SCOPING STUDY ON AFRICAN REPRESENTATION IN KEY INTERNATIONAL ICT ORGANIZATIONS

INCLUDING AGENCIES (EXCEPT ITU) THAT PLAY KEY ROLE IN INTERNATIONAL AND PUBLIC POLICES IN ICT

March 31, 2021 // Dr. Sherif Guinena

In this scoping study, Organizations that may have such significant impact, mainly in the areas concerning Cybersecurity, Sustainable Development and Internet Governance, have been identified and selected after scanning a large number of relevant entities.

ABSTRACT

The ATU Member States (ATU MSs) have requested a scoping study to identify key organizations, institutions and forums that have decision-making power over the ICT sector, which impact Africa policies, regulations and ICT sustainable development; and how to strengthen preparation, participation, representation and contribution of ATU Member States in these identified organizations. In this scoping study, Organizations that may have such significant impact, mainly in the areas concerning Cybersecurity, Sustainable Development and Internet Governance, have been identified and selected after scanning a large number of relevant entities. A detailed study on the scope, role, relation with the ITU and impact of these entities on ATU Member States in the above areas has been performed to identify the status and efficacy of ATU MSs' participation, contributions and involvement in decision-making processes of these key organizations, as well as benchmarking with other regions. Recommendations and proposals, based on a SWOT analysis of the current situation, were presented to strengthen ATU MSs' involvement in decision-making processes of these entities that impact their policies, regulations and ICT sustainable development. Mainly, the formation of an 'ATU Functional Unit' to give guidance to ATU Member States in this regard, and the formation of coordination 'TEAMS' membered from the five African Regions. Action Lines are suggested to realize these proposals.

Scoping Study on African Representation in Key International ICT Organizations

Motivation

The International Telecommunication Union (ITU) remained for many years the main International Intergovernmental Organization in which key decisions are taken related to ICTs' public & International policies, standard frameworks, as well as partially in cyber-security and Internet governance.

However, the ATU Member States (ATU MSs) realized that there is a change in the landscape in the recent years that some decisions and influential recommendations are now being developed and undertaken elsewhere, mainly in other UN organizations as well as in some nongovernmental organizations, civil societies and forums.

Accordingly, the ATU Member States in their meeting at Rabat in March 2019 on the outcome of PP-18, requested a Scoping Study to identify key organizations, institutions and forums (other than the ITU) that have decision-making power over the ICT sector that could impact Africa policies, regulations and ICT sustainable development.

Additionally, to analyze the nature and level of representation and contributions of ATU Member States in these organizations, with benchmark with other regions, and finally to make a proposal on how to strengthen preparation, representation, contribution and involvement of ATU Member States in decision making processes of these identified organizations.

Response

In response, ATU Secretariat has contracted an independent consultant to perform the Scoping Study. The draft Scoping Study was submitted by the Consultant to ATU Secretariat on 24 SEP 2020.

Accordingly, ATU Secretariat requested the Consultant to prepare a Summary Document to the ATU Member States (this document.

CHAPTER ONE

120

Number of organizations scanned by the Scoping study

30

Number of key organizations identified

Structure of the Scoping Study

The Scoping Study scanned about 120 relevant organizations, and accordingly identified about 30 key International and Regional Intergovernmental Organizations, Civil Societies, Institutions, Forums (Hereafter called ORGs) that could have decision-making power and influence on Telecomm/ICT policies, regulations and ICT sustainable development in Africa, and in the world in general.

The Scoping Study started with an introductory Chapter (Chapter 1) on the problem definition and methodology, followed by another four Chapters including the analysis, the key findings, the recommendations and proposals on how to strengthen preparation, participation and contribution of the African countries to the identified institutions and forums as follows:

- ORGs Identification, Screening, and Characterization of Eligible ORGs, with regard to their Role, Impact and Efficacy, in the following areas:
- Cybersecurity.
- ICT Sustainable Development.
- Internet Governance and Relevant Issues.
- Africa Participation and Involvement in decision-taking processes and its Efficacy:
- Nature of Participation, Composition, Involvement and Efficacy.
- Benchmark with Other Regions.
- SWOT Analysis for Africa Participation.
- Recommendations and Proposal for Africa, including Proposed Action Lines to strengthen ATU Member States participation and efficacy in these key ORGs.
- An appendix includes the results of a survey on ATU MSs' level of participation in the key ORGs.
- References (about 180 citations).
- Appendix, including the outcome of a survey on ATU Member States participation.
- An extensive list of references, and to act as well as a source of information.

CHAPTER TWO

The ORGs Screening Process

The screening process Criteria to select the key ORGs considered the following aspects:

- Their Outcome: Obligatory, or Defacto Norm for International Law, or Non-binding Recommendations, or Just Analyses, Reports, Best Practices ...etc.

- Their level and extent of their Direct or Indirect Impact on MSs' Policies, Regulations and ICT Sustainable Development.
- Their Influence and Impact on the MSs' Decision Making Power.

Key Findings

Some UN organs are identified to have an escalating significant decision-making power in the recent years on the above-mentioned areas (Cybersecurity, ICT Sustainable Development and Internet Governance), in particular the UN General Assembly (UNGA) and its Committees.

Additionally, other UN organs that could have influence on UNGA resolutions, include the UN ECOSCO (Economic and Social Council) and its affiliated High Level Panel and Forums on sustainable development and on the implementation of WSIS outcomes, where these are interrelated with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in the realm of ICTs.

Although the outcome of UNGA Resolutions have no enforcement mechanisms, and they are generally considered to have no binding force under international law; however, such resolutions reflect the opinion of a large number of States (and in many instances, in addition to opinions of other stakeholders) and they touch upon legal matters.

Therefore they can be successfully regarded as indications of a general global consensus, and this will lead to the creation of a "norm for international law", or "rules of customary law". Moreover, UNGA Resolutions can have significant political influence rather then legal obligations on the behavior of states who try to diverge from these Resolutions.

On the other hand, it was recognized in the Scoping Study that the decisions and resolutions undertaking in these UN organizations and bodies are influenced, in a bottom-up style, by some key NGOs, Societies and Forms of other non- governmental stakeholders. Several of these entities has been considered and analyzed in the Scoping Study to assess their role, impact and efficacy on the intergovernmental decision-making processes.

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Cybersecurity

ICT Sustainable Development

Internet Governance

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Paradigm Shift in UN Directions

Moreover, the Scoping Study paid attention to the paradigm shift of the UN directions to become a multilateral, multistakeholder facilitator and platform, and mobilizer of partnership with other stakeholders. This was clearly stipulated in the report of the 'UNSG High Level Panel on Digital Cooperation' (SG HLP DC) "The Age of Digital Interdependence", as well as the consequent report of the UNSG 'Roadmap for digital cooperation'. This shift is leveraging the role of the nongovernmental stakeholders as indicated above.

For example, much of the activities of the GGE and OEWG on Cybersecurity, as well as the SG HLP DC, and many others, include regional consultations, in which all stakeholders are included, even in the consultation steering panel in its way to build recommendations based on a 'rough consensus' procedure. Such arrangements and procedures, usually does not adequately reflect the Member States Government's voices, where the voices of the nongovernmental stakeholders outweigh that of the MSs' administrations, and usually the panel – including its formation - can easily influence the direction of the discussion during the build up of the rough consensus and the final outcome. Therefore, the role of stakeholders, other than the ATU MSs' Administrations, in shaping the UNGA resolutions should not be underestimated.

This Chapter 2 aimed to characterize the selected key ORGs (Eligible ORGs) with regard to their Role, Impact and Efficacy in the areas Cybersecurity, ICT Sustainable Development, and Internet Governance & Relevant Issues.

It should be clear that the list of selected ORGs is not static or restrictive; it should be a dynamic list, influenced by the prevailing global themes, priorities, directions and developments.

Moreover, each nongovernmental stakeholder may have even a minute contribution or role in shaping the higher-level decisions. It would be impractical and/ or very costly to follow-up and participate in activities of each of these ORGs as done by some capable Member States from other regions. Therefore, a mechanism of keeping eye on such ORGS should be considered.

ORGs Characterization

The scoping Study starts the characterization by considering for each area (Cybersecurity, ICT Sustainable Development and Internet) the role, impact and efficacy of both, governmental and nongovernmental ORGs in sequence.

A: In the Area of Cybersecurity

The Scoping Study clarified significant role of UN bodies, mainly UNGA and its 1st Committee and affiliates (GGE, OEWG), UNODA, UNDIR in the area of Cybersecurity under the name 'ICTs in the Context of International Security'. Also the role of the AUCSEG 'African Union Commission Security Experts Group' was highlighted indicating the support of ISOC and the USA given to this group. On the other hand, the role of other nongovernmental organizations, institutions and forums such as DiploFoundation (and GIP), I&JPN, GFCE and GCSCC were presented and discussed in the Study.

The ultimate goal of all of these UN ORGs is to develop a 'Consensus based Legally Binding Norm of Responsible Behavior of States in Cybersecurity', which is the most difficult target to achieve. Many nations of the world are trying to agree upon such a norm, in particular Africa.

The Scoping Study shed light on the two competing camps, revealed by the UNGA and affiliates discussions and resolutions, each supporting a different ideology. This behavior was also extended to the GGE and OEWG, where each has vulnerabilities in achieving consensus. It may be obvious that such tactics by some super powers is to inhibit or at least postpone the development of binding norms on Cyberspace, sine it may not be in their favor!

To well understand the role of nongovernmental ORGs, the Study in Chapter 2 highlighted the formation of

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these ORGs, their leadership and key management staff background and historic affiliation, their financial resources and supporting organizations, to have a clue on their possible directions.

Their role appeared very clearly in the Regional Consultations. Several of these ORGs, have as well roles in the other areas, such as ICTs for SD and Internet governance. The Study did not ignore the important role of such nongovernmental organization in supporting the activities of the UN and its bodies as well the Member States in achieving sustainable development and international security; however, as the folkloric saying says "There is No Free Lunch!"

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Analysis of the Africa Member States participation and deliberations in above mentioned discussions and voting are detailed in Chapter 3 of the Study.

B: In the area of CTs for Sustainable Development

The Scoping Study started by overviewing the UN activates in the context of Sustainable Development (SD).

It overviewed the evolution of the 2030 Agenda for SD and its 17 SDGs 'Sustainable Development Goals', as the outcome of the UN SD Summit in September 2015; and how they have replaced the MDGs 'Millennium Development Goals', which were criticized for lack of updated datasets and indicators to monitor implementation progress, and thus were not effectively action oriented.

The Study has addressed as well the role of the ITU Council Working Groups (CWGs), report to ECOSOC through the HLPF SD on follow-up of WSIS outcomes as well as its alignment with the 2030 Agenda and SDGs, which will find its way to UNGA through ECOSOC Resolutions and Report to UNGA.

The Scoping Study, pointed out to the studies, which identified that ICT is a key catalyst for the three pillars of the SDGs: Economic prosperity, Social inclusion and Environmental protection. Moreover, ITU analysis has identified 150 of ITU Study Groups' Objectives are enabler to the 17 SDGs, and additionally, there is a strong linkage between the WSIS Action Lines and the 2030 Agenda.

Accordingly, the Scoping Study focused on the UN bodies such as UNGA 2nd Committee, UN ECOSOC, CSTD, DCF, FfD (including AAAA) UN HLPF SD, UNSG HLP DC, UNSG SDG Action Forum....etc., as well as other nongovernmental ORGs which have key role in ICTs for SD. A detailed study of these bodies, their role, impact and efficacy was presented

Although UNGA and other UN bodies are intergovernmental organization, where the key decisions shaping the global directions and activities for Sustainable Development, including ICTs are taken. However, it was obvious to the Scoping Study that such decisions and Resolutions are greatly affected - in a bottom up approach - with the input from other nongovernmental stakeholders to relevant UN bodies such ECOSOC, or via open or regional UN consultations.

The Report of the UNSG HLP DC "The Age of Digital Interdependence", and the consequent report of the UNSG, the 'Roadmap for Digital Cooperation', both have changed the compass of the UN, that is UN to become a multistakeholder facilitator and mobilizer for partnership with nongovernmental stakeholders!

The impact of this new direction has appeared clearly in the ECOSOC 'Forums' discussions, including the Regional Consultation processes of the 'HLP DC', 'HLPF SD', DCF, ...etc, that are usually co-organized and supported by NGOs. Therefore, the Scoping Study discussed in detail the impact of such NGOs in shaping the final UNGA resolution on "ICTs for Sustainable Development".

The Scoping Study has also addressed the importance of the Voluntary National Reviews (VNR) to help in achieving the SDGs, which will also rank the African Member States high on the UN SDGs implementation scale, an incentive to motivate Member States to achieve the SDGs!

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Therefore, unless the ATU MSs' government representatives influence from the very beginning the several stages of consensus building in these forums as well as in the ITU, it will be very difficult to make substantial changes to UNGA Resolution at such a late stage.

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B: In the area of Internet Governance & Relevant Issues

An quick overview on some key milestones related to Internet Governance was presented, this included UNGA ten-year review of the WSIS (WSISI+10, 2015) which Resulted is Res. 70/125 on the overall review on the implementation of WSIS.

The important observation is that it linked the WSIS Action Lines with the 2030 Agenda in the context of 'Human rights offline apply equally online'. This has been also treasured in the WSIS Forum (WSIS+15) in 2020.

It was highlighted in the Study how WSIS+10, although lead by an intergovernmental body, UNGA, yet kept most of the Internet controversial issues stand still (Multistakeholder vs Intergovernmental governance, as well key issues related to Cybersecurity).
WSIS+10 extended the IGF for 10 years under the umbrella of the UN, while CSTD was mandated for the improvement of the IGF. Accordingly, the SG HLP DC proposed three alternatives modalities for Digital Cooperation; among these is the IGF+. It was pointed in the Scoping Study that

A special focus was given in the Scoping Study on the UNESCO, firstly as the co-organizer of the WSIS Forum with the ITU and UNDP, and more importantly is its role in the Artificial Intelligence ethical considerations.

the resulting modality would have a far-reaching consequences on the relation between the governmental and other stakeholders in the area of Internet.

However, it is apparent that the three modalities are still delimiting the role of Governments. The apparent IGF+ forerunner option for digital cooperation modality that is pushed by several stakeholders, especially in the regional consultations, is still suffering controversies even at the UNGA 75th session.

In addition to UNGA, the Scoping Study also considered the Role of ECOSOC (and its subsidiary CSTD), which was charged by WSIS on the follow-up of WSIS Outcomes. A special focus was given in the Scoping Study on the UNESCO, firstly as the co-organizer of the WSIS Forum with the ITU and UNDP, and more importantly is its role in the Artificial Intelligence ethical considerations.

The Scoping Study in addition to its focus on the UN bodies, it considered as well other actors including nongovernmental ORGs, which have key role in Internet Governance and relevant issues; these included UNGA High level Meeting 2015 (WSIS+10), ECOSOC & CSTD, UNGIS, UNESCO, WSIS Stocktaking Process, WSIS

Forum (WSIS+10, WSIS+15), IGF and ISOC. It was highlighted in the Scoping Study, how eventually the final decision by UNGA is largely based on the outcome of the WSIS Forum! Actually, the WSIS Forum (WSIS+15) in 2020: "Fostering Digital Transformation and Global Partnerships: WSIS Action Lines for achieving SDGs" resulted in numerous outcomes. These were reflected through an ECOSOC Resolution in the UNGA's Resolution 'ICTs for Sustainable Development'

The multiplicity of tracks and the numerous outcomes of such forums, and the open-consultation processes, make it so difficult for ATU MSs' Administrations to follow-up and share effectively in the decision making process of such type of forums, where the outcome is based on rough consensus among many stakeholders, and not on a well disciplined approval procedure.

Outcomes usually detour critical and controversial issues; e.g. a global agreement on Cybersecurity, intergovernmental governance of the Internet, etc. Additionally, due to different priorities of Member States and other Stakeholders, Outcomes of the WSIS FORUM could give Wrong Consensus Message to the HLPF SD, CSTD, ECOSOC as well as UNGA.

CHAPTER THREE

Africa Participation, Involvement and Efficacy

The Scoping Study was mandated to assess the nature and level of participation of ATU Member States in key ORGs, and their involvement in the decision-making processes in these ORGs.

Therefore, the Study considered first an introductory part on Nature of Participation according to the type of the ORG, as well as characterization of typical Composition of the Delegations in formal groups and international intergovernmental conferences, highlighting current common practices, pros and cons, and limitations.

The second part included a detailed analysis of African Countries' participation in Key ORGs, in addition to benchmark with other regions.

Firstly, the results of a survey among the 49 ATU MSs, conducted by the Author with support of ATU Secretariat, was presented aiming to estimate the nature and level of participation in the key ORGs.

The Study also performed a lengthy comprehensive analysis of African Member States participation in UNGA's first Committee at the 74th session of UNGA (2019) as well as in the First Committee's groups, the GGE and OEWG on Cybersecurity, as case studies.

The study in this chapter considered level of participation and formation of the delegations, as well as level of Contributions, Deliberations and voting, with statistical analyses for benchmarking with other regions. This section is concluded with remarks on participation features and efficacy.
The benchmarking has considered in particular the Multistakeholder Consultation processes of these ORGs that involve nongovernmental stakeholders. Also, highlighted the salient features of the consultation processes in different regions, which differ than that of the Africa region. This will help in diagnosing the shortcomings in Africa Region Consultations.

Key Findings

Almost all African States attend the meetings with number of delegates near the average of other regions (except few specific MSs). Therefore, apparently participating in such UN meetings is not so problematic for Africa.

However, the representation and composition of the African delegation may need adaptation to the new developments in the UN regarding its increasing involvement in the ICTs relevant areas, e.g. dominance is for Diplomats, Technocrats, or Specialized Experts, or a balanced composition of these delegates.

It has been highlighted in the Study, using statistical analysis of the case study example, that the delegation of active countries from other regions, usually include single or very few spokesmen/ladies, and several advisors in the back seat to provide specialized support. Not the case in almost all African delegations.

The Scoping Study has observed low level of contributions and/or interventions in the critical debates by Africa, either in the UN meetings. Additionally, has not shown a definitive position while voting, in contrary with other regions, in particular from the developed countries, where they can take strong positions whenever needed.

Moreover, the Scoping Study analysis of a Regional Consultation in Africa by one of the UN Bodies, showed also lack of significant contributions from ATU MSs; additionally,
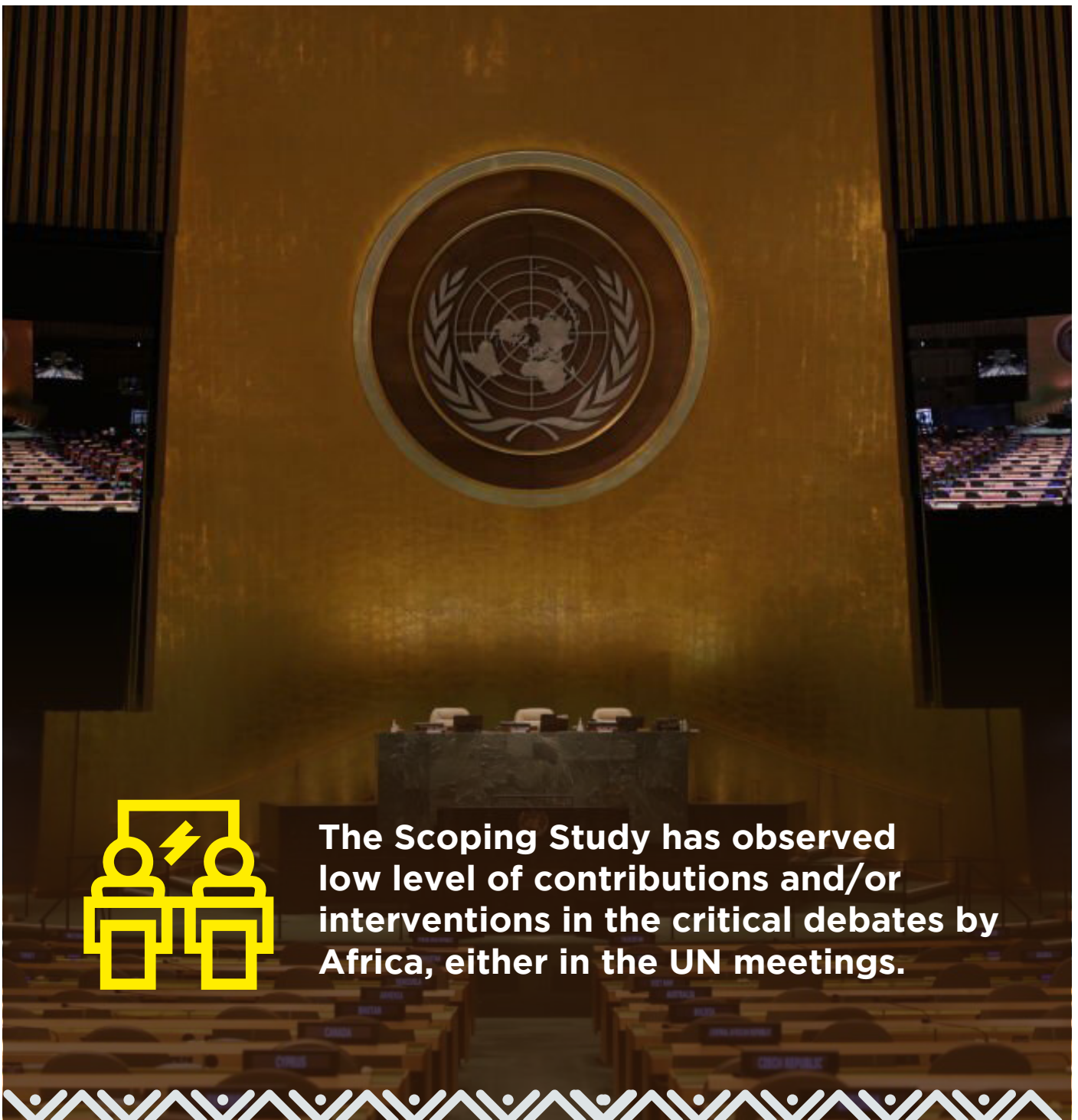
the outcome of the consultation may be highjacked by the steering panel, if the panel is not fairly structured.

The benchmarking with some other regions on the same consultations processes showed more administration role, for example through a closed then an open segment of the consultation. ASEAN countries also showed a good example of coherence, as well as being proactive in the context of the engagement in the ongoing UN processes.

The examples given in the Scoping Study, shows to great extent common features for Africa participation in key ORGs. A proposal to enhance effective participation will be presented in Chapter 5 of this Scoping Study.

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CHAPTER FOUR

Africa Participation SWOT Analysis

To develop a proposal for more effectiveness ATU Member States representation and efficacy in the key ORGs, a SWOT analysis has been presented in this chapter of the Study.

Strengths

- Large number of countries: Strong voting power.
- Can collate forcers as one hand, and complement each other.
- Many are fluent speakers in one or more of UN languages, and are convincing debaters when well prepared.
- Relatively Few, but there exist good and diverse experts in ICTs and Cybersecurity. Can be the Head of the Spear, the Train Puller!
- Africa has good motivation for development, being the most affected continent.
- Emerging role of the private sector stakeholders, when aligned with the governments' objectives.

Opportunities

- Emerging role of the UN in ICT related matters: a more influential body; more possibility to reach global consensus at such a higher level.
- Its Resolutions are mostly accepted globally as 'customary laws'
- Open documents, discussions, reports, … etc.
- UN supported Capacity Building programs, expected to be more neutral!
- More access to UN funding by more engagement in the UN processes.
- The momentum gained by ATU Member States since ITU PP18 should be fully exploited.

Weaknesses

- Lack of awareness of the whole picture!
- Lack of integrity among multitude of events at different levels and of ORGs.
- Coordination problems among a large number of countries
- Capacity building usually for awareness not for deep learning.
- Political will: Analogue or Digital minded?
- Financial constrains resulting in: Small delegation, Missing Meetings, Late appointment of delegation, No preparedness, missing continuity …etc.

Threats

- Much delay in being engaged will result in irrevocable lag.
- Participation of many NGO Stakeholders at equal footing, can bias the decision-making processes, and swap MSs' role and interests.
- Missing engagement in decision-making process in higher level ORGs, may cripple developing related resolutions at lower level ORGs.
- Existence and loyalty of many NGO Stakeholders who are affiliates, or sponsored by foreign multinational entities.
- Donors' impact on ATU MSs: "is there a free lunch"?
- Political lobbying.

CHAPTER FIVE

Recommendations for Africa

Recommendations and proposals for ATU Member States are presented in the concluding Chapter 5 of the Scoping Study. It started with preliminary observations to reiterate the correlation between the SDGs and the ITU objectives enshrined in the WSIS action lines.

Thereof, it was highlighted in the Study that UN activities and Resolutions in the ICT realm will impact the ITU objectives and activities, which in turn will reflect more closely from the ITU onto ATU MSs' Policies and Regulations regarding ICT Sustainable Development, infrastructures, the Internet, as well as Cybersecurity.

Additionally, the HLPF SD and the HLP DC as well as the UNSG 'Roadmap for Digital Cooperation', all stress on a "multi-stakeholder 'systems' approach for cooperation and regulation", and proposed three modalities for cooperation between Governments and other Stakeholders. One of these modalities, when approved by UNGA, it will determine how MSs' governments will cooperate with the other stakeholders.

Therefore, the Scoping Study calls for full engagement in the relevant UN bodies by the ATU MSs' policy makers and diplomats, in full collaboration with ICT experts from ATU MSs, to ensure integrity of debates, positions, and decisions, to take into consideration political aspects, as well as specialized ICT technical, policy and regulatory dimensions. Additionally, calls for coordinated and effective participation in other nongovernmental ORGs.

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Elements of the Recommendations

The recommendations will address how to empower the delegation members and increase their competencies in these venues, and the recommended strategies for participation, and the composition of the delegation.

Additionally, the recommendations will highlight the importance of awareness of the overall picture of what is going on in the key organizations in every theme, the status of potential resolutions and decisions, the optimum timings and deadlines, ..etc.

Moreover, how ATU through certain mechanisms can support the elaboration of the full picture and the follow-up processes, including coordination of ATU Member States participation and activities in the meetings of these organizations, and how

to keep track of the work in these orgs.
Finally, a proposal and action lines were presented to realize these functions and targets.

Delegates Empowerment

To append usual capacity building awareness programs by in-depth learning! This can be achieved by Authority supported self-learning, making use of the ATU sponsored knowledge base (see later in the proposals), or by guided learning through contracts with universities or private sector institutions, or formal education with special arrangements with Academia.

Awareness with the Full Picture

Discussions and Decision in different ORGs are interrelated and interdependent. Belatedness of African MSs' delegations to get prepared for conferences and meetings due to missing of the Full Picture may cause missing vital irrevocable decisions, or missing opportunities. A mechanism is presented in the Study to ensure that Authorities and Delegates have full awareness of the Full Picture of the topics and in what venues.

Participation Strategies

The work in the UN and its agencies has become pivotal in the international discussions and decisions. The UN work is based on input from Governments/ Member States and many other NGO ORGs and entities. The outcome (Decisions and Resolutions) are built upon the sum of the rough consensus output of all of these entities. Therefore, ATU Member States participation and representation strategy should be based on a well-coordinated, efficient Holistic Approach, to have efficacy in the decision-making processes.

The proposal at the end of the Scoping Study will propose mechanism for such involvement in the key ORGs. The following are recommendations on participation strategies.

In the area of Cybersecurity

Although Africa is represented in the GGE (three Representatives), and participate in the OEWG meetings, however is missing strong and effective involvement as explained in this Scoping Study. Very close coordination between ATU Member States and the GGE's Africa Experts should be guaranteed, as well as intense participation and contribution in the OEWG.

Lately, the third session, and the fourth and final session of the GGE are rescheduled by UNGA 75th meeting to end before May 2021. Additionally, UNGA 75th established a new OEWG 2021-2025, acting on a consensus basis, with a view to ensuring the "uninterrupted and continuous nature of the democratic, inclusive and transparent negotiation process on security in the use of ICTs under the auspices of the UN".

Therefore, it is an opportunity to ATU Member States to intense their participation and involvement in these two groups, as well in UNGA 1st, to influence the decision making processes, including very close coordination with the African Experts in the GGE.

Additionally, the 'African Preparatory Online Meeting' APR 2020 on the open consultation on the GCA (Global Cybersecurity Agenda under auspices of the ITU), has supported the draft guidelines of the GCA as a norm for Cybersecurity. Therefore, the Scoping Study proposed that ATU Member States to raise their agreed position both in the ITU and in relevant UNGA bodies to push forward the GCA.

In the area of ICTs for Sustainable Development
The HLPF SD is the main annual UN platform on SD (Intragovernmental nature). Has a central role for the follow-up and review of the progress in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs.

ATU Member States contributions to the HLPF SD are eagerly needed. Additionally, ATU, as an intergovernmental body, can as well submit input to the HLPF SD on behalf of its Member States (Common AFR MSs' input) as some other regions do!

HLPF meetings are convened annually at the level of Heads of State and Governments under the auspices of ECOSOC, and every four years under the auspices of UNGA. HLPF DC adopts intergovernmentally negotiated political declarations; but including input from other stakeholders subject to Partnership with MSs.

ATU Member States contributions to the HLPF SD are eagerly needed. Additionally, ATU, as an intergovernmental body, can as well submit input to the HLPF SD on behalf of its Member States (Common AFR MSs' input) as some other regions do!

This should be followed by coordinated participation and debating, as will be explained later in the proposal.

Participation and Contribution to the ITU CWG WSIS/SDG, will support escalating ATU MSs' concerns in the ITU input document to HLPF, thence to ECOSOC and to UNGA. i.e. raising the concerns from early stages will support a favorable or at least balanced Resolution in UNGA.
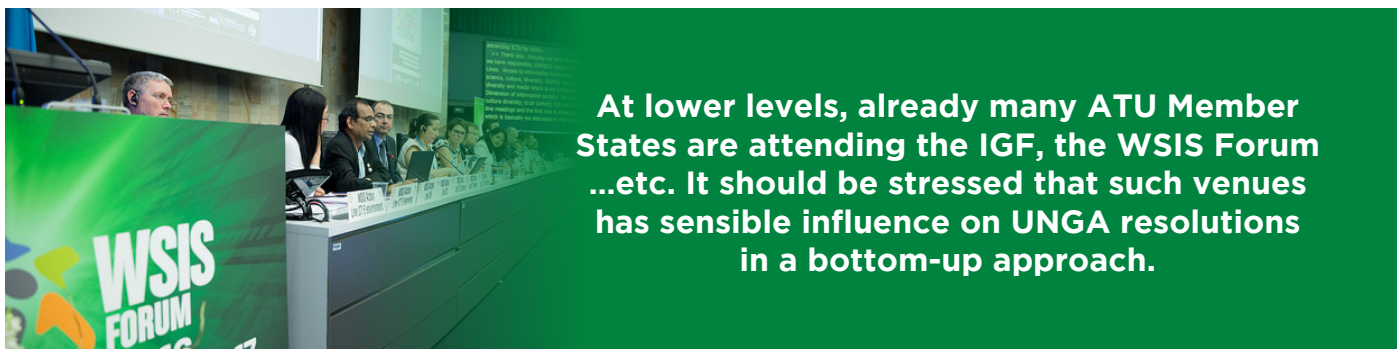
ATU Member States should be carful about the discussions on the 'Modality for Digital Cooperation' (Recommendation #5A/B of the HLP DC report "The Age of Digital Interdependence"). As said before, this will determine the far-reaching modality of cooperation between Member States and other Stakeholders!

ATU Member States should be very well determined and very proactive to push forward for the most suitable modality that can preserver balance between the impact of Member States and other stakeholders on the UNGA Resolutions, and prevent domination of other stakeholders on the decision-making processes.

In the area of Internet Governances
It has appeared from the survey that ATU Member States are more proactive in Internet Related issues. Additionally, the interrelation between WSIS and the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs has become obvious. Therefore, more engagement in the ICTs for SD activities will touch closely upon the Internet related issues.

At lower levels, already many ATU Member States are attending the IGF, the WSIS Forum …etc. It should be stressed that such venues has sensible influence on UNGA resolutions in a bottom-up approach.

For example, the HLP DC's 'Modality of Digital Cooperation' will determine the level of interaction and/or dominance between the governmental and the nongovernmental stakeholders relevant to the Governance of the Internet as well as other relevant Internet issues. Inclination to the IGF+ model is apparent by some other regions, mostly to keep the status quo!!

ATU Member States should either extract the maximum outcome of this IGF+ model, or strongly push for another model that alleviates their concerns.

Effective participation in the ITU CWG WSIS/SD as well as in the HLPF SD, ECOSOC and UNGA 2nd Committee, could impact the UNGA Resolution on the implementation of WSIS outcomes an other Internet rated issues and governance.

At lower levels, already many ATU Member States are attending the IGF, the WSIS Forum …etc. It should be stressed that such venues has sensible influence on UNGA resolutions in a bottom-up approach. Once more, coordinated representation and contribution to these forums, with follow up in the higher-level organizations that receive these forms' reports, is of paramount importance.

Proposals for Enhancing ATU Member States Representation and Effectiveness

The essence of the proposal is firstly, to empower the representation and debating power of the delegation members by ensuring proper composition of the delegation in the key ORGs. Secondly, by empowering the delegations' members through a proposed 'ATU Functional Unit' that support their preparedness and contributions to the key ORGs. Thirdly, to create a coordination unit 'TEAMS' among the five African regions, to coordinate and integrate ATU MSs' Power.

Proposal #1: Composition of the Delegations The Scoping Study has proposed a recommended composition of the delegations to the UN bodies, where it has been stressed that both diplomats as well ICT technocrats/experts should be among the delegation; Policy-maker representatives for the political debates, and the competent ICT experts for the intense specialized debates.

Additionally, there must exist specialized advisors in the topic of discussion (e.g. in the back-stage) to support the main negotiator(s).

At least one member of the delegation should be 'dedicated' and fluent in instant messaging; he/she will be responsible for ATU MSs' online coordination of interventions and positions during the meetings.

Participation and Representation in the intergovernmental as well as in the other Nongovernmental ORGs will be coordinated by the "TEAMS", supported by the "ATU Functional Unit" as detailed in the Scoping Study.

Proposal #2 : The 'ATU Functional Unit'

Decision making processes that set the overall theme of the ICT policies,

ATU to establish an "Information Repository Platform" (Mostly hosted on one of the cloud providers). Fed by ATU Member States in a collaborative initiative, as well as by the 'Full Picture Function'. It will include as well ATU working and common proposal documents. A source for capacity building and education.

required enhancement of representation and effectiveness. These structures are detailed in the Study, and summarized as follows:

ATU will establish a dedicated 'ATU Functional Unit' (a temporary hypothetical name), located at the ATU Headquarters in Nairobi; operated by a small team around three persons, responsible for the following three activities:

The Full Picture Function

To scan, monitor and track the status and development of key actions in all relevant organization to the three main areas (ICTs for SD, Cybersecurity and Internet Governance). And to Produce regular, or event-based short reports to inform ATU Member States with the Full Picture regarding what is going-on in these themes and relevant Orgs and venues.

The Time Keeping Function

Acts as a master timekeeper to alert ATU Member States in advance with important events in different interrelated organization for a topic, and when actions are needed.
The above two Functional Units will exchange mutual support with "ATU Member States coordination 'TEAMS' (More on this latter)

The Information Repository Function

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For continuity and reliability, ATU to take the responsibility of hosting the platform instead of a volunteering MS.

regulations and development is based on an intricate interdependency among many organizations, hundred of them. Even though, the Key ORGs are still many.

Being well acquainted with the 'Full Picture', will help navigating the activities of these many ORGs to provide precursors on where key decisions are taken, decide which to attend, who to attend, how to prepare well, and when to join and intervene in the right time.

In this regard, the Scoping Study proposed two empowerment and coordination structures, one inside ATU Securitate HQ ('ATU Functional Unit', this proposal #2), and another that stems from the five African regions, the (TEAMS, the 3rd proposal); both will cooperate tightly under ATU Secretariat to achieve the

Rationale for the Proposal

Rational for these proposals are detailed in the Scoping Study. It was highlighted that awareness of the delegations with the 'Full Picture' in a 'Holistic Approach' will enhance follow-up, coordination, participation, and intervention in the proper time and place. Additionally, the dedicated "Full Picture" function and a "Time Keeping" function will ensure no missing of key events or key-timed interventions, deadlines, ...etc. and will support early preparedness and coordination.

This function is important to cater for the bottom-up thrust on the higher level ORGs' decision-making processes.

Currently, information is a very valuable wealth! The Platform will provide quick access to well-indexed documents and information to give good support for ATU Member States as well as Delegations in the preparedness phase as well as in the meetings phase, and for educational purposes.
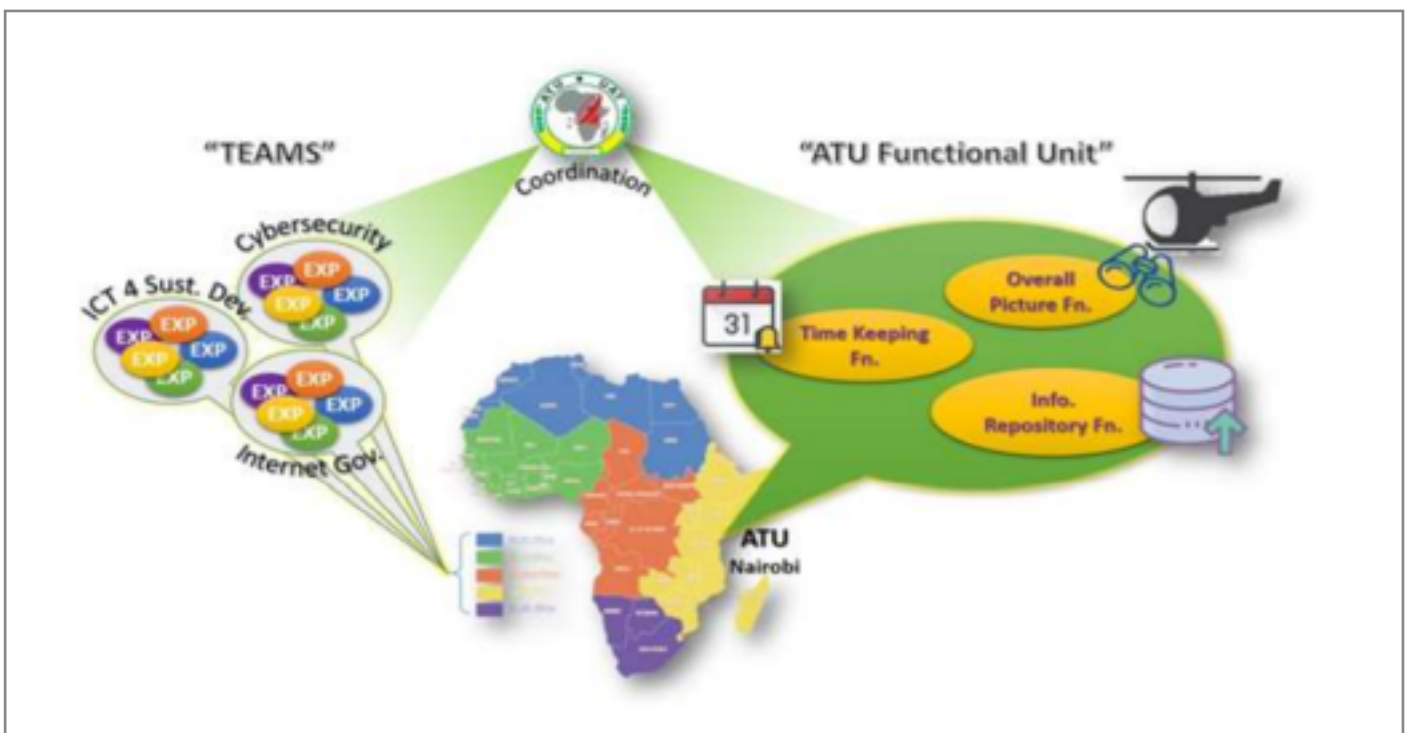
Future implementation of AI (Artificial Intelligence), Big Data, Data Mining and Analytics...etc. can greatly enhance the functionality and effectiveness of this Platform.

The Scoping Study has considered making the cost burden minimum on the ATU MSs, a small staff count for these functions, and even some of them can work remotely online under supervision of the ATU Secretariat to reduce cost. The Information Repository platform can be hosted by a cloud provider with reasonable annual fee; however, the return on the ATU Member States will outweighs this cost.

The TEAMS and the ATU Functional Unit

Proposal #3 : Cooperation and Teaming Recognizing the urgent necessity to ensure good cooperation, coordination and collaboration between ATU MSs, and to ensure their efficacy in the key ORGs as presented in this Scoping Study, the 3rd proposal (TEAMS) aims to let the ATU MSs' Experts who got the chance to have good education and/or vast practical experiences, to pull the train! to be the head of the spear!

The TEAMS and the ATU Functional Unit

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ATU MSs' Coordination "TEAMS"

Three "TEAMS" to be formed on voluntary basis on each of the current main themes (Cyber Security, ICTs for Sustainable Development, and Internet Governance). Each of the three TEAMS will be formed of five members representing the five African Regions.

The Scoping Study details the formation and function of the "TEAMS". A TEAM is headed by one of the Experts, possibly in rotational basis, whereas, another will act as a rapporteur for documents management, time keeping and event planner/handler.

A TEAM will be responsible to follow up the status and development of the area under its responsibility. It will lead and/or guide the ATU Member States reactions in consultation with all ATU MSs. The TEAMs will work very closely with the "ATU functional Unit" for mutual reinforcement and exchange of support.

Nomination of the Expert members and Working methods (Mainly Virtual) and collaboration with the ATU Functional Unit are all described in detail in the Scoping Study.

Proposed Action Lines

1. Approval and dissemination of the "Scoping Study" to ATU MSs.

2. Approval to establish the proposed 'ATU Functional Unit', including the three above mentioned functions.

3. Appointment of three over-junior to mid-age staff (to be handworkers and energetic) at ATU HQ, some may work virtually. One for each of the three functional units.

4. Establishment of the 'Information Repository Platform' by contracting with a reasonably costed Cloud provider. ATU and ATU Member States to feed the platform.

5. Approval on the formation of the three 'TEAMs' on the three main themes: Cyber Security, ICTs for SD and Internet Governance (the themes may be dynamic with time).

6. A mechanism – described in the Proposal - for selecting the experts of the 'TEAMS' by the ATU SG in consultation with the AU ICT Ministerial Council (nearly similar to the UN GGE group).

7. ATU will facilitate ZOOM (or alternative online conferencing platform) for the TEAMS to communicate regularly in predefined intervals.

8. A detailed Action Plan with timing, activities and costing is envisaged.

Appendices and References

The Scoping Study is appended with an Appendix containing the results of three surveys conducted among the ATU MSs' about their participation and involvement in the Key ORGs considered in this Study. Although the responses were scarce, however they give rough indications, which go inline with the findings of this Scoping Study.

Additionally, a large amount of references (with hyperlinks) are included as references for content of the Scoping Study, as well as to act as an information source for ATU Member States in the relevant issues dealt with in this Scoping Study.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this study has considered the problem facing ATU Member States in identifying and being involved in key organizations other than the ITU that have significant impact on the development of ICT polices, regulations and sustainable development of the African countries.

About 30 key organizations (ORGs) have been identified in this Scoping Study among 120 scanned ORGs. Hence, these ORGs were characterized to evaluate their impact on Africa, as well as to determine the level and nature of representation, and involvement of ATU Member States in these key ORGs' decision-making processes.

Accordingly, a SWOT analysis of this participation led to recommendations, proposals and action lines to increase ATU Member States representation, involvement and efficacy in these identifies organizations. This proposal include creation of a small "ATU Functional Unit" inside ATU HQ, to ensure full picture awareness of the ATU Member States of those key ORGs, and to avail a well-structured information repository platform, and also to follow-up their activities in order to be fully engaged and influential in their decision-making processes.

Additionally, the Scoping Study proposed the formation of three "TEAMS" each with five Experts from the five Africa Regions, who will work in collaboration with the "ATU Functional Unit" to help ATU Member States in collating and coordinating their activities and forces for more effectiveness in the decision-making processes in the identified key ORGs.

Future work may consider a dynamic key ORGs list influenced by the prevailing global themes and priorities. The 'ATU Functional Unit' could be enhanced by more staffing, more smartness, e.g. using AI in the 'Information Repository Platform'. Also a robust and secure instant messaging platform for the TEAMS and for ATU Member States during the meetings.

It was clarified in the Scoping Study, based on references, that Africa is one of the most affected continent by the Cybersecurity threats due to absence of such binding norms.