



IAFI/ India (Republic of)

PROPOSED MODIFICATION TO WTSA RESOLUTION 88 - INTERNATIONAL MOBILE ROAMING

Background

ITU-T issued recommendations D-98 in Sept, 2012 regarding charging in international mobile roaming service, wherein suggested measures to empower consumers to benefit from efficient competition and regulation. Similarly, ITU-T recommendations D.97 contains possible approaches to the reduction of excessive roaming rates, highlighting the need to encourage competition in the roaming market, educate consumers and consider appropriate regulatory actions such as the introduction of caps on roaming rate.

Recognizing the importance of the issue related to international mobile roaming (IMR), WTSA in its meeting in 2016 adopted a Resolution - 88, wherein it is proposed for cooperative approaches to foster the implementation of Recommendations ITU-T D.98 and ITU-T D.97, and to lower IMR rates.

The International Telecommunication Union (ITU) recognized the critical importance of addressing issues during the World Telecommunication Standardization Assembly in Hammamet, 2016.

Introduction

International mobile roaming (IMR) is a service (voice, SMS/multimedia messaging service (MMS), data) that subscribers to post-paid or prepaid mobile services purchase from a mobile operator in their home country, that is, from the 'home operator'. It allows subscribers the convenience to continue to use their national mobile phone numbers to access voice, short message service (SMS), and data services while visiting another country, by accessing a mobile operator's network in the visited country, that is, the network of the 'visited operator' – with all arrangements made by their home operator. IMR wholesale and retail rates are the prices charged for IMR service where:

- a) IMR wholesale rates are the prices that the visited operator charges the home operator for allowing the home operator's subscriber to roam on the visited operator's network; and
- b) IMR retail rates are the prices that the home operator charges its subscribers for usage of IMR services.

Considering that a competitive international telecommunications market may not exist if significant differences persist between national prices and international mobile roaming prices, the goal should be to reduce differences between national tariffs and international mobile roaming tariffs. However, it is worth acknowledging at the same time that differences are likely to exist due to differences in costs between countries and regions.

The affordability and accessibility of mobile communication are crucial for economic and social development globally. However, high and inconsistent IMR charges can hinder international connectivity and trade.

World Telecommunication Standardization Assembly, WTSA in 2016 emphasized the growing reliance on global mobile communications and the need for cost-effective and competitive solutions and adopted Resolution-88, to further study the issue and suggesting concrete steps to implement effective solutions.

Proposal

For studying the economic effect, it is proposed that the SG-3 of ITU-T, being the concerned study group, for continuation of studies on the economic effects of IMR rates to ensure a comprehensive understanding of the challenges and potential solutions.

For enhancing awareness, it is proposed that the Director of the Telecommunication Standardization Bureau should collaborate with the Director of the Telecommunication Development Bureau (BDT) to organize initiatives aimed at raising awareness among Member States about the consumer benefits of lowering IMR rates.

It is also proposed that Member States to take proactive measures for the implementation of Recommendations ITU T D.98 and ITU T D.97, and to collaborate in efforts to lower IMR rates. This may involve regulatory actions when applicable to ensure a coordinated and effective approach.

Following a thorough examination of Resolution-88, IAFI pinpointed areas for improvement and drafted precise amendments to refine its applicability and enhance its outcomes.

This document proposes to modify Resolution 88 of WTSA-22.

Annex:

Revision of Resolution 88

RESOLUTION 88 (Hammamet, 2016)

International mobile roaming

(Hammamet, 2016)

The World Telecommunication Standardization Assembly (Hammamet, 2016),

considering

- a)* the results of the ITU High-Level Workshop on international mobile roaming (IMR), held in Geneva on 23-24 September 2013;
- b)* the results of the ITU Global Dialogue on IMR, held in Geneva on 18 September 2015;
- c)* that the tasks undertaken in the ITU Telecommunication Standardization Sector (ITU-T) cover Recommendations, conformity assessment and matters having policy or regulatory implications;
- d)* that the economy is increasingly dependent on reliable, cost-effective, competitive and affordable mobile communications technology on a global scale;
- e)* that wholesale IMR tariffs are decoupled from underlying costs, which may have an effect on retail rates, including inconsistent and arbitrary charges;
- f)* that a competitive international telecommunication market may not exist if significant differences persist between national prices and IMR prices;
- g)* that there are differences in costs between countries and regions,

noting

- a)* that Recommendation ITU-T D.98 is an agreement concluded between Member States and Sector Members in 2012;
- b)* that Recommendation ITU-T D.97 contains possible approaches to the reduction of excessive roaming rates, highlighting the need to encourage competition in the roaming market, educate consumers and consider appropriate regulatory actions such as the introduction of caps on roaming rates,

resolves

that ITU-T Study Group 3 must continue to study the economic effects of IMR rates,

instructs the Director of the Telecommunication Standardization Bureau

- 1 to organize initiatives, in collaboration with the Director of the Telecommunication Development Bureau (BDT), to raise awareness of the benefits to the consumer of lowering IMR rates;
- 2 to propose cooperative approaches to foster the implementation of Recommendations ITU-T D.98 and ITU-T D.97, and to lower IMR rates among the Member States, by promoting capacity-building programmes, workshops and guidelines for international cooperation agreements,

invites Member States

- 1 to take measures towards the implementation of Recommendations ITU-T D.98 and ITU-T D.97;
- 2 to collaborate in the efforts to lower IMR rates by taking regulatory measures when applicable.