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EC 2024 Doc 13  
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# Meeting of the APPU/UPU Reform Working Group

## Tuesday 13 August

Presentation by Australia

Executive Council Meeting  
Siem Reap, Cambodia  
12 - 16 August 2024



# Agenda

Item	Document
1. Introduction	
2. Report of the Reform Working Group	EC 2024 Doc 13.1
3. APP Cooperative update <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Update on Extraordinary Congress consultation (Bureau)</li></ul>	EC 2024 Doc 13.2 EC 2024 Doc 13.2a
4. Review of Governing Documentation and workplan	EC 2024 Doc 13.3
5. Any other business	

**Decision: Approve the agenda**





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# Agenda item 1

## Introduction



# 1. Introduction

- The Reform Working Group consists of Australia, China, Korea, India, Indonesia, Iran, Japan, New Zealand, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam. The Bureau participates as an observer. The Reform Consultant assists the Reform Working Group undertake its activities.
- The focus of the Reform Working Group is the review and enhancement of the Union. Given this broad remit and the complex issues, it is important that the Reform Working Group work in a proactive and transparent way. This includes exploring issues progressively, carefully studying topics, engaging with the wider Union where required and publishing our meeting summaries.





# 2024 Executive Council Documents

- The Reform Working Group drafted or contributed to a number of documents presented to this Executive Council meeting:
  - EC 2024 Doc 13.1: Report of the APPU/UPU Reform Working Group
  - EC 2024 Doc 13.2: Asia Pacific Post Cooperative update
  - EC 2024 Doc 13.3: Review of Governing Documentation report and forward workplan
- The Bureau will also present:
  - EC 2024 Doc 13.2a: Result of Consultation Process regarding Extraordinary Congress in 2024



# 1. Introduction

- I would like to thank all the members of the Reform Working Group for their participation and positive contributions.
- I would also like to thank the Bureau and the Reform Consultant for their ongoing contribution to the Reform Working Group.





# 1. Introduction

- APPU members who are not members of the Reform Working Group can keep up to date with our activities by visiting the bottom of the Documents webpage on the APPU website, where the summaries of all our meetings are made available.

APPU/UPU REFORM WORKING GROUP
Constituent Meeting - 22 February 2023
Meeting 1 - 3 April 2023
Meeting 2 - 23 May 2023
Meeting 3 - 28 June 2023
Meeting 5 - 12 December 2023
Meeting 6 - 13 March 2024
Meeting 7 and 8 - 29-30 May 2024
Meeting 9 - 3 July 2024 
Meeting 10 - 9 July 2024 

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# Agenda item 2

Report of the Reform Working Group





## 2. Report of the Reform Working Group - overview

- EC 2024 Doc 13.1 presents an overview of the work undertaken by the 2022 - 2026 Reform Working Group to the 2024 EC.
- EC 2024 Doc 13.1 discusses a number of matters including the Bangkok Cycle Workplan of the Reform Working Group, the Reform Consultant budget and the review of decisions taken by the 4<sup>th</sup> Universal Postal Union Extraordinary Congress.



## 2. Report of the Reform Working Group - topics

- The Reform Working Group has progressed work on an ambitious reform agenda, which has included:
  - Continuing the Review of Governing Documentation throughout the Bangkok Cycle, informed by a member-agreed vision,
  - Considering the long-term solution for the APP,
  - Contributing to the Review of Financial Contributions as required, and
  - Considering implications from the 2023 UPU Extraordinary Congress.





## 2. Report of the Reform Working Group - meetings

- The Reform Working Group has met (virtually) on 6 occasions since the 2023 Executive Council. These meetings took place as follows.
  - Meeting 5: 12 December 2023
  - Meeting 6: 13 March 2024
  - Meeting 7: 29 May 2024
  - Meeting 8: 30 May 2024
  - Meeting 9: 3 July 2024
  - Meeting 10: 9 July 2024



## 2. Report of the Reform Working Group – Bangkok Cycle Workplan (updated)

Activity	Axis of Focus	Proposed Areas of Focus	Current Status of Focus	Relevant Observations re Focus
1	Directional	Maintain and execute workplan to achieve the agreed Vision	Active. Ongoing routine nature, as evidenced through WG activity on establishing Policy Positions for key areas of the Acts of the Union.	Focus is the process for managing / directing WG input / output to meet objectives.
2		Impacts and influence of decisions taken at the 2023 UPU Extraordinary Congress	Completed with WG signing off a draft report to the 2024 EC on impacts of decisions taken at the 2023 UPU Extraordinary Congress. Draft WG report is at: EC 2024 Doc 13.1, Appendix 2	Task completed.
3	Legal	Finalise a long-term solution for the Asia Pacific Post Cooperative [Shared with Organisational Axis]	Active (updated position provided in EC 2024 Doc 13.2).	Initial urgency to complete this item during 2024 has changed. Focus is now on completion by the 2026 Congress. That said, it remains a complex matter that will require capable resource given it is new ground for the APPU. Anticipate that work requirements could create pressure on timely completion of other WG activities / commitments.
4		Finalise the review of current provisions of the Acts of the Union to develop policy positions	Active (specific detail provided in EC 2024 Doc 13.3)	Complex matter involving high workload and specialist knowledge. Anticipate variations to personnel involved and decision-making methods. Activities 5, 6 and 7 are dependent on the completion of Activity 4. Will be on workplan through to 2026 Congress.
5		Develop amendments to the Constitution	Inactive (will be active following the 2024 EC meeting)	
6		Develop amendments to the General Regulations		
7		Examine and develop proposals to minimise future amendments to the Acts of the Union		
8		In light of the changes to the Acts of the Union, full review of the Rules of Procedure of the Executive Council	Inactive	Consequential to Activities 4, 5, 6 and 7. Activity not anticipated to be complex nor time-consuming. Timing for commencement not known, but likely to be 2025-2026.
9		In light of the changes to the Acts of the Union, full review of the Rules of Procedure of Congress		
10		Contribute to the review of Financial Contributions and position on arrears, jointly in conjunction with the Finance Committee [Shared with Financial Axis]	Active (specific detail provided in EC 2024 Doc 17)	Complex matter involving variable workload. Will be on workplan through to 2026 Congress. Will involve Activities 5, 6 and 7 in the second half of the Bangkok Cycle.





## 2. Report of the Reform Working Group – Bangkok Cycle Workplan (updated - 2)

11	Organisational	Finalise a long-term solution for the Asia Pacific Post Cooperative [Shared with Legal Axis]	Refer to Activity 3	Refer to Activity 3.
12		Develop long-term objectives and work plan of APPU working groups	Inactive	Key initiative to enhance the relevance and value of EC meetings by bringing standard disciplines into working group activities – and, to extent possible, ensuring that objectives / plans links with other Union activity. Likely commencement timing is 2025.
13	Financial	Contribute to the review of Financial Contributions and position on arrears, jointly in conjunction with the Finance Committee [Shared with Legal Axis]	Refer to Activity 10	Refer to Activity 10.
14		Develop guidelines to guide the Bureau to engage with other institutions to increase resources for activities and training courses	Inactive	Developmental work to commence in 2025.
15	Capacity and capability	Bangkok cycle matters, building on Tehran cycle, including the archiving project	Active (specific detail provided in EC 2024 Doc 13.3)	Complex matter involving high workload and specialist knowledge. Anticipate variations to personnel involved to obtain decisions on range of issues. Will be on workplan through to 2026 Congress.
16		Develop more effective and in-need training courses	Inactive	Developmental work to commence in 2025.



## 2. Report of the Reform Working Group – Bangkok Cycle Workplan

Table 1: Summary of activities				
Line	Feature	No. of Activities	Activity Identifier(s)	Further Details Available
1	Total number of Activities	16	N/A	
2	Activities completed	1	2	Appendix 1, Appendix 2
3	Activities currently under action and on schedule	6	1, 3, 10, 11, 13, 15	3, 11 ref Doc 13.2 10, 13 ref Doc 17 15 ref Doc 13.3
4	Activities currently under action and behind schedule	1	4	Doc 13.3
5	Activities requiring consultation / direction	2	14,16	
6	Activities not requiring action up to 2024 EC	6	5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 12	





## 2. Report of the Reform Working Group – Workplan

- There has been mixed success with meeting the workplan since the 2023 EC meeting.
- There have been some positives – a high work rate, good attendance and participation in the online meetings.
- However, the policy position work has been more complex and time consuming than initially anticipated.
- It is expected that the Reform Working Group will still be able to deliver the expected work by the deadline of the 2025 EC.



## 2. Report of the Reform Working Group – Impact of Decisions Taken at the 4<sup>th</sup> UPU Extraordinary Congress

- This work was undertaken by the Reform Consultant and focused on:
  - changes to the UPU General Regulations, and
  - decisions made by Congress other than those amending the Acts (i.e., resolutions, decisions, recommendations, formal opinions, etc).
- For completeness, the review also covered Congress proposals on the:
  - Congress Rules of Procedure;
  - Convention;
  - Final Protocol to the Convention; and
  - Postal Payment Services Agreement.





## 2. Report of the Reform Working Group – Impact of Decisions Taken at the 4<sup>th</sup> UPU Extraordinary Congress

Table 3: Details of Four Items Considered Relevant to Review of GD				
Proposal / Decision Type	Title of Proposal / Decision	App 1 Ref	Comment	Recommendation
Proposal 3 and Resolution C 3	Further reform and opening of the UPU to wider postal sector players	Line 3	Relates to development of structures and activities involving Posts and WPSPs, with relevance to RWG activity on WPSPs.	<b>Recommended</b> for noting, as background material, by Ad Hoc Group on Policy Position for WPSPs.
Proposal 4 and Resolution C 4	Opening of the UPU to wider postal sector players – Reform as a continuum	Line 4	Relates to development of structures and activities involving Posts and WPSPs, with relevance to RWG activity on WPSPs.	<b>Recommended</b> for noting, as background material, by Ad Hoc Group on Policy Position for WPSPs.
Proposals 15.107.1, 15.108.1, 15.109.1, 15.113.1, 15.114.1, 15.115.1, 15.120.1, 15.121.1, 15.122.1, 15.123.1, 15.124.1, 15.125.1, 15.126.1 and 15.133.1	Various proposals relating to the Consultative Committee	Lines 11 to 24	Relates to the participation of CC members in UPU Council, access to the IB and membership of the CC.	<b>Recommended</b> for noting, as background material, by Ad Hoc Group on Policy Position for WPSPs.
Congress RoP (Proposal 19.1.91)	Exceptional definitions and procedures associated with remote participation at Congress	Line 29	Although not relevant to Review of GD, the UPU is continuing a practice of temporary provisions only for remote participation, including the continued confinement of secret ballots to members physically present.	<b>Recommended</b> for noting by APPU, as background material, for considering in an APPU context



## 2. Report of the Reform Working Group – 2024 Budget of the Reform Consultant

- A Reform Consultant assists the Reform Working Group.
- In 2024, Reform Consultancy has an approved contract value of US \$19,000.
- The estimates outturn expenditure is as follows:
  - February to May 2024 (invoiced): US \$5,149.69
  - June to December 2024 (estimated): US \$13,850.31
  - Estimated end-of-2024 position: **In line with budget**





## 2. Report of the Reform Working Group – 2025 Budget of the Reform Consultant

- The Bureau has advised that US \$20,000 has been allocated to cover work to be undertaken by the Reform Consultant in 2025 to support the Reform Working Group.
- This allocation is subject to:
  - (i) approval of EC 2024 Doc 6 and report of the Finance Committee by the Executive Council; and
  - (ii) satisfactory conclusion to 2024 activities as specified in contractual reporting requirements.
- Australia as Reform Working Group will seek to continue the services of the current Reform Consultant.



## 2. Report of the Reform Working Group - decisions

The EC is asked to:

- **note** the activity of the RWG since the 2023 EC
- **note** the detail of the RWG activity is presented in a range of documents to be dealt with separately at the 2024 EC
- **note** the financial position of funds allocated to support the RWG through the Reform Consultant
- **note** the review conducted by the Reform Consultant of all decisions taken at the 4<sup>th</sup> UPU Extraordinary Congress for relevance / impact on the APPU in relation to the review of GD, including key outcomes and recommended action, and this report will conclude the work of the Reform Consultant on the assigned task
- **inform** the 2024 EC of the work undertaken and action required





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# Agenda item 3

Asia Pacific Post Cooperative Update



### 3. Asia Pacific Post Cooperative update – overview

- The issues with the Asia Pacific Post Cooperative (APP) have been extensively explored by the APPU EC.
- At the 2023 EC, members agreed that the preferred path forward is to amend the General Regulations of the APPU to permit the creation of user-funded subsidiary bodies.
- A number of points were agreed at the 2023 EC to continue work on this topic.





### 3. Asia Pacific Post Cooperative Update – Consultation on holding an Extraordinary Congress

- The Bureau conducted consultation in March 2024 about holding an Extraordinary Congress.
- The results indicated that membership had not consented to holding an Extraordinary Congress.
- Any treaty changes can occur at the 2026 Congress at the earliest.
- This is discussed further in EC 2024 Doc 13.2 (a).



### 3. Asia Pacific Post Cooperative Update – recent activities

EC instruction	Summary	Actions
(ii) Treaty text	Further develop treaty amendment to facilitate agreed solution to be finalised no later than 6 months prior to the next Congress.	For consideration The RWG has developed a policy position on user-funded subsidiary bodies more broadly, including draft treaty text. Refer EC 2024 Doc 13.3.
(iii) Basic framework – APP	The APP to create draft 'Basic Framework' and provide to RWG no later than 6 months prior to the 2024 EC meeting.	Completed The Chair of the APP Cooperative Management Board (CMB) provided a draft Basic Framework to the Chair of the RWG in February 2024, within the required timeframe.
(iv) Basic framework – RWG	The RWG to analyse the 'Basic Framework' and advise the EC on its suitability for adoption.	Underway The RWG analysed the 'Basic Framework' in February and March 2024 and provided comment back to the Chair of the APP CMB. See paragraph 2.3.
(v) Government negotiations	Create a group to commence negotiations with the host country of the APP, once the preferred host is identified.	Not commenced The APP is yet to advise its preferred host country so negotiations have not commenced.
(vi) Operational transition arrangements	The SG of the APPU and the Chair of the APP CMB to work on operational transition arrangements.	Underway The SG and CMB Chair have met to discuss preliminary arrangements, noting more detailed discussions will follow.





### 3. Asia Pacific Post Cooperative Update – Draft Basic Framework

- The Reform Working Group considered the draft ‘Basic Framework’ provided by the Chair of the APP Cooperative Management Board.
- The Reform Working Group cannot recommend the draft ‘Basic Framework’ for adoption by the EC as further work is required.
- The Reform Working Group proposes that discussions continue and an update is provided to the 2025 EC.



### 3. Asia Pacific Post Cooperative Update – next steps

**Further work is required ahead of the 2026 Congress to implement a solution for the APP. As such, it is recommended that the EC asks:**

- i. the Chair of the APP CMB to advise the Secretary General and the Chair of the Executive Council on the preferred location of the APP Cooperative no later than 3 months prior to the 2025 Executive Council meeting,
- ii. the APPU/UPU Reform Working Group to continue working with the Chair of the APP CMB to develop the 'Basic Framework', and
- iii. the Secretary General to continue working with the Chair of the APP CMB and the APP Managing Director on operational transition arrangements as required, with the Chair of the APP CMB to report annually to the Executive Council on such activities.





### 3. Asia Pacific Post Cooperative Update - decisions

EC 2024 Doc 13.2 – for decision:

- **note** the information provided
- **agree** the next steps



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# Agenda item 4

**Review of Governing Documentation and Workplan**





## 4. Review of Governing Documentation and Workplan - overview

- The first detail report to the EC on the review of governing documentation and archiving project was in EC 2023 Doc 13.3.
- The 2023 EC endorsed a vision to guide the review of governing documentation and has used this to guide the review of governing documentation and development of policy positions.
- There have been several disruptions to this work given unforeseen circumstances and a revised proposed workplan has been drafted.



## 4. Review of Governing Documentation and Workplan

### – Archiving and annotated Acts of the Union overview

- The Reform Working Group and Reform Consultant undertook archiving of Union materials and the development of a fully annotated set of the Acts of the Union.
- This was completed by the 2023 EC and the responsibility for finalising the project was transferred to the Bureau and is now part of the broader Digital Library project of the APPU.
- In the APPU Circular N0. 3 of 2024, the Reform Working Group advised APPU members that the annotated Acts of the Union were available for comment on the document portal.
- Comments were received from one member country which have been incorporated into the wider review of governing documentation.





## 4. Review of Governing Documentation and Workplan –Review of the Acts of the Union and policy positions overview

- The Reform Working Group were tasked in EC doc 13.5 with developing policy positions and proposing solutions for endorsement by the membership at the 2024 EC.
- The themes drafted for consideration include:
  - Purpose and functions of the Union
  - Creation and maintenance of the Union
  - Cooperation
  - Structure of the Union
  - Organs
  - Treaty Meetings (Congress)
  - Less than Treaty Meetings (Executive Council)
  - Administration



## 4. Review of Governing Documentation and Workplan – Review of the Acts of the Union and policy positions overview

- The Reform Working Group have taken a thematic approach with the policy position papers.
- The Reform Working Group created an ad-hoc team to progress the Wider Postal Sector Players policy position.
- Resourcing constraints and a greater complexity of work than previously identified have collectively meant that the Reform Working Group has not been able to finalise all policy positions for endorsement by membership at the 2024 EC.





## 4. Review of Governing Documentation and Workplan – Policy positions overview

Theme	Topic
Purpose and functions of the Union	Objectives and functions of the Union
	Regional representation
	Centre of excellence
Creation and maintenance of the Union	Membership
	Accession
	Ratification
	Reservations
	Withdrawal
	Treaty structure and amendment
	Language
	Budget
Cooperation	Member cooperation provisions
	Wider Postal Sector Players
Structure of the Union	Organs
	User-funded subsidiary bodies
Organs	Meetings of the Union
	Other organs?
	Administration
Treaty Meetings (Congress)	Purpose, frequency and attendees
	Credentials and proxies
	Quorum
	Decisions and voting
	Observers
Less than Treaty Meetings (Executive Council)	Purpose, frequency and attendees
	Credentials and proxies
	Quorum
	Decisions and voting
	Observers
Administration	Functions
	Secretary General



## 4. Review of Governing Documentation and Workplan – Policy positions

- Nine policy positions have been finalised for presentation at the 2024 EC.
  - Objectives and functions of the Union
  - Centre of excellence
  - Regional representation
  - Membership
  - Reservations
  - Accession
  - Ratification
  - Withdrawal
  - User-funded subsidiary bodies





## 4. Review of Governing Documentation and Workplan – Objectives and functions of the Union policy position

- First policy position discussed by the Reform Working Group.
- Encompasses the agreed vision for the APPU, as addressed in EC 2023 13.1.
- Details on the objectives and functions of the APPU in the treaty documents is limited and does not describe the actual services and functions that the APPU and the Bureau provides.
- **Recommendation:** expand the objectives and functions statement to encompass the key functions identified in the vision.



## 4. Review of Governing Documentation and Workplan – Centre of excellence policy position

- APPU treaty documents do not currently discuss aiming to be a ‘centre of excellence’ but is included in the APPU’s vision statement and APPC.
- Reform Working Group discussed that it was important to identify the APPU’s aspirations and provide direction.
- Closely linked with the Objectives and functions of the Union paper.
- **Recommendation:** Incorporate the APPU’s intention to be a ‘centre of excellence’ in an expanded objectives and functions statement in its treaty documents.





## 4. Review of Governing Documentation and Workplan – Regional representation policy position

- APPU treaty documents reference representation of the Union, however the provision includes a limited mandated responsibility for the Secretary General.
- Reform Working Group discussed the importance of the APPU having the ability to represent both the region and the postal sector, including as an observer at the UPU.
- **Recommendation:** Include an explicit representation function in the APPU to ensure that the current level of representation is maintained and continues under future administrations, if desired by members.



## 4. Review of Governing Documentation and Workplan – Membership policy position

- Current requirements for membership of the APPU are split between two Articles in the Constitution:
  - Article 2 ‘Members of the Union’, and
  - Article 6 ‘Accession to the Union’.
- Issues with current provisions and potential scenarios that are not currently covered in the APPU’s treaty documents, including if a member of the APPU leaves the UPU.
- Reform Working Group discussed that the intention of updating the wording is to ensure that the current membership and eligible countries within the geographical boundaries are not changed.
- **Recommendation:** List the membership requirements in Article 2, rather than Article 6, and ensure that membership requirements are met on an ongoing basis (not only on joining).





## 4. Review of Governing Documentation and Workplan – Reservations policy position

- APPU has two Articles in its Constitution which include provisions for members to make reservations on joining the APPU:
  - Article 6 ‘Accession to the Union’, and
  - Article 14 ‘Acts of the Union’.
- Also Article 113 ‘Reservations’ in the General Regulations, which include a provision to make reservations at Congress.
- There are several gaps with the provisions for reservations, including an unnecessary provision for reservations upon accession which is no longer required.
- Reform Working Group discussed that while member countries do not currently have any reservations in practice, there could be value in allowing for reservations at Congress to occur in the future against Chapter V of the General Regulations.
- **Recommendation:** Remove the ability for reservations upon accession the UPU and make the parameters of reservations (during membership) clear in the Constitution.





## 4. Review of Governing Documentation and Workplan – Accession policy position

- Issues with the accession protocols are detailed in Congress 2022 Doc 24.9 Appendix 4 – include a redundant provision that was copied from the UPU's governing documentation that is not applicable to the APPU's context.
- Consultation with existing members on accession of prospective members does not currently happen and this would not represent procedural fairness.
- Policy position closely linked with the membership and reservations policy positions.
- **Recommendation:** move the geographic boundaries from the accession Article into the membership Article (the criteria for joining the APPU will remain materially unchanged).





## 4. Review of Governing Documentation and Workplan – Ratification policy position

- Reform Working Group discussed the importance of members continuing to be able to give proxies the authority to represent, speak and vote on behalf of another member (particularly in unforeseen circumstances such as COVID-19).
- However, there is no material reason for allowing proxies for signing the Acts of the Union, something which could cause confusion.
- **Recommendation:** Align the APPU Article 15 with the UPU Article 24 to specify acceptance and approval as valid forms of ratification and remove the ability for proxies to sign the Acts of the Union on behalf of the member they are representing.



## 4. Review of Governing Documentation and Workplan – Withdrawal policy position

- APPU treaty documents do not include a clause that requires member countries to meet their operational obligations during the period between the notification of withdrawal to the effective date of withdrawal, which is one year from notification.
- **Recommendation:** Expand the existing withdrawal process to clarify that members must meet all current and outstanding financial and operational contributions.





## 4. Review of Governing Documentation and Workplan – User-funded subsidiary bodies policy position

- APPU treaty documents do not currently have any provisions about user-funded subsidiary bodies or the ability to create these within its current treaty framework.
- This has been previously discussed within the context of the Asia Pacific Post Cooperative.
- Reform Working Group discussed ensuring the Union had flexibility to respond to future needs and considering specific operation requirements of user-funded subsidiary bodies as needed.
- **Recommendation:** create a new provision in its General Regulations which would allow the EC to establish and administer user-funded subsidiary bodies.



## 4. Review of Governing Documentation and Workplan – revised workplan

Review roadmap			
2023 EC	2024 EC	2025 EC	2026 Congress
Vision and implementation plan for the RWG agreed.	Nine policy development and proposed solutions presented for endorsement.	Remaining policy development and proposed solutions presented for endorsement.  Text of proposals, including treaty amendments, presented as 'zero draft' for the 2026 Congress.	Approve proposals and treaty amendments.





## 4. Review of Governing Documentation and Workplan – next steps

- The Reform Working Group will continue to progress the review of governing documentation.
- Development of the policy positions will be a priority focus of the Reform Working Group.
- The archiving project will continue to be progressed by the Bureau as capacity allows.



## 4. Policy positions - decisions

- The EC is asked to:
- **note** the progress of the review of governing documentation and archiving project
- **approve** the final annotated Acts of the Union
- **agree** the Objectives and functions of the Union position
- **agree** the Centre of excellence position
- **agree** the Regional representation position
- **agree** the Membership position
- **agree** the Reservations position
- **agree** the Accession position
- **agree** the Ratification position
- **agree** the Withdrawal position
- **agree** the User-funded subsidiary bodies position
- **endorse** the proposed workplan for the APPU/UPU Reform Working Group and next steps





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# Agenda item 5

Any other business?