



Summary Report of the 34th IMAC meeting

Present: Mr. Kamlesh Vikamsey (Chair), Mr Honoré Ndoko (Vice-Chair), Mr. Henrique Schneider, Mr. Alexander Narukavnikov (remote participation in selected sessions)

Absent: Ms. Sarah Hammer

1 Introduction

1.1 The thirty-fourth IMAC meeting was held in a hybrid set-up, from 15 to 17 March 2023.

1.2 In this summary report the terms IMAC and Committee are used interchangeably.

2 Opening Session with ITU Management

2.1 In accordance with its usual practice, IMAC met in the opening session, the ITU Secretary General, Ms. Doreen Bogdan Martin.

2.2 The SG has asked the IMAC to support the new ITU Leadership in strengthening the accountability and the responsibility across ITU.

2.3 The ITU SG shared with the IMAC members the main actions that has been done since the beginning of the mandate and the short- and medium-term priorities for the Union. She assured the members of the IMAC about the full collaboration of the new Leadership team.

2.4 IMAC recognized that even though there has not been a formal transition process in ITU from the Outgoing to the incoming leadership, the actions initiated by the Secretary General facilitated a smooth transition to the new Leadership. The Committee finds merits in a formalized and appropriately resourced process of transition and handing over and advises ITU to consider setting such a process framework to support future changes of Secretary General and senior elected officials.

2.5 IMAC had an open and fruitful discussion with the SG, and highly appreciated his previous engagement and commitment, to the issues previously raised by the Committee expressing its confidence for a good cooperation in the future.

2.6 The IMAC Chair expresses the interest of the members of the Committee to participate in the following Townhall meetings to learn about the programs developed by the new ITU Leadership.

3 Declaration & Statement of Private, Financial and Other interests

3.1 Members of IMAC declared the absence of any conflicts of interests during the internal IMAC session at the beginning of the meeting.

4 IMAC Self-Assessment

4.1 The Committee completed its 2022 self-assessment and discussed the findings. The members of the Committee were again satisfied that collectively they have a range of skills and professional credentials to assist the Secretary General and the Council in their oversight responsibilities by providing independent senior-level advice on governance, efficiency, risk management, internal controls and integrity.

4.2 The members agreed to continue their efforts to value and build on team spirit, trust, peer learning, knowledge sharing and complementarity..

4.3 Special attention was given to the importance of active participation of the members in the work of the committee, the availability of all documents at least one week prior to the meetings, the importance to the formal adoption of the annual work plan and rolling plan. The Committee renew its intention to do field visits when possible. This will allow IMAC to review the working of the Union and the oversight arrangements in Regional Offices.

4.4 The members also agreed that formal (anonymous) feedback from ITU senior management and key stakeholders would complement and add value to IMAC's self-assessment.

5 Overall status of IMAC Recommendations

5.1 In keeping with its standard practice, the Committee reviewed the follow-up of actions taken in response to IMAC's recommendations, reviewing the implementation status.

5.2 Up to the 34th IMAC meeting, around 85% of the IMAC recommendations have been implemented (56 out of 66 recommendations), while 10 recommendations remain in progress with the Secretariat.

6 Update on Financial Management issues

6.1 IMAC received a briefing from the Financial Resources Management Dept. (FRMD) on the key financial management issues.

6.2 The challenges related to the 2023 budget implementation were also discussed as well as those encountered in the development of the budget 2024-2025.

6.3 The secretariat provided details regarding the measures taken to balance the budget for 2023 and the basis for the development of the budget 2024-2025.

6.4 IMAC encourage the secretariat to focus on the reduction of the expenses side, but instead of, for example, cutting the expenses equally across ITU, by developing a full methodology for prioritization. ITU should also focus on revenue generation, improving the predictability and developing scenarios that can help facing the challenges that can appear. IMAC also recommends strengthening the work on unlocking potential from the increase of efficiency in the organization.

6.5 Following the discussion on revenues, IMAC invites ITU to present the current methodologies and processes regarding the cost recovery in the meeting scheduled in June 2023.

7 Specific Session on IT security best practices

7.1 Mindful of its updated TOR with respect to IT/IT security, IMAC received a briefing by the Information Services Department, on the IT security framework and internal ICT controls implemented in ITU. At the same time the Committee was briefed about the data management at the level of organization and the cross sectoral cooperation in this area.

7.2 The Committee appreciated the clarity of the presentations and the commended measures taken by ITU in securing the data and the networks.

7.3 IT security is such an important risk that can be critical for the functioning of ITU. The Committee acknowledges the absolute importance of having in this area strong and functioning governance framework, technically and strategically, and encouraged the secretariat to take measure to include relevant external subject expertise to provide effective governance and to challenge the management in this area of dynamic risk.

7.4 The Committee expressed concerns about security weaknesses and risks in field offices and requested a thorough review of mitigating measures. The Committee encouraged efforts to streamline and use IT resources more efficiently across ITU.

7.5 The Committee agreed to have information and data management in focus and as one of the subjects in the next meeting.

8 Update from Internal Audit

8.1 IMAC received a briefing from the Head of the Internal Audit Unit, on the status of work of Internal Audit. It highlighted the resources allocated for the unit, the activities performed in the last period and the status of the implementation of IA recommendations and the Audit Plan for 2023.

8.2 The Committee acknowledged the work of IAU, the increase in the transparency in the dissemination of the reports and invited IAU to continue to work on strengthening the three lines of defense framework.

8.3 The Committee advised further to continue following a risk-based audit approach while building the Audit Plan with the expectation that the Audit Plan for 2024 will include a section on risk assessment.

8.4 IMAC encouraged the IA unit to explore the digital specialized audit tools /business analytic that can be used and to integrate the appropriate ones in their activity.

9 Update on the HQ building construction project.

9.1 The Head of the Facilities Management Division, , provided a detailed update on the progress of the HQ building construction project, the procurement process for the construction services, the challenges that ITU is facing due to the high prices of the offers received, higher than the expectations, and the option that have been explored, to be developed and presented to the Council 23 for a decision of the way forward. The measures to strengthen the technical expertise of the Project team have been also presented.

9.2 IMAC engaged with the Head of the Facilities Management Division in many aspects of the project. The Committee especially inquired different scenarios regarding the way forward of the project as well as its financing.

9.3 The Committee reiterated the importance to strengthen the governance of the project. The Committee also reiterated the importance that this project will stay on track and for this highlighting the need for clear options of the continuation of the project to be presented to the Council 23.

10 Update from the External Auditors (UK National Audit Office)

10.1 IMAC met with the representative of the External Auditors, both in a session with the members of ITU Secretariat and in a closed session

10.2 The representative of the External Auditor presented the Audit Plan and updated of the ongoing review ITU financial statement 2022.

10.3 The Committee welcomed the systematic and strategic approach of the new External Auditor and looked forward to the next IMAC meeting to start engaging on the audit findings.

11 Update from the Ethics Office

11.1 IMAC received a regular briefing from the Ethics Officer and discussed the developments and progress of work. The Ethics Officer discussed the implementation of the Action Plan presented at Council, on the mandatory online ethics training (that will be implemented this year), the declaration of interest policy and the need to raise awareness on the new harassment policy.

11.2 . The Committee discussed the need to build an entire organizational speak-up culture, which should not only depend on the openness of staff but should be supported by organizational processes that enable that culture.

11.3 The Committee encourages ITU to consider the use of Ombuds services when needed.

12 Specific Session on Internal Justice System

12.1 The ITU Legal Adviser briefed IMAC on the measures to enhance the effectiveness of the Internal Justice System.

12.2 The Committee highlighted the importance for the organization of having a transparent, efficient Internal Justice System and the importance of the coordination between all its components.

12.3 IMAC is looking forward at its next meeting to have a joint session with Legal Affairs, Human Resources, Investigation, Internal Audit and Ethics to start discussing among other topics, how to line out the roles and responsibilities, standard operating procedures, and respective Charters.

12.4 The committee highlighted the importance of the alignment of the charters for the Internal Audit, Ethic Office and Investigation Unit and encourage ITU to take the necessary measures to improve the coordination of the three structures while preserving their independency.

13 Update from the Investigation Unit

13.1 The Head of the Investigation Unit briefed the Committee on the ongoing investigation cases and presented the work plan for 2023 of the Investigation Unit, reflecting the priorities set for this year.

14 Update on Human Resources issues

14.1 IMAC received a briefing from the Chief and the Deputy Chief of the Human Resources Management Dept. (HRMD). The briefing focused on the implementation of the recommendation formulated by the Internal Audit and other overseeing bodies.

14.2 The Committee concluded that the presentation was very comprehensive, noted the achievements, but also recognized the need to continue to prioritize and sequence follow actions.

14.3 The Committee appreciated the enhancements provided by the use of digital tools in support of HR processes and encouraged efforts towards a unified one stop portal integrating a comprehensive suites of HR processes.

14.4 IMAC will continue to engage with HRMD, on the implementation of the high-priority open recommendations, but also on other important issues, such as the development of the vision for the

time when all recommendations will be fully implemented and to consider reflecting this vision when updating the People Strategy.

15 Update on the Visioning Exercise

15.1 IMAC received a briefing from the Coordinators of the Visioning Exercise on the Recommendations formulated in the first phase related to the three tracks of the exercise – Thought Leadership, Partnership resource mobilization and Organization Excellence – and the ongoing efforts for the formulation of relevant strategies and actions plan.

15.2 The Committee appreciates the scope of achievements of the first phase, the realism of the visioning initiative and looks forward to receiving regular updates and to continue to engage with this initiative.

16 Closing Session with ITU Management

16.1 In accordance with its usual practice, IMAC met with top management and briefed the ITU Deputy Secretary-General on the Committee meeting's deliberations and observations. The DSG and IMAC agreed to have a discussion concerning operations in the next meeting.

17 Next meeting of the IMAC

17.1 The Committee's 35th Meeting will be on 5-7 June 2023, and the last meeting of this year will be from 30 October to 1 November 2023.

17.2 The Committee would like to convey many thanks to all the participants for their contributions and to the IMAC Secretariat for the helpful support during the 34th meeting.
