleagues and to extend CTEL's appreciation for Sharon for guiding us through some of these very challenging, very long discussions, and bringing us towards compromise and consensus and she did an excellent job. So, I want to thank my colleagues as well for coming to the table and having honest conversations about these resolutions and, again, thank you so much, Chair.

>> CHAIR: Thank you, Canada.

United States.

>> UNITED STATES OF AMERICA: Thank you, Chair. And on behalf of the United States, we would also like to express our sincere thanks to our Chair Sharon, as well as to the Secretariat for guiding us through these negotiations. Thank you.

>> CHAIR: Thank you, United States.

South Africa.

>> SOUTH AFRICA: Thank you, Chairperson. We just wanted to join colleagues in commending my sister Sharon from Kenya and the colleagues working on the internet resolutions for their considerable work. I think throughout the process, we were aware that there was another group that was having as many struggles to reach agreements as we were. And some even suggested that we should try and resolve our issues before them, like there's supposed to be some kind of a race. But I was not worried about that because it wouldn't be the first time for somebody to lose a foot race with a Kenyan. So --

(Laughter)

(Applause)

>> CHAIR: Thank you, South Africa.

Niger.

>> NIGERIA: Apologies once again. This is Nigeria. On behalf of the African Group, I want to thank one of our own, Sharon. I think Sharon has done a wonderful job throughout this process. It was a late night. It was -- we had so many long sessions and she kept cool. I would like to on behalf of the African Group thank her so much for the wonderful job and wish her the best. Thank you very much, Chair.

>> CHAIR: Thank you, Nigeria. France.

>> FRANCE: Thank you very much, Chairman, I would like to align myself with conveying my congratulations. Sharon and the Secretariat of the ITU for the excellent work undertaken for the wealth and richness of the debates over many, many hours of negotiation. And for the spirit of consensus which prevailed which led to the adoption of Resolution 102. Thank you, everyone.

>> CHAIR: Thank you, France.

I see China. China, you have the floor.

>> CHINA: I thank you, Chairperson, Resolution 1 to 102 is to regular the row and the position of the ITU, internal telecommunications. Reflecting the role of the ITU internet affairs. Woe like to thank the leadership of Sharon and the efforts and consensus and compromise made by various delegates. I thank you, Chair.

>> CHAIR: Thank you, China.

Now to Kenya.

>> KENYA: Thank you, Chair. They say that a profit is not how much, but this is different. We stand very, very, very proud of our sister and distinguished lawyer and we are ready to share her efforts. We, actually, appreciate first the colleagues who have tirelessly worked with her and supported her throughout this. As a country, the empowerment of the woman and the special place we hold them, their abilities are much. And as a country, we are very, very thankful for the opportunity to share with. That is Kenya. Thank you, Chair.

(Applause)

>> CHAIR: Thank you very much to all of you. Your leadership, your cooperation, your disagreement were all worth it. It brightened the spots of all the resolutions related to the internet. And apart from a couple of them where there were no change, there were improvements regardless across the other resolutions. It doesn't come easy. We knew it wouldn't be easy. Tribute to the famous Mr. Fabio Beiji.

(Applause)

>> CHAIR: With such skill and enormous talent that he has, it is not easy to immediately take up a row for which he comfortably does. And thanks to young people from Kenya and from ITU Secretariats, and I saw that they were really having fun with it. Thank you for your subtitles, thank you for your endurance. Thank you for making friends with everyone, we hearing all this loud round of applause. It tells the future that the ITU has. And we hope that we can continue with this. Again, thank you very much for your work and for giving us such useful outcomes.

We would move on to our next agenda item, which is to revise Resolution 139.

I invite, go to Brazil now. They are used to 17-year-olds playing the workup and winning the workup. I hope they can also give us something magical. So back to you, Chair.

>> BRAZIL: Thank you, Chair. We attempt one more time during the lunch break. I want to report on that. Because there are some important messages and information from our discussions.

We tirelessly discussed the matter and important reference to certain groups in the context of bridging the digital divide. It's not only text. It's important matter for the consideration of everybody. Not only that the certain groups that are listed.

We ended up discussing the statistics in the context of bridging the digital divide and regarding the gender divide. And we even had divergent views on this, on statistics. Some regions claimed that we have agenda divide. And there are some other regions that claim that we don't have a gender divide.

This, for me, is surprising. And we have to be very careful when considering those facts. It's important that we consider this very carefully because this is a matter of inclusion. We want to include everybody. We want to include everybody, I repeat myself. But there are certain groups that do need our focus and do need to have our attention. And we didn't reach agreement on having this.

I am a little surprised that we ended up in that corner. But I am confident and I am very calm to say that we made every effort possible to reach agreement. But we did not. And this is a matter of great importance for our union and going forward, because equity and equal access is key as we had in a lot of speeches and a lot of important people saying.

This is a matter that I hold whole heartedly and I think, as the ad hoc chair, I had the responsibility for conveying this message very clearly.

And at the end, on the outset, I want to thank everybody for their engagement and everybody that was interested in this discussions, because they are really important. And I think we can try to compromise and reach agreements. But certain key important philosophical and cultural aspects are involved. And this is out of the controls of the -- of myself.

But at the end, I think we can have the consideration of the text going forward. And I hope that we can agree to have some important consideration to the other parts of the resolution as well.

We did accomplish a great deal on the other parts. And it's important that we keep that in focus as well. Thank you very much, Chair.

>> CHAIR: Thank you, Chair of group on network for the updates, as you said, it is at a standstill. This particular resolution has had a considerable amount of time for discussion in our meeting.

I will propose that because we have not made progress on this, we want to defer to the next agenda item and see what update that they have and then possibly come back. Definitely come back, because this is not concluded.

So, can we move on to the next agenda item, which is revise Resolution 130 and invite the Chair of the ad hoc group cyber to update us.

>> SOUTH AFRICA: Thank you, Chairperson, and good afternoon, Colleagues. We have good news to report, Chairperson. We were battling this afternoon after this morning's meeting to try and resolve how we address the last issue that we had set for ourselves to try and resolve, and that was how to handle the global cybersecurity agenda.

So, fortunately, we have reached agreement, and in line with the discussions we had in the Working Group of Plenary this morning, the agreement is that we delete the remaining brackets and text in the Resolution 130, and we have a draft recommendation that will go to the plenary meeting from yourself, Chairperson, and I can read the recommendation. It's in this document, I think on the screen. It should be. No, it's not this one.

Okay. So, the recommendation is that the Working Group of the Plenary recommends that the Plenipotentiary Conference invites the Council to consider proposals from member states regarding the GCA, its current use and possible future elaboration. So, that's what was agreed.

Then in terms of the document that we went through this morning, the remaining areas where we did not have agreement, that were still in brackets, will now be deleted.

Thank you very much, Chairperson.

>> CHAIR: Thank you very much for your results. Very good. But I want to ask from the floor, must I repeat what you just said, that the agreement from the Arab Group is that the text as we have on the screen and will be part of the report to the Plenary is we are recommending that the conference invites Council to consider proposals from member states regarding the GCA, its current use and possible future elaboration. Full stop. And if we agree to this, every text and the square brackets around it is taken out and then we have Resolution 130 revised.

Is this the understanding from every region? I want to take from the -- you may request for the floor and affirm. Russia Federation, you have the floor.

>> RUSSIAN FEDERATION: Thank you, Mr. Chair. We understand that we are talking only about the part of square brackets related to the Global Cybersecurity Agenda. Since a number of square brackets related to other issues were not discussed at the ad hoc. And, moreover, according to our proposal at the last meeting of the Working Group of the Plenary, we would like to add a few additional square brackets in relation to gender issues. In order for us to make a final decision, which will not run counter to the decisions on other parts of this resolution.

I would like to ask you, Mr. Chair, as well as Mr. Peterson to confirm or refute this approach. Thank you.

>> CHAIR: Thank you. Attempted to respond directly. But I will give the opportunity to our Chair to, again, indicate that that was what I tried to repeat. Please, Mr. Peterson, kindly repeat what this text means to DT/81, Rev 1. You have the floor. Please give South Africa the floor.

>> SOUTH AFRICA: Thank you, Chairperson. It's possible that the Russian Federation has a different understanding. I can accept that. But the understanding I have, we did not open any new text once we agreed it. There was text that was bracketed, that was related to gender. There was text that is also bracketed relating to references to stakeholders, different stakeholders. The text that is bracketed in both cases would be deleted. The text that is bracketed relating to the Global Cybersecurity Agenda would also be deleted so that we can complete that document.

That means that the agreements we made this morning, obviously, would still stand. And then we would now have this recommendation. That's the understanding I have, Chairperson.

>> CHAIR: Thank you very much, South Africa. Indeed, that was the task which was assigned to the ad hoc group at the break. That the proposal then was to delete all text in square brackets with the understanding that there will be consideration of a recommendation from the Working Group of Plenary on GCA as part of our report to the Plenary.

So, if this is clear. I see Russian Federation asking for the floor. It means that every text which is in square bracket in DT/81, Rev 1, will be deleted and then we will have as we see on the screen, the text which recommendation from our Working Group of Plenary report to the plenary.

Russia Federation, you have the floor.

>> RUSSIAN FEDERATION: Thank you, Mr. Chair. And I would also like to thank Mr. Peterson for his explanation.

We understand the method of work you are proposing and I'd like to thank you, Mr. Chair, for confirming this.

However, in the part in terms of what Mr. Peterson said that we are not opening consensus-based text, I would like to remind you that my colleague at the meeting of the ad hoc group said that we must approach issues in a uniform manner. And if we decide that we do not agree with specifications used in relation to gender issues in this resolution, then we must return to the issue of including additional square brackets or deleting the relevant text.

I can specify these points on which we would like to have a uniform approach. Because we have specific resolutions. This is considering the -- this is instructing directors of the BDT Number 12. This is the text of inviting member states, sector members and associations -- associates, rather, Number 7, as well as the new text in the same section under paragraph 4. We would like for our resolutions to be integral and we would like to use the same approaches.

And since the ad hoc group refused to consider this approach, we warned about this and we put this question to you for the discussion of the Working Group of the Plenary.

Thank you for giving me the floor.

>> CHAIR: Thank you, Russia Federation. I see Iran asking for the floor. Iran, you have the floor. Please give Iran the floor.

>> ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN: Thank you, Chair. We confirm the statement made by Chairman Peterson with respect to the course of action has been taken. We have no opposition to anything but, but the two-line paragraph which is a very high-level contact coming from various detailed proposals for many reasons.

Finally, everybody makes efforts to contribute building consensus to this paragraph with the proviso that all square brackets, without exception, with the content be removed.

The Chairman of conference gave you up to end of this day. I don't know what is end of the day. It could be 6:00. It could be 24 hours, up to 00 midnight. I don't know. But I think that if we come back to any further suggestion, there is a risk that this consensus will be broken. Once again, we, not opposed to any proposal of any membership, but we just give you what have happened. That was the balance.

And these lines was agreed after a lot of efforts and concession by many regional group delegates and so on, so forth, which may not be a perfect or perfection, but at least address one of the basic issue that at least three regional groups brought to this conference and that is GCA and it is addressed in a high level here.

Chairman, once again, my personal view would be that it is a big risk if we start to break this consensus, Chairman.

>> CHAIR: Thank you.

>> ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN: I do not think that anybody is wrong or right but that is the fact and reality. Thank you.

>> CHAIR: Thank you, Iran.

So, I have feedback that what the Chair of the ad hoc group presented reflects the agreement as we have that with this text agreed as a recommendation, part of the report of the WGPL and with any other text in square brackets in DT/81, Rev 1 being removed. That will go as a package to the Plenary. Is there any objection to DT/81, Rev 1 cleaned up with all square brackets and the text in that taken away and the recommendation as part of the report of the WGPL.

I see no one asking for the floor. So, thank you very much.

I see Russia Federation asking for the floor. Russia Federation, you have the floor.

>> RUSSIAN FEDERATION: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I apologize. I'm not as quick as the decision making here. With all due respect to you and to the previous speakers, we are ready not to return in agreed text, however, with possibly one item where women are represented in a disgraceful manner with understanding that women need special education programmes, if they cannot be educated using the same programmes as men.

When I submitted the text on this item to our colleagues, they were shocked. But, Mr. Chair, can I ask, to delete just one word from one paragraph, I am calling on inviting number 4 under inviting member states, sector members and associates, number 4, just the word women, because women do not need special programmes, contemporary to persons with special needs or specific needs.

I would agree with the rest. But I would ask you to just read this paragraph and you will understand how what an insult it is to the women. Thank you.

>> CHAIR: Thank you very much, Russia Federation for your comments on this. And apologies if any words in the text as we have approved interpreted as an insult.

A response because of cultural differences and for someone who is coming from a much linear background, which means I inherit from my mother and not my father. I farm on my mother's land and not my father's land. I am the son of my mother and not my father, because nobody saw my father given birth. That is the difference.

So, we all have our differences as to how. And so my mother definitely has special place in my culture. My mother decides who (?) and not any other mother. It is not a deficit that in my country girls who are the most prominent and with the best facilities. Because in every month, excuse me to say, we know what happens. But women are not toward men.

So, these are the differences and which calls for something of that sort. And I hope that it does not mean an insult. But, rather, of the difference between why even in the words men, M-E-N, and when it comes to woman, there is a W-O before it. That is the difference. I hope this is acceptable to us. We can keep the text as we have approved. Thank you very much.

May we then move on to what is remaining as Resolution 139 to be revised, DT/71. I see Iran asking for the floor. And then United States. Iran, you have the floor.

>> ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN: Thank you, Chairman. I seriously apologize to you but we cannot leave this without expressing our sincere gratitude, appreciation to Chairman Peterson, who has dealt with this difficult issue, not only here, but WTSA, WTDC, WCAG and everywhere. Chairman, you are well aware of the complexity of this resolution because he were dealt with that, as I mentioned this morning. 9 revisions at Plenipotentiary Dubai.

He made tremendous job, patient, kind, competent, skillful, listening to everybody, and trying to build consensus. We need really to report to the Plenary of the tremendous amount of job.

I am not discriminating anyone. But we need to appreciate those with worlds. Chairman, similarly, all member states participating in the ad hoc, their efforts are very highly appreciated. All of them made considerable efforts and concessions in order that we arrive at this agreement, Chairman.

So, if everybody agree, we give a big round of applause to Chairman Peterson.

(Applause)

>> CHAIR: Thank you, Iran. I see, Brazil, I see kingdom of Saudi Arabia asking for the floor. Brazil, you have the floor.

>> BRAZIL: Thank you, Chair and we just wanted to associate with the comments made by Iran, Mr. Jim was tireless and he kept the good humor during the whole discussions, which is quite amazing. So, we just wanted to thank you for this amazing effort. And, of course, to thank our colleagues that participated through the discussions. We have a great result in our hand. We have a new resolution with several provisions that will guide I think in this major efforts, one of our major goals is cybersecurity. And we want to thank the Secretariat that was on board during this overwhelming process. And, of course, with your leadership in this process as well, that we have this great result. Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

>> CHAIR: Thank you very much, Brazil.

Over to Saudi Arabia.

>> SAUDI ARABIA: Thank you, Mr. Chairman and good afternoon to all. We would like to thank Mr. Peterson for his great leadership and management of this very long and complicated resolution. Also, we would like to thank the Secretariat for their hard work, commitment and patience with us. So, thank you all.

>> CHAIR: Thank you, kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

United Kingdom.

>> UNITED KINGDOM: Thank you, Chair. And on behalf of CPT we would like to thank all colleagues who took part in these discussions and thank the Secretariat and also thank you, Chair, for your leadership. But most of all we would like to thank our wonderful ad hoc chair, who showed enormous patience, wisdom, good humor and leadership. He was outstanding, Chair. And we could never have done it without him. Thank you so much.

>> CHAIR: Thank you, United Kingdom.

Australia.

>> AUSTRALIA: Thank you, Chair. And good day to everyone. On behalf of APT we would like to also thank the chair Jim Peterson and the secretary for their efforts. It was no main feat but we agreement appreciate all the efforts that was made. Thank you.

>> CHAIR: Thank you, Australia.

United States.

>> UNITED STATES OF AMERICA: Thank you, Mr. Chair. We would like to add our delegation's course of thanks to our Chair Jim Peterson, as colleagues have noted frequently, tireless efforts and continual good humor in the face of some contentious negotiations and his never ceasing faith that we will get there in the end. He's, unfortunately, I think, worked himself into a bit of a specialty here, now having done three of these in one calendar year and we look forward to working with him in the future. Thank you.

>> CHAIR: Thank you, United States.

Algeria.

>> ALGERIA: Thank you, Chairman. And we would like to join our voice to the previous colleagues by expressing our gratitude to Mr. Peterson for his excellent work. And we are so proud of him. We as African. And we want to express also our thanks to the Secretariat for their assistance and help. And thank you very much, Jim. Congratulations to you. Thank you.

>> CHAIR: Thank you, Algeria.

United Arab Emirates.

>> UNITED ARAB EMIRATES: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairperson. We also would like to join the chorus of those who have already thanked Mr. Jim Peterson from the South African administration for the masterful leadership of the team and the very heartfelt resolution pertaining to cybersecurity. And his ongoing efforts at the helm of the team. Despite the difficulty of the task, he has never -- the smile never left his face throughout these meetings. Thank you very much.

>> CHAIR: Thank you, United Arab Emirates.

China.

>> CHINA: Thank you, Chair. We thank very much Mr. Peterson for his work. He has always made tireless efforts, especially on pulling us together on some contentious issues. Without his efforts, we will not be here today. Thank you.

>> CHAIR: Thank you, China.

To South Africa.

>> SOUTH AFRICA: Thank you very much, Chairperson. And thank you to all the colleagues for all of the very kind words. They really are much appreciated. I also wanted to extend my own thanks to yourself, Chairperson, for your leadership and guidance, but also to all of the colleagues who participated in the ad hoc on cybersecurity for all the assistance, the advice, the knowledge, the insights that they shared, but most of all, their willingness to keep going and to keep going that extra mile, in fact, to try and find solutions and reach agreements.

It was really much appreciated. And there was a good spirit in the group throughout, in spite of the long hours. But most of all, I would also like to -- because I never mentioned this before. I would like to thank very much the Secretariat for their considerable work, Preheim and sometimes Satya would jump in and help as well. They have been very helpful throughout the process. It was much appreciated. Thank you, Chairperson.

>> CHAIR: Thank you very much. Thank you very much. I know for you, dealing with difficulties is your lifestyle. And you impress on us, I got you involved in the ITU and Plenipotentiary. You have always been guiding and training me, so I will not be arrogant to say I am proud of you, but I know you are my master, so good work done, indeed, to the group on cybersecurity.

It's such an amazing experience I had four years ago. Made friends, even with our disagreements. Very intelligent persons in every debate, very valuable, taking you into such perspectives, which if you don't agree, gives you a thought to consider. And I will sincerely thank you all, our experts, for your work.

I mean, when we started this and, again, it went through ah new formal discussion before we came to the conference. We all had about a couple of meetings on the issues that we have in our proposals and what we want to resolve. If nothing was done at all, the length of the resolution was reduced, certain new ideas have been incorporated. And there is a certain tolerance for GCA or proposals of GCA to be received at Council to be considered.

So, we have a foot forward. And I very much appreciate your -- I am happy that you enjoyed Mr. Peterson and he has also made friends with you as well. I wish you all the best and hopefully the conversations on 130 will come up during Council and elsewhere. So, thank you very much again.

(Applause)

>> CHAIR: Can we now go to Brazil for Resolution 139. You have the floor.

>> BRAZIL: Thank you, Chair. The two outstanding brackets, we discussed through a lot of hours and meetings. I think one thing that we -- I think we could agree is to have the recognizing C brackets deleted and in the instructs, 14, we go and discuss we keep or not within the context of this meeting. That's one suggestion that I make.

And I think we were hoping to have understandings of the importance of these instructions. Thank you.

>> CHAIR: Thank you very much. So, can we all go to instruct 14 to the BD director, give it one more chance. The text, even though it's in square brackets. What we can possibly take out and then we could keep the rest of the text, if it will be useful for us.

This is supposed to be page 9 as on the screen. I see Russia Federation asking for the floor. Russia Federation, you have the floor.

>> RUSSIAN FEDERATION: Thank you, Mr. Chair. With all sympathy for the Chair of the ad hoc group, I have a substantive question. Just now on the Resolution 130, we took a decision not to consider the text here. And whatever we did not agree on or reach consensus so, we simply deleted with the square brackets.

I have a serious doubt that the amount of time spent on an internal discussion, spent at the ad hocs of Mr. Robert was less than the similar time spent at the group of Mr. Peterson. We propose to use the same approach because we don't not see any sense in wasting the time at your meeting, Mr. Chair.

We tried and tried repeatedly, despite the fact that Mr. Chair of the ad hoc group expressed his personal view on this issue, which we believe is not quite acceptable. Because it does not demonstrate the neutrality of the Chair. We believe that we will not reach a compromise if we did not manage to reach it on Friday, Saturday, Monday or today. Thank you.

>> CHAIR: Thank you, Russia Federation.

Next United Arab Emirates.

>> UNITED ARAB EMIRATES: Thank you, Chair. At the outset and on behalf of the Arab Group, we would like to thank Mr. Roberto from the Brazil administration for their efforts at the helm of the ad hoc group. And also, the other representatives of regional groups and administrations who participated in the marathon discussions which overviewed the many different resolutions and discussions from the ad hoc groups and pertaining to this Resolution 139.

However, Mr. Chair, given the length of time we have spent discussing all the aspects and points of consensus and disagreement pertaining to this resolution, we do not see right now any way forward. With further discussions on these texts as mentioned by my colleague from the RCC, we have exhausted all solutions. And we agree with them in their proposal to treat these texts between brackets the same way they were dealt with in previous resolutions today.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

>> CHAIR: Thank you United Arab Emirates.

Dominican.

>> DOMINICAN REPUBLIC: Thank you, Chair. So, contrary to those who spoke before us, I would also like to congratulate, understanding the need to continue discussion on this, trying to strike a consensus on such an important topic for everyone. If ITU would like to be effective, make sure its policies are effective, it needs to identify who are the vulnerable groups. And we have spent so many days talking about gender and the need to include young people, indigenous groups, children.

This exercise to discuss this drafting has been really critical. Therefore, we would like to congratulate you for having achieved this so far. Thank you.

>> CHAIR: Thank you.

Argentina.

>> ARGENTINA: Thank you very much, Chairman. Thank you for giving me the floor. At the outset, what we would like to say on behalf of our delegation is to congratulate you, Chair, for the leadership that you have shown, for your patience and for how you are running these meetings to try and find a consensus, which is everyone's objective. Everyone working as a team. We will always reach our objective.

I would also like to convey our gratitude to the head and the chair of the ad hoc group, Mr. Roberto Hirayama. He was our dear friend representing delegation for his patience and for the energy that he put into the work to give us this space to all administrations to work with the best of intentions at each and every one -- that each and every one of us has in order to try and reach consensus, and to work towards connectivity for all, which is the overarching goal of the ITU.

Without repeating all the arguments that have already been spoken, we don't want to take up more time. But we would like to stress the following. That we do have a compromise here and a strong conviction, a compromise and commitment that all of us represent here, which is what we have to really acknowledge and recognize there is a digital divide. How they affect gender parity in all its spheres, how it affects connectivity in people's skills, in people's knowledge base.

Very recently, a few hours ago in the Plenary we had the commitment, perhaps, more than 30 delegations made, and whom emphatically supported the gender equality treaty for the empowerment of women for and young girls. We also had from the Chair of the Conference who spoke very strongly as a core goal of all the work of the union. This resolution is one of the most important resolutions, Chair, in order to bridge the digital divide, because it emphatically underscores this very issue.

Therefore, we are in favor of the proposal that you have made, Chair, which is to suppress the first part within square brackets and to retain the other part. Thank you very much, Chairman.

>> CHAIR: Thank you, Argentina.

Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

>> SAUDI ARABIA: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairperson, for giving me the floor. In fact, Mr. Chairperson, I did not participate in the discussions around this resolution extensively. However, I know one fact, which is how do we reach consensus on more problematic resolutions, such as 102, 130, 101, and other such resolutions?

The reason why we were able to achieve consensus is the great flexibility shown by the regions interested in these resolutions. For instance, 102, just recently we made great compromises with regard to square brackets, despite the fact that there was no extensive discussion in this regard. Despite that fact, we have shown flexibility around those brackets and the text contained therein. And we were able to achieve results.

Mr. Chairperson, dear delegates and colleagues, we need, we see that we need to see further flexibility by certain regions with regard to those agreed square brackets and striking those which were not agreed. Thank you.

>> CHAIR: Thank you, kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

United Kingdom.

>> UNITED KINGDOM: Thank you for the floor, Chair. On behalf of CPT, I would like to clearly state our strong sense of disappointment that consensus could not be reached in the ad hoc group on this crucial issue.

Two regions seem to find it impossible to acknowledge that women and girls are particularly badly affected by the digital divide. The ITU itself has recognized this for years. ITU data consistently demonstrates that globally women are less able to access the internet than men. In fact, according to the GSMA Mobile Agenda Gap Report published this year, progress has stalled and in certain areas the gap between men and women may be widening.

Chair, on Monday you hopefully reminded us that a core mission of the ITU is to leave no one behind. Only four months ago at WTDC all parties agreed to acknowledge the specific challenges faced by women and other groups in accessing the internet. This is, in fact, the same text shown on the screen now.

We have not been asking countries to agree to anything in this resolution that they have not agreed to before.

We welcome the progress that has been made in many other areas of this resolution. And at this point I would like to extend huge thanks to Roberto, the Chair of the networks ad hoc group for his tireless work and his enormous patience.

However, in the case of women and girls and other groups, I am sad to say that we have fallen short. Thank you, Chair.

>> CHAIR: Thank you, United Kingdom.

Mexico. And indeed, I have a growing list. But I am patient because I have more than enough. So, I am ready to listen to you. But if you make it brief, then we can listen to everyone. So, please proceed.

>> MEXICO: Thank you very much, Chair. We think it's important to identify the vulnerable groups and their specificities and especially paying attention to women, girls, persons with disabilities and persons with specific needs and promoting connectivity in the digital sphere in order to protect their rights.

Therefore, the text is in alignment within text within ITU and within UN text. We would like to retain the text in number 14 and we would like to thank all the work undertaken in order to strike a consensus by the Chair of the ad hoc group. Thank you very much.

>> CHAIR: Thank you, Mexico.

Denmark.

>> DENMARK: Thank you, Chair. This is a very good resolution in general that generally takes a targeted approach to the ITU's efforts in bridging the digital divide. The resolution very sensibly recognizes the need to target ITU's efforts in several places by mentioning that efforts to close the digital divide are relevant in particular in developing countries and similarly reference is made to rural, remote or unserved and underserved areas and that is because we know for a fact that, for example, rural areas are more often in need of help than other places.

Just as we know that rural areas need special attention, we also know for a fact that some demographic groups need targeted attention. As my UK colleague said, statistics show us that among these demographic groups is women and girls. If we don't realize this, these groups will be left behind by one-size-fits-all measures because we know for a fact that general measures won't reach everyone in these groups.

In conclusion, Denmark supports the guidance to the ITU not only in terms of geography, but also in terms of demographics, which number 14 represents. Denmark believes this is a fact-based approach to targeting ITU's efforts making sure we don't waste our efforts and making sure no one is left behind. Thank you, Chair.

>> CHAIR: Thank you, Denmark.

Uruguay.

>> URUGUAY: Thank you very much, Chairman. I would like to stress the need to reduce the time. The time, we don't have it. It's against us. Therefore, I will be brief, Chairman.

Here we are discussing national statistics and global statistics, which is what we have in front of us here. Therefore, Chairman, this is a reality. As some have said before me, we have spun over everything again and again. Therefore, our delegation stresses the need, the opportunity even, to retain this text. And also like to underscore the discrepancies that we have seen. In the very little time remaining, we have to try to find consensus. People deserve this. Thank you.

>> CHAIR: Thank you. Yes, I am listening. But I want to give a bit of guidance here, because I am not getting it from the submissions so far. As on the screen, this is in square brackets and the candidates for deletion. Just as another say, similar approach as we dealt with other resolutions. So, if you take the example of the GCA, which was to be deleted, they found a way as a recommendation.

My initial question was that, is there anything that we can take out of 14 and keep the remainder, which would be acceptable to everyone? I don't seem to get such proposals. And I will encourage those who will be taking the floor, if you could help indicate anything of the sort.

This by way of guidance. I lost the country which is next in line. You have the mic. You can take the floor. But I see -- is it Netherlands? Netherlands, you have the floor. Nether.

>> NETHERLANDS: Thank you, Chair. On behalf of the Netherlands, I would like to add that reaching the digital divide does require extra efforts of the ITU to continue to support the vulnerable groups mentioned here on the screen right now, which is, let's not forget, existing text. We are disappointed this text is strongly opposed by some countries. However, in the spirit of compromise, we support you, Chair, and agree with the proposed way forward. Thank you.

>> CHAIR: Thank you, Netherlands.

Portugal.

>> PORTUGAL: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to express our disappointment as well in relation to the position that this text is facing. I think it's a very straightforward and important text that has been agreed before.

But in line with my colleague from Netherlands, we would support our proposed way forward but expressing our disappointment in relation to this. Thank you.

>> CHAIR: Thank you, Portugal.

Ireland.

>> IRELAND: Thank you very much, Chair. I just want to say from the outset that Ireland fully aligns itself with the position of the Dominican Republic, Argentina, the UK, Mexico, Denmark, and other countries that have spoken on this already.

As my colleague in Denmark pointed out this resolution importantly recognizes there's a need for a focused approach to be taken by the ITU in terms of efforts to close the digital divide in developing countries, with references made to rural, most underserved and unserved areas. However as highlighted by my UK colleagues statistics show that the demographic cohorts left on screen have special attention to ensure they are connected.

We do believe that it is necessary to specifically call out and address in the resolution the vulnerable groups of society who are most directly negatively impacted by the digital divide plus we do agree to work with you, Chair and to try and find a compromise. Thank you.

>> CHAIR: Thank you, Ireland.

Canada.

>> CANADA: Good afternoon, Chair. Thank you for your guidance. When I read the text, the title of this resolution, it says the use of telecommunications and information of communication technologies to bridge the digital divide. It should say close the digital divide and build an inclusive Information Society. That is the title of this resolution. And we are here taking a decision not to tell the ITU to continue to support and coordinate efforts to connect women and girls, youth and vulnerable groups, indigenous people, the elderly and persons with disabilities and persons with specific needs? What kind of message, Chairman, are we sending outside when we talk about the inclusiveness but we don't seem to walk the talk? Thank you, Chairman.

>> CHAIR: Thank you, Canada.

United States.

>> UNITED STATES OF AMERICA: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. The United States wishes to add its voice to the overwhelming support for retaining the text in this clause. In fact, we are dismayed and disappointed that there is any contention within this group on something as basic as this text, due solely to concerns from only two regions.

The need to extend additional support to women and girls, as well as youth and vulnerable groups, indigenous peoples, the elderly, persons with disabilities and specific needs is recognized 36 times in various ways in the final outcome of WTDC '22 as was echoed earlier by the United Kingdom.

It's a shame there's any disagreement here to emphasizing the fundamental principles of digital inclusion, which are a key priority for this Union.

With respect to your proposal, Mr. Chairman, as you suggested for the draft recommendation with the GCA, we would suggest and support additional time for discussions to explore this option. We remain available to work with you and with colleagues to ensure that no one, particularly women and girls, youth and vulnerable groups, indigenous peoples, the elderly, persons with disabilities and specific needs, no one is left behind. Thank you.

>> CHAIR: Thank you, United States. Before I call the next in line, I was not suggesting a recommendation is the only way to go. But we could look at this text and if we could -- we take out certain groups, if it's acceptable to everyone, that is also an option.

Romania, you have the floor.

>> ROMANIA: Thank you, Chair, I cannot add any more data than other colleagues have, and to us, it's clear about the digital divide, where it's more important to focus, this text is very important to us. Chairman, if we don't see any kind of proposal from those opposing to have this text, I think it's a way to be considered to have recommendation. It's really important to us. And in the -- in this year, 2022, I think we can agree at least to have that. Have that as a recommendation.

But if we can still try to have this text, it would be better. Thank you.

>> CHAIR: Thank you, Romania. You got me smiling.

Thailand, you have the floor.

>> THAILAND: Thank you very much, Chair. I would like to reiterate that the name of this resolution is, the key word once again are bridging the digital divide and build an inclusive Information Society. It's the resolution by ITU the International Organization deal directly with this issue and it's the resolution of the plenipot, the most important forum of the ITU.

Of course, we would have to go by the rules, and if consensus cannot be reached, then obviously this bracket has to be deleted. But my question is that, if we cannot try to compromise and reach consensus here, then where would this be addressed?

And if we think ahead that if we can't address this very important issue about digital divide, inclusive Information Society and certain groups and if other organizations cannot address it, then it will raise the question.

I also would like to say if there is a proposal as the Chair has kindly suggested, that if we can preface somehow or cut some words and that would be acceptable to all, that would be another good way forward.

And I would end by saying that this a very important issue and the question, again, is if we don't address it now, then when? If we don't address it by us, then who? Thank you very much.

>> CHAIR: Thank you very much, Thailand, for helping me out on this. But you recall that we heard the issue of women and girls as mentioned or this text 36 times in WTDC resolution. And WTDC is in Thailand. So, that will be where, it could be a possibility. It could be a possibility considered by. I don't think you have premeditated to delete all the permissions.

Let's go to United Arab Emirates.

>> UNITED ARAB EMIRATES: Thank you very much, Mr. Chair, first for giving us the floor once again.

However, we wished to clarify certain points. As you always say, Mr. Chairperson, that every proposal has its supporters. And in this case, we have two regional groups that are supporting the proposal. And, on the other hand, there are those who have reservations. And there are two -- they are also two regional groups. And that is also applicable to all resolutions in this conference.

And this is why we are here, in attempting to achieve consensus as much as possible and to take into consideration all opinions, whether acceptable or not acceptable, but in an equitable manner.

Mr. Chairperson, let's look at this resolution, 139, has to do with digital divide and what the ITU has to do to close that gap for all the users all around the world. To include the nonconnected or unconnected within the principal mission of the ITU, which to connect the unconnected, whether they be men or women.

Mr. Chairperson, we have a number of reservations on this text as we have clarified many times. Our opinions on the difficulties that we see in this text, and amongst them, the content. And the question that we had raised in the past is the content part of the work of the ITU looking into former presentations or what has presented by that group and refused for the same reason, because they said this is outside the context and the prerogatives of the ITU also. Talking about certain groups or even vulnerable groups, is not clear to us and we emphasize that when we come up with a list, it is our -- because we are mindful to take only on board and to close the digital divide so that we do not exclude any users, whether these be men or women, because the consequences will involve everyone.

We would like to express once again that we are quite disappointed with the way how certain opinions are being changed. And that they are supposed -- or that they are not supposed to be respecting the digital divide. But looking into the statistics and that have been mentioned by previous speakers shows that there is an equivalent and equitable level of nonconnectivity around the world and that reaching those who are underserved or not served and we do not distinguish between the different groups.

And I would like to emphasize here that what the Arab Group has presented in terms of many proposals and in the presence of the subgroup chair, since we started reviewing this resolution and especially this question that deals essentially with the connectivity issue. And the factors that have an impact on connectivity and the consequences, without any exception or without excluding any group.

And we emphasize the importance of being comprehensive when ensuring that everybody is involved, men, women, and this is also what was presented by our colleagues from our other groups. We targeted aspects that have to do with everyone so that they have the right to access ICTs in various regions of the world.

But very unfortunately, these proposals were not accepted for many hours that we had spent in discussing them.

Mr. Chairperson, and on behalf of the Arab Group, we emphasize once again that our proposal and that of the Russian Federation has to be supported. We have to adopt the good texts that have been approved. As was the case in other resolutions. Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.

>> CHAIR: Thank you, United Arab Emirates. And thanks interpretation. What I picked from your solution and thank you for asking for the floor one more time, indeed.

What I take from your submission was that when you go to recognize C, the content is one which has been argued before in the IT. That is not within this mandate. And then you are not clear on the use of the word vulnerable groups in instruct 14 to the BDT director.

I want to start with your paragraph we have on the screen now. Kindly if you can do an attempt, if we strike out and vulnerable groups. Don't take out the comma. And vulnerable groups. Then you leave the comma alone. And vulnerable groups before the comma.

Would this be acceptable for us to remove the square brackets with the others listed? Okay. I see this will not be acceptable. So kindly undo. And let's continue the conversation.

Iran, you have the floor.

>> ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN: Thank you, Chairman. Listening to all debates. First of all, I am not disappointed of anything. People are free to express their views. Expressing their views does not means they are disappointing. These are their views, their desire and their understandings.

However, Chairman, I think in order to get out of this dead lock, it doesn't seem to be helpful to give justification for retention or to give justification for deletion. Doesn't help us all. Doesn't take us anywhere. We have to think some alternative, Chairman.

Chairman, would it be possible that, if your kind Secretariat, if possible, they have facility to typing. Below this 14, put alternatively that is another text which may cover the point. If it is possible, I can proceed.

>> CHAIR: Very possible. That's what I've been asking for for the last 30 minutes.

>> ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN: Thank you, Chairman.

>> CHAIR: I have the time 45 minutes to go. So, very much possible. Secretariat is ready. Iran, please proceed. And take it slowly. Slowly. And softly. Just as you like it.

>> ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN: 1 1/2 lines only.

>> CHAIR: That's what I have. Please go ahead.

>> ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN: Distinguished Secretariat, take the first part to continue to support and coordinate, to connect unconnected with a view to breach digital divide, which currently exists or currently may exist between different categories of society. Very general. Not talking of this, not talking of that. By the way, I was not in favor of deleting the vulnerable people, because all of us are potentially vulnerable in future.

So, I think that is one possibility to put it here.

The other possibility that --

>> CHAIR: Please take the initial one, one more time, slowly, and softly.

>> ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN: Yeah. To continue to support and coordinate to connect unconnected with the view to connect either bridge digital divide or minimize digital divide. Maybe bridge digital divide in line with title of the resolution. Which currently exists within different categories of society. This is one alternative for 14. If we can put it here, then no difficulty. If we cannot put it here, we delete this paragraph totally and in the minute of the Plenary, which is in approving this resolution or adopting in line with the title of resolution, then you put whatever is in current 14 in the Plenary. Nothing prevent the director to continue providing assistance to other directors with these different categories, Chairman. These are the two alternative.

However, continuing pros and against that does not help. Thank you.

>> CHAIR: Thank you, Iran, for your help.

So, let me -- at this stage I see a number of countries asking for the floor. So, let me ask for -- from those who do not -- who oppose we retaining text 14 in square brackets, whether your tentative as well and that would be acceptable to you.

And whether you also have the preference that any that way we could add the 14 as part of report to the plenary.

I see Brazil asking for the floor. Brazil, you have the floor.

>> BRAZIL: Thank you very much, Chair. Associate ourselves with many of the other interventions regarding the particular text we have in current 14 that's under brackets. We have heard before the Chair of the ad hoc may have expressed some personal views. But, actually, they are the views of the Brazilian delegation. This is what we believe in as well.

I think it's very important to recognize the incredible and amazing work that Roberto did on the ad hoc hope. He made a very good effort and this is in line what Brazil always tries to do, we always be ready to step in and try to find consensus in all ITU matters and all the matters that we have in the Union.

We would very much prefer to have what we have in current 14. We do appreciate the attempt we have in the paragraph below. But believe it's, kind of, missing the point. And we prefer to have paragraph 14.

But, again, in the sense of compromise and trying to find a way forward for this discussion, we could go with your original proposal and try to find when this text to have particular recommendation under the report and this maybe we can find a way to move this discussion in that sense. Thank you very much.

>> CHAIR: Thank you, Brazil.

Czech Republic.

>> CZECH REPUBLIC: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Speaking on behalf of the Czech Republic, we would like to come back a few steps back and to join to the statements made by our colleagues from UK, Denmark, Mexico and many others.

Czech Republic deeply deplores that we were not able to reach a consensus and include those who are the most impacted by the digital divide in the resolution.

Keeping in mind no one is left behind, promoting gender equality shouldn't be any more a question whether yes or no. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

>> CHAIR: Thank you, Czech Republic.

Israel.

>> ISRAEL: Mr. Chair, firstly, I would say that we cannot accept the alternative text. We keep talking about connecting the unconnected. We all agree that we must bridge the digital divide and build an inclusive Information Society. This starts with making sure each member of our society have access and affordable digital literacy and related skills.

Unfortunately, in many of our societies, women and girls, persons with disabilities and other persons with specific needs do not get the same access as others. A world in which everyone enjoy equal opportunities will benefit all of us. The economic and social potential are enormous.

Let me add one more thing. We cannot ignore what happens in our world these days. When women's rights are being trampled. What message do we send to the young, courageous women with their lives fighting for their rights? It is, thus, unfortunate that we couldn't find consensus on this crucial issue, especially these days. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

>> CHAIR: Thank you, Israel.

Australia.

>> AUSTRALIA: Thank you, Chair. So, we have a resolution here about bridging the digital divide. We have statistics from the ITU that help us understand the types of digital divide. And we know that lower levels of connectivity do exist for women and girls, youth and vulnerable groups, indigenous people, the elderly and persons with disabilities and persons with specific needs.

We can say there's no consensus for retaining this text. But we think without this text, we, sort of, miss the point that the resolution here. So, we have heard from Romania earlier some support for this idea of having a recommendation and perhaps that might be the only way that can move us forward. But we do feel that without this text, the resolution does have a critical gap. So, thank you, Chair.

>> CHAIR: Thank you, Australia.

Russia Federation.

>> RUSSIAN FEDERATION: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Many colleagues are talking about statistics here. However, in my opinion, the conclusions drawn are not quite correct. If you look at the official statistics of the ITU with regard to the distribution of access to the use of internet resources between genders, we will see that in 2018, the difference was 5.8%. In 2019, 5.5%. In 2020, 5.2%.

In one of the regions women are already connected better than men. We see a clear trend that -- showing that Resolution 70, which relates to gender issues, is effective. We do not need additional provisions in the resolution on the digital divide to ensure that this trend continues.

I will not even mention the fact that 5% is not as statistically significant value showing that we have such a problem.

With regard to youth, if you look at the same statistics, you will see that youth are already much better connected than people who are older. This is according to the ITU statistics. Youth are connected. The connectivity percentage is 70.8%.

While the rest of the population, of the global population, the percentage is 56.9%. Thoughtlessly including the above mentioned, women, young women, youth in general We can in terms of the gender divide, we could even exacerbate this digital divide, because women could continue to be connected even more than men. This is not a desire to achieve technology, as far as youth are concerned, will exacerbate this divide even further.

Mr. Chair, as far as your proposal is concerned regarding the recommendation, of course we can make such a recommendation. But what is the point? Why do we need it? We have a special resolution, Resolution 70 on gender issues, 184 on indigenous people. 175 on persons with specific needs. 198 on youth.

If we make such a recommendation, it will seem that we are recommending to duplicate the efforts already being made in other resolutions. The digital divide is what we are dealing with in the entire ITU. It's not a task of one single resolution. It's a good, comprehensive task which is above that resolution.

Of course, we can try and discuss the text of such a recommendation. But we will not look, as showing that we do not understand that in addition to Resolution 139, there are also other Plenipotentiary resolutions which for some reason we don't want to open and read.

Mr. Chair, do you have any proposal on the text of the recommendation? Maybe someone else has such a proposal? Thank you.

>> CHAIR: Thank you, Russia Federation. I have a number of countries that now say my time may not be enough. So, I want to close the list and then we can go forward.

I have Canada, Tobago, Spain, New Zealand, Sweden, United States, Argentina, Kenya, Iran and Algeria. And I see United Arab Emirates want a third time. I will end on United Arab Emirates. And please, you will be brief.

But respond to Russia, as to what will be the text in the recommendation, and that will be the 14 without square brackets. That was a proposal from Iran. However, if the alternative text is also one which is preferred by the meeting to the Plenary, that will be a decision for us, from us all.

So I will extra Tobago to proceed on your submission. Please go ahead.

>> TOBAGO: Thank you, Chair for giving me the floor. Island of Tobago would like to align itself with those administrations which have spoken in support of retaining the text. The need to continue to emphasize the importance of targeting efforts and focus on disadvantaged groups is important. It is unfortunate, however, that we have been unable to find consensus. We think that the text in 14 should include to continue to support connectivity to all groups, particularly the disadvantaged, persons with disabilities, persons with special needs.

Now, I noted earlier that one of our colleagues identified that the number of women using the internet was substantially higher. However, in less developed countries, as far as I recall, number of -- the percentage of women using the internet is around 19%. And in 31% in other countries that are developing.

So, I think it's important that, if possible, if we could retain women and girls in the text as a compromise, we would look at disadvantaged persons, persons with disabilities, persons with special needs. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

>> CHAIR: Thank you for that. I want to get your proposal right. Are you looking at 14 in square brackets and taking out certain groups out? Is that your proposal.

>> TOBAGO: Yes, Mr. Chairman.

>> CHAIR: Which ones do you want out so we know what you are proposing to maintain?

>> TOBAGO: I would suggest to continue to support connectivity for all groups, particularly the disadvantaged, persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples and persons with special needs. We should retain women and girls because of the low percentage of takeup of the internet, particularly amongst women and girls in less developed countries. So, perhaps, we could focus on less developed countries for women and girls. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

>> CHAIR: We seem to have difficulty. Can we cut and paste the 14 somewhere and we turn that into Tobago rendition? Please take us through slowly. Slowly.

>> TOBAGO: Thank you, Mr. Chair. To continue to support connectivity to all groups, particularly the disadvantaged, persons --

>> CHAIR: Slowly.

>> TOBAGO: Persons with disabilities, indigenous groups, persons with special needs, and women and girls in less developed countries, or developing countries.

>> CHAIR: Can we delete before the persons with special needs, elderly and persons with special needs? Okay.

So, this is the proposed text from Tobago. With my addition of elderly. Okay.

Now, we go to Spain.

>> SPAIN: Thank you very much, Chair. Just one moment, please.

Spain aligns itself with all the statements made previously by Distinguished Colleagues in order to retain paragraph 14 currently within square brackets. This is absolutely paramount to bridge the digital divide, particularly affects the people who have listed in this paragraph, which form part of this resolution, but also due to the relevance of the current generation and the future generations to bridge this digital divide. This has to be absolutely part of each and every one of the resolutions of this PP Conference and perhaps in those to come as well. Thank you, Chairman.

>> CHAIR: Thank you, Spain.

New Zealand.

>> NEW ZEALAND: Thank you, Chair. Good afternoon to you and to the meeting. New Zealand like a number of previous speakers is disappointed we can't achieve consensus on the original text in square brackets on the screen in paragraph 14.

Many words have been said on this matter in this session and in previous sessions as well, which we would echo.

On the topic of statistics that have been presented recently by another member state I'm sure if any delegation here lost 5% of its delegation here at the Plenipotentiary, we would all be concerned by that 5% loss.

Therefore, we should all be very ashamed that we still have the 5% trend which appears to be narrowing very, very slowly. And, in fact, this is a call to action to speed up to reducing that divide. We would therefore accordingly like to retain this text currently in the square brackets as we believe no one should be left behind. Thank you.

>> CHAIR: Thank you, New Zealand.

Sweden.

>> SWEDEN: Thank you, Chair. Despite the warming scarf that I received as a gift at your -- Ghana's amazing reception, thanks again. The room feels cold.

I really don't understand the reason for the ignorance of the facts, and I am honestly surprised to see today 2022, the passion behind the request to delete the text on the screen. Please, dear Chair, find a way to keep all the original bracketed text on the screen or a recommendation closely based on the wording of 14. Because it's important, not least for the reputation of ITU, also the text is true factually relevant for this resolution.

Finally, I would like to fully associate Sweden to the comments made by, among others, United Kingdom, Mexico, Denmark, Uruguay, Netherlands, Ireland, Canada, U.S.A., Thailand, Czech Republic, Israel, Australia, Spain, New Zealand. Thank you.

>> CHAIR: Thank you, Sweden.

United States.

>> UNITED STATES OF AMERICA: Thank you for giving me the floor again, Mr. Chairman and I will be brief. May I respectfully suggest that now might be a good time for a break? It seems we have heard a number of promising new proposals that weren't raised at previous informals and I think I am inspired, perhaps, by the tireless efforts of our ad hoc chair on this, but I think if we could take a brief break and have either the ad hoc Chair or yourself lead an informal consultation on this, would may be a more productive way to reach consensus. Thank you.

>> CHAIR: Thank you, United States, for your proposal.

I have a number of countries I want to -- if they can be very brief and then we can go on the stretch.

So, for those of you who just want to let's have this consultation quickly because we have to come back and get interpretation to be able to close. You may withdraw your request so that we can be very quick on this.

Argentina, you have the floor.

>> ARGENTINA: Thank you very much, Chairman. We were listening very closely to all the comments. What we are hearing, there are three proposals at play. The first of these, which you made, in which a viable suggestion to, perhaps, delete the word or the text in 14, vulnerable groups. And, thus, we will be able to remove the square brackets. Then the Distinguished Delegate from Iran also made a proposal, which is the text which follows the original 14.

And then lastly, Trinidad and Tobago has made a further proposal on new text in order to strike a consensus.

Argentina, in our view, we are in favor to accept your proposal to retain 14 and striking out vulnerable groups. Then we would have consensus on the proposal that you made, Chair. And we are also in favor of what is being proposed by Trinidad and Tobago. Thank you very much, Chair.

>> CHAIR: Thank you, Argentina.

Kenya.

>> KENYA: Thank you, Chair. I think the challenge we have, Chair, and I want to believe that all member states represented here, they are both women and those groups that we have noted here. Chair, I come from a developing country. We have our own special challenges. And I think you can believe me when I say this is the challenge, because I live there.

So, one of the challenges we have is we have not given prominence to the special groups. And as you are aware, ITU documents, actually, are our guide to so many developing countries. We don't have probably the resources, the manpower, and all these items to enable us focus on these groups. So, sometimes we forget about them. Not that we actually don't care about them.

So, the texts are identifying the specific groups that we need to focus on to ensure that the digital gap issues are resolved. It is important for us. We have different challenges between developing and developed countries. Yes, you may focus, because the situation on your side is different from -- but ours is actually different.

So, saying that, Chair, it's my belief that it's just a language. So I will opt to edit that paragraph where the Casa is and actually focus on developing countries.

The sentence that says to continue to support and coordinate to connect the unconnected with a view to breach the digital divide, which currently exists within different categories of society, especially then you list those special groups in developing countries.

>> CHAIR: Thank you, Kenya.

We want to go to two paragraphs ahead of that and you see developing countries are being taken care of there.

But I will give the floor to Iran. Iran, you have the floor.

>> ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN: Thank you, Chair. Perhaps I was not properly understood. First of all, there is no major difference between current paragraph 14 and the third paragraph. They are almost the same. So the problem exists.

What I suggested that either we put the middle paragraph with the addition to in particular in developing countries, which I have no difficulty. I know this divide is more on developing countries, which include least developed and so on, so forth. This is one.

Or, if we don't agree with that one, we report to the Plenary with no recommendation. We report to Plenary then approving this resolution without this paragraph 14 and others to put the text along the line of the middle paragraph in the minute of the Plenary. Somebody asked that what is the recommendation? The recommendation is the middle paragraph.

In considering and approving this resolution, in line with the resolution, it is understood that the director of the BDT together with other director and take the middle paragraph as a sentence putting in the minute of Plenary, Chairman. That was a clear-cut suggestion that I have made. Thank you.

>> CHAIR: Thank you, Iran.

Algeria.

>> ALGERIA: Good afternoon. Thank you, Mr. Chair, for the floor. We are very aware of the importance of this topic and this resolution. And in that regard, we are very supportive to the Arab and RCC region's position.

We don't see -- we cannot support even the 14th paragraph and the alternative paragraph proposed, then submitted to the group. And also, we don't see the need for recommendation to address this issue. Thank you very much, Chair.

>> CHAIR: Thank you, Algeria.

And finally, United Arab Emirates. United Arab Emirates, you have the floor.

>> UNITED ARAB EMIRATES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Since it is the third time I take the floor, I would like to confirm that I am taking the floor on behalf of the Arab countries and there are 17. If you want me to, I can mention all the 17 countries as the previous delegates did.

However, Mr. Chairman, this is not the issue here. What we are discussing here, Mr. Chairman, is the direction, the orientation this resolution is taking. We started with a question with regard to approving, keeping this text between brackets or deleting it and referring it to the Plenary. And we had also a question from our delegate from the Russian Federation. That followed the recommendations of other delegates. And we had closed the debate based on this question.

Afterwards, we listened to interventions and we started to proposing new texts with regard to the same paragraph, IE paragraph 14.

Now we do not know where we are headed. Do we need to present new proposals? We can do that, as we did in other ad hoc groups. What is the point of presenting new text that could not reach or could not find consensus. Therefore, on behalf of the Arab Group, we would like to confirm that we are -- keep our position to not approving the bracketed texts and we insist on treating this text the same way we treated other resolutions. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

>> CHAIR: Thank you, United Arab Emirates.

I see a number of countries asking for the floor. But because of our time, we will want to -- I want to propose a final attempt and that is to call the regional coordinators and the ad hoc chair, if we can meet at a corner on my left and we can now -- a one-minute decision, a very quick decision for which I will come to announce.

So, let's meet for a minute and we return to be able to close this meeting. The regional coordinators. Thank you.

>> Recording stopped.

(Break)

>> Recording in progress.

>> CHAIR: We are settling so in two minutes we can start.

(Break)

>> CHAIR: Thank you very much for your patience. We are almost there.

So, we will go through the stages. We have agreement to leave the text in square brackets. And I have a recommendation to -- or we have as part of our report to the Plenary. So, if you can take 14 out. You are greening the text.

>> Agreed to take out.

>> CHAIR: Yes, we will go for the second option. And when you go to the second line, take off the words different categories of, different categories of. The text in the middle will be what we will add as part of our report to the Plenary. I hope this is clear.

So, this is a very delicate compromise. And I count on your very valuable support. You can take off the third one. Yes. Okay.

I see Iran asks for the floor. Iran, you have the floor.

>> ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN: Thank you, Chairman. I apologize to asking for the floor. Our government is --

>> CHAIR: Please, Iran, you have the floor.

>> ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN: I would like to mention that the aim is to assist ourself in order to find a solution. Chairman, if something does not have the agreement, no way, no option to delete that. So, that's the first step. Step 1, in my view, is agreed.

Step 2, what to do. Forget about everything, in my view, no. At least we have to raise it. Where? In the minutes of the Plenary. You kindly as a Chairman, not on your own behalf, on behalf of everybody, present a document. You mentioned that it is inviting, the Plenary is not recommendation. I don't understand this recommendation. Inviting the Plenary in the light of discussions and in the light of the consensus reached on this document to include the following paragraph in the minutes of Plenary.

And the paragraph is that one there in the middle. The only thing at the end of that, society, please kindly add in particular -- I'm sorry. In particular, those in the developing countries. This is something that no one is against the developing countries. In fact, the developing countries categories least developed, landlocked and so on, so forth.

Chairman, it is not perfect. It is not something that satisfy everybody. But it means the general sense of consensus. We may not agree with that, but we can live with that. We can live with that, Chairman.

I mean, the Chairman of the com is waiting for you at the end of today's meeting to propose something to the Committee 4 and tomorrow they have to deal with it. Tomorrow will be the last day of the formal situation. The (?) will be other formal, Chairman.

I hope, Chairman, I have covered point of all Distinguished Colleagues. I know may not addressing every point. Those who want to have 14 as it is, those who doesn't want. But, finally, something in the middle, in the Plenary. I'm sure that the Director, distinguished Director of the BDT together with other two directors take into account to render the support or continue their support with the objective of this middle paragraph. We don't need to go through the details.

In fact, they have done that for many, many years and so on, so forth. Chairman, it is, I would say, a plea to everybody request an invitation to everybody, if kindly could either relax or whatever way agree with middle paragraphs goes to the minutes of the Plenary by yourself been proposing on behalf of this group, but not on behalf of yourself because we want to take that responsibility that we proposed. I'm very sorry. I was relatively lengthy. I apologize for that. Now give the floor back to you. Thank you.

>> CHAIR: Thank you, Iran. I have Brazil in the house waiting, and I've Canada, Romania. Because of our time, please be brief. Brazil.

>> BRAZIL: Thank you, Chair. We support your way forward. I just wanted to remember us that this start with recognizing C bracket to be deleted as well, as I understand. Thank you.

>> CHAIR: Yes, that is correct. Recognizing C will be deleted as well.

Sweden. Recognize the time. Sweden may have the floor.

>> SWEDEN: Just reading the title from the resolution, use of telecommunication information and communication technology to bridge the digital divide and build on inclusive Information Society. When we went to this conference, we were trying to improve, add something to the resolution, apart from the title. I see a version of the title in the text. It doesn't add a lot. But that was just a reflection. Thank you.

>> CHAIR: Thank you, Sweden.

Canada.

>> CANADA: Yes. Thank you, Chairman. We are not sure we understand the way forward. This is a text that, in your opinion, is a text agreed by all of us here? Or it's going to be your views in the report of this meeting to be attached to your report of the Plenary? And I am asking because I am not entirely sure that there is agreement here on that particular text. Thank you.

>> CHAIR: Thank you, Canada.

Romania, please, your submission help with an answer to Canada.

>> ROMANIA: Thank you, Chair. We have had extensive discussions also in some small or larger informal group by the podium. Unfortunately, we don't see any way forward. The requests from CPT, CTEL and also African countries are not to be included with this text that we see now deleted.

We respect your decision, Chair, to delete the text that is not agreed and was new text for this resolution. But, unfortunately, we cannot support this text that we see to continue to support, coordinate and connect the unconnected, the text that was now proposed that you mentioned to be included in the minutes. Unfortunately, we cannot support that. We will make probably our own statements regarding this. But we respect your decision, Chair, and we move forward with yours. Thank you.

>> CHAIR: Thank you, Romania.

Togo.

>> TOGO: Thank you, Chair. Thank you to all of the colleagues who are making an effort to find a solution to the problems that we have been facing for several days now.

Now for us, Chairman, to be honest with you, we can easily accept your proposal. And why? Well, because in this resolution, when we look at resolves 1, the resolution asks the decision from Kigali to be implemented and asks the BDT to be able to put into place projects for all of the social categories that we are taking out here.

So resolves 1 of this resolution recommends continuing and no one has denied this. And to do this identified all of the different categories that we are talking about here. So honestly, Togo is indifferent if we keep it or not. But if we take it out, then, well, we will be asking to pay attention to all of the different social categories that we have listed.

So, in summary, Chairman, we are indifferent. We can't see where the problem is. Just like I was saying, resolves 1 asks Resolution '37 of Kigali to be followed.

So, to be clear, whether we delete it or not, our resolution covers those categories. Whether the wording is in there or not. So, that's something I wanted to put to this August meeting. I invite you to refer to the resolves 1 in the resolution and move on from this discussion, which is taking too long. Thank you.

>> CHAIR: Thank you, Togo.

United States.

>> UNITED STATES OF AMERICA: Thank you, Chairman, and thank you very much for allowing us time for additional discussions.

To align ourselves with the previous intervention from Romania, we respect your decision as to the deletion of the bracketed text per our agreed working methods. However, we cannot support this proposed new text for inclusion in the minutes, as it was not discussed during the informal with all parties and has not achieved consensus. Thank you.

>> CHAIR: Thank you, United States.

Argentina.

>> ARGENTINA: Thank you very much, Chairman. Like the previous speakers and in line with our principles, our convictions and our objectives and representing the Argentinian side that gave us this mandate, we cannot agree with this proposal. Thank you very much, Chairman.

>> CHAIR: Thank you, Argentina.

Iran.

>> ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN: Thank you, Chairman, listening to the discussion, all the Distinguished Colleagues it seems there is no agreement to put anything in the minute of the Plenary, Chairman. So, the simplest way would be to delete this and not to do anything in the minute of Plenary and you delete that number 14 together with recognizing Chairman. Just to be trusted and if the people don't like it, you don't include that. Semper is better. Thank you.

>> CHAIR: Thank you, Iran.

So, let's go that way. Delete the text beneath the 14 entirely. Let's go to recognizing C. Strike out the text in square brackets. Yes. Let's strike that out.

And now let's proceed to the approval of Resolution 139 as revised and we have on our screen.

Is there any objection to the approval of Resolution 139 as revised? I see Israel. Israel, you have the floor.

>> ISREAL: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I would like to add Israel's voice to the statement made by Romania and CPT. This is very disappointing way forward to us. Thank you.

>> CHAIR: Thank you, Israel.

Canada.

>> CANADA: Thank you, Chairman. I don't believe there is any consensus on the approval of this resolutions as we see it on the screen. So, we would like that opinion of Canada to be reflected in your report of this meeting. Thank you.

>> CHAIR: Thank you, Canada. Is there any objection to the approval of Resolution 139 as we have deleted recognizing C part of it and also the new 14 instructs to the BDT director? I see the Africa withdrawn their request. Thank you very much.

Seem to be no objection. So, 139 is approved.

Thank you. 139 approved. It contains text on Open RAN, and for this reason, if we go to DT/73, it will no longer be required. So, we can suppress this -- or we cannot take this any further. I hope this is clear to everyone.

Thank you. Now we get to any other business. Any other business? I see Brazil asking for the floor. Brazil, you have the floor.

>> BRAZIL: Thank you, Chair. I would just like to emphasize and thank very much Roberto for the amazing effort that he did in conducting the work in the ad hoc group of networks. And was very tirelessly trying to find consensus at all times and we can see how well he's conducted his job here in the hope everyone can appreciate him in the same way as we in the delegation do. I kindly ask a round of applause for him, for his conclusion. Thank you.

(Applause)

>> CHAIR: Thank you. Indeed, we do appreciate Mr. Roberto. He has done it many times. He has careful experience. There are many things he's gotten in which were contentious before. But quietly that is not what was in contention. We are to find something else to have disputes about. I participated in the ad hoc meeting on Saturday and it was quite an experience. And thank you for your graceful, calm and tolerance and acceptance of (?) and all that. It shows how tolerant you have. I see Russia Federation asking for the floor. You have the floor.

>> RUSSIAN FEDERATION: Thank you, Chairman. Just in order to save time, I will speak English. I know we are all tired. Congratulations to Mr. Robert Hirayama, my dear friend. I always ask him why you continue to do resolutions on digital divide. It's the fourth time in a row. This is a very, very hard resolution and you always seem convinced in wish. But always with success, always with trying to find compromise and with very big patience, despite of different views.

Thank you, Roberto, my friend.

(Applause)

>> CHAIR: Think, Russia Federation.

Iran.

>> ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN: Thank you, Chairman. Are we at the end of the working group Plenary or we have other issues to deal with?

>> CHAIR: We are at any other business.

>> ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN: Yeah, thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

In my view, having run Plenipotentiary conference, 18 RCC, and so on so forth, RCC, the Working Group Plenary is one of the most difficult working group, all complicated, sensitive issue, including internet cybersecurity and so on, so forth are given to Working Group Plenary. I am not downgrading the good work of other two committees but your committee always facing very, very difficult and we are in support of you. We know that you, we have found a good man, an excellent person to deal with this issue together with Roberto, together with Peterson and other people you have, Chairman.

Chairman, you made a tremendous amount of work a very good guidance, Chairman. You never lost your patience. You always were helpful, always were kind with all of us. We thank you sincerely.

And really, if you have success, this is a collective approach. This is a collective -- something that you have got. Credit goes to everybody, all the people here, Chairman, that they made a lot of consensus from two regions in favor of 14, two regions in against 14, but finally we come that we are in one ITU and so on, so forth.

At the end of the conference, as I have mentioned, we continue to have concurrence, consensus and that is one of those, Chairman, we are grateful for you. We are grateful to your secretary who has worked hardly and beyond the call for duty, really. We thank you very much, distinguished secretary. I have seen you in many other conferences. You work very much if you have success, mostly because of your hard works you have done. Mr. Chairman, thank you very much. I think we have finished this plenary with all sectors. I thank you. And once again, another big round of applause for yourself, our Chairman.

(Applause)

>> CHAIR: Thank you, Iran. You are kind, indeed. It is credit to all of us, the teamwork, the collaboration, the patience. And there's always tomorrow, as I believe we -- we share in your experience, certain disagreements, conferences (?) agreements in later conferences. So, let's not be too disheartened by our proposals that were not adopted. But see how best in the future we can all work together to progress our proposals.

I will give the floor to China. China, you have the floor.

>> CHINA: Thank you very much, Roberto, Chair of the Working Group. Thank you very much for your work and your efforts. You're a unique person, and I am extremely grateful for the time we spent with you. At the same time, I wish to thank the Chair of Working Group of Plenary. Thank you very much for your successful stewardship of the work of this committee. Thank you very much. Congratulations.

>> CHAIR: Thank you, China.

Romania.

>> ROMANIA: Thank you, Chairman, and on behalf of CPT I also want to thank you and not only CPT, myself personally, to thank you for the leadership of this working group. To thank every ad hoc chair, your vice chairs, the Secretariat. I know that we always say that the working group of Plenary is a difficult one. It's us, the delegates, who make it difficult. And we apologize for that and we thank you for your patience.

And I don't know how many Plenipotentiary conferences you have, but it seems to me like you have done an amazing job. I remember us talking in the last Plenipotentiary conference exactly about taking our positions and making our voices heard. And thank you so much for all that you are doing.

>> CHAIR: Thank you very much, Romania.

United Arab Emirates.

>> UNITED ARAB EMIRATES: Thank you, Chairman. Following the previous statements and in the same vein, I also wish to thank you on behalf of the Arab Group. I wish to first thank Mr. Roberto and the delegation and government of Brazil for their efforts, for Mr. Roberto's efforts. He made all of the necessary efforts to resolve these issues.

I also wish to thank the Chair of the ad hoc groups who dealt with everything to do with the resolution our colleague from Bulgaria, our colleague Oscar on Resolution 103, and then the new resolution discussions, all of these discussions were headed up by Brazil. All of these colleagues did excellent work, hence, they headed up very difficult debates, very difficult discussions to reach results. And we also wish to thank you, Chairman, because thanks to you, we have been able to resolve an extremely complicated issue from the ad hoc group. So, thank you very much.

>> CHAIR: Thank you, United Arab Emirates. Argentina.

>> ARGENTINA: Thank you, Chairman. Thank you for giving us the floor. First of all, we wanted to underscore that in our discussion, as we all are aware of, we were able to reach an agreement and all of us learned something from this. And it was resolved due to the consensus that was reached and, perhaps, certainly something that we have all learned from. And with the understanding that we were able to reach, I wish to thank you, first of all, for your leadership of the meeting, and in particular the Secretariat for all of the work that they are doing did make these discussions successful. We were able to resolve all of the issues, and particularly our friend and colleague, Roberto, who engaged in spectacular work, we are trying to thank him publicly through this microphone. But we will also, I'm sure, be doing it in person. Thank you very much, Chairman.

>> CHAIR: Thank you, Argentina.

South Africa.

>> SOUTH AFRICA: Thank you, Chairperson. And on behalf of South Africa and as chair of the ad hoc on cyber, we also like to thank you kindly for your leadership and your wisdom and your emphatic demands that you have made on us that we should deliver on our side. I think you successfully navigated a very difficult working group of Plenary. I know it's a long journey now. We have been through a few conferences together. And I value your friendship and your wisdom. And greatly appreciate the work that you have done here. So, a big thanks from our side. I'm sure the African Group is still going to speak. If they don't, we are a part of our region and I know we speak for all of our colleagues when we congratulate you on the very positive work that you have achieved here. Thank you very much.

>> CHAIR: Thank you, South Africa.

Egypt, you have the floor.

>> EGYPT: Thank you, Chair, thank you very much for, as similar to Jim, as part of the African Group we are very proud to have you as Chairman of Working Group of Plenary. It's a very difficult task and thank you for taking on this job. You have done it perfectly. I personally always learn from you. And we will look forward to keep learning from you in the future. And I take this opportunity to also thank all the ad hoc chairs for all their excellent work. Thank you very much.

>> CHAIR: Thank you very much, Egypt. You are kind.

For those who do not know, for those who do not know, the first president of my country, in his last days, was in Romania for cancer treatment before he died. For those who do not know, the first president of my country was married to an Egyptian. At the first president of my country is called Kwame.

(Laughter)

>> CHAIR: I go to Mexico.

>> MEXICO: Thank you, Chairman. Just to join Mexico's voice to the congratulations extended to you for your excellent stewardship of this Working Group of Plenary as Chair and also the other chairs of the ad hoc Working Groups, particularly Roberto, thank you very much. This has been a very difficult task. We know it has not been easy. But we wanted to thank you for your excellent management and it looks like we are finishing pretty much on time without having to work too late. Thank you.

>> CHAIR: Thank you very much, Mexico.

Brazil.

>> BRAZIL: Thank you, Chair. I couldn't end without thanking you for your leadership or your wisdom and all your competence on leading this very complex topics. I can attest that this WGPL experience in conducting this ad hoc of networks was really a tough job. And a very complex and I enjoyed the time and all the conversations and discussions, but I think it's a matter of who we are with. And I am grateful that I am with you and your leadership as the Chair. Thank you very much.

>> CHAIR: Thank you very much, Brazil.

We have to end. (?) makes a statement, probably I will do that the Plenary. But I see Sweden asking for the floor. I hope you be the very last. Sweden, you have the floor.

>> SWEDEN: Thanks, Chair, very brief. Today was the first day below 0 in Stockholm, so I will really need both the scarf and the bag. Thank you.

>> CHAIR: Thank you, Sweden, for that. Distinguished Delegates, I really appreciate you. Having been in the ITU system for as long as Mr. Aresteh, but throughs the various conferences I have learned a lot, I believe strongly in efficiency and effectiveness as a projects manager. And believe that for every movement that we have, we can have continuous improvement on what we have with the inspiration I have from many of you of the various conferences, I take on this role but very much with your support and your indulgence and as we prepare towards this conference, it was exciting that we will not want to work deep into the night. Four years ago I did many of those nights. I don't regret them. I did enjoy them because I am a nocturnal and yesterday it had to take my secretary to tell me to sleep, because I work better until 4:00 a.m. in the morning and I wake up at 6:00 a.m. back to work. I don't know what I have, but I look like a German machine.

So far we seem to have reached the target and I am very excited about that. That we could have free Sundays to go on tours to the castle. We are not passing on any disagreements to the Plenary for it to be contentious to stay over the nights. There was a WTSA that we stretch a WTSA chair, I wouldn't say that's (?) but he was a stroke survivor and took him late into the night. We made great friendship but to the next WTSA we lost him.

These have some of the reasons why certain conditions were set. And indeed, we have set the example that it is possible to use as many groups and new formal groups to discuss and then we use interpretation at this committee level and to the Plenary to be procedural to achieve the same objectives.

So, for this, I want to thank the ad hoc chairs and those who offered informal consultations even within the Arab Chairs sincerely for what you were able to achieve.

Our understanding is important. Interpreters, you have been kind. Captionists, you have been supportive. Our technical team who we may not have seen, various ways, document control, who I don't even know, wherever they are, we appreciate you.

But when we talk about support, it is the ITU staff that we have. Very professional, very qualified and most available. As such as I was saying a nocturnal, so some of them are. And I give my text messages at 2:00 a.m. but I will always get a response.

I want to thank Mr. Catalino Moresco for such kind support with the big team of his staff, I can't mention all the names now. But I am very, very appreciative of you.

For those that you -- some also right there. For those that you entrusted us with this room, with my vice chairs and some of them took positions of leading ad hoc groups, you have all been very, very, very supportive to our process and our success of this Working Group of the Plenary.

I hope, I hope that we did not cause any fractions that we cannot bridge. But, rather, we formed friendships that will help us to continue our conversation for the cause and the objective of the International Telecommunications Union. If there were any fractions, I sincerely apologize for them all, but to all of you, I wish you greatest success in your endeavors. And I hope we have a brighter and a better ITU in the future.

This meeting, without any further issues, is closed.

>> Recording stopped.

(Session was concluded at 1830 EEST)

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