ASIA-PACIFIC TELECOMMUNITY
**Asia-Pacific ICT Ministerial Meeting on**
**"Building Smart Digital Economy through ICT"**
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**Chairman of the Asia-Pacific ICT Ministerial Meeting**

**Brunei Darussalam Statement of the Asia-Pacific ICT Ministers on Building Smart Digital Economy through ICT**

# Brunei Darussalam Statement of the Asia-Pacific ICT Ministers on Building Smart Digital Economy through ICT

**We,** the Ministers responsible for Information and Communication Technology (ICT) from the Asia-Pacific region, have assembled in Brunei Darussalam, on 10th and 11th of September 2014, to commemorate the 35th Anniversary of the Asia-Pacific Telecommunity (APT) and to discuss our joint efforts to further strengthen regional collaboration in the development of telecommunication / ICT.

**We reaffirm** our commitment to collectively work towards building a smart digital economy through ICT in the Asia-Pacific region, to achieve sustainable development and further improve the quality of life of our people.

**We commend,** the initiatives, contributions and the substantial achievements that have been made by the APT and its members to achieve the objectives of the Bali Statement of the Asia-Pacific Ministers on Strengthening Regional Collaboration towards a Broadband Economy in the Asia-Pacific.

**We acknowledge,** the commitments made by our leaders at the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) held in Geneva in 2003 and in Tunis in 2005, to harness the power of information and communication technology to "create, access, utilize and share information and knowledge" in order to achieve sustainable development and improve the quality of life of people globally in our efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals.

**We note** that the Asia-Pacific region has progressed well in broadband infrastructure and services development. We also take note of the APT's support for its members in bridging the digital divide that has resulted in sustainable ICT growth. However, there is still a vast gap in broadband penetration and ICT development among the various countries of the region. This digital divide needs to be bridged because lack of adequate broadband connectivity and ICT accessibility pose great difficulties in harnessing the full benefits of the digital economy. The least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing states, continue to need further support in this regard.

**We believe** that in harnessing the power of information and communication technology to create, access, utilize and share information and knowledge, the cultural and social values should be respected.

**We take note** that ICT being one of the finest invention of mankind, should be used for welfare of our people, humanity and global community. Mindful of the need to respect national sovereignty, we should discourage the abuse of ICT as a tool to spread disharmony.

**We recognize** that the convergence of communications, computing, and content enabled by the availability of broadband infrastructure, mobile communications, the internet, and its myriad of

applications has a great impact on the lives of the people and the socio-economic development of the region. This new digital economy can be stimulated with smart utilization of ICT supported by capacity building programmes, enabling policies and the regulatory environment. The digital economy needs to be safe and secure to improve the quality of people's lives and meet the needs and security of society.

**We are determined** to strengthen our cooperation and collaboration to realize a policy and regulatory environment that will be the basis of a creative and innovative economy. Innovation is the key to enhance our region's competitiveness and needs to be encouraged at all levels through a conducive ICT environment.

**We resolve** to work collectively with all stakeholders within the ICT sector including cross-sector engagement, to implement, as appropriate, the following key priority areas in order to build a smart digital economy in the Asia–Pacific region.

A. Conducive Policies for Sustainable Growth of ICT and Smart Digital Economy

B. Safe and Secure Society through ICT

C. Trust and Confidence in ICT

D. Sustainable ICT Ecosystem for Innovation

E. Capacity Building and Institutional Development

F. Fostering Regional Cooperation for ICT Development

# A. Conducive Policies for Sustainable Growth of ICT and Smart Digital Economy

To foster sustainable growth of ICT as the driver of the economy in our region, we need policies that are conducive for investment, creating business opportunities and equitable access for all players. These policies should stimulate innovation and creativity, with the appropriate level of regulatory mechanisms, while protecting consumers' interest.

The conducive policies that we envisage will:
- promote affordable national broadband access and improve international broadband connectivity in Member countries in the Asia-Pacific region;
- promote sustainable investment by enhancing investor confidence in the sector, recognizing the role of appropriate regulation to facilitate innovation by key stakeholders, encouraging the deployment of broadband networks, and adoption of technologies and services which will benefit the citizens;
- promote the harmonization of spectrum across the Asia-Pacific region including new frequency spectrum such as the 700 MHz band to provide affordable broadband services;
- promote the deployment of wireless broadband in low frequency bands currently allotted to 2G mobile system in a harmonized manner;

- improve spectrum efficiency by such means as the use of shared spectrum access, including dynamic spectrum access (DSA), for further regional and international harmonization in order to support flexibility for expansion of broadband services in Asia-Pacific nations;
- enhance closer cooperation in the region to consolidate regional views on ICT issues including the preparation for all ITU conferences and assemblies;
- encourage development and adoption of common standards in the region for deployment of innovative technologies, including IPv6, Machine-to-Machine (M2M), and the Internet of Things (IoT) with the focus on interoperability, security, privacy and protection to maximize the benefits of available services;
- continue building smart cities by integrating ICT into the urban planning process to provide better services to our citizens;
- promote ICT adoption within governments to transform and increase efficiency by use of broadband technologies;
- encourage the development and implementation of strategies to make ICT more accessible and affordable to people with special needs, including children, elderly and people with disabilities.

## B. Safe and Secure Society through ICT

The Asia-Pacific region has suffered from natural disasters such as tsunamis, typhoons, floods and landslides, and volcanic eruptions. Our preparedness, early warning systems, rescue and recovery efforts can be improved with the use of ICT.

In order to provide a protected and safe environment, we will:
- share expertise on the use of communication technologies for PPDR (Public Protection and Disaster Relief) to assist the mobilization of equipment and other resources to help people during disasters;
- encourage the development of more ICT experts on disaster management/communications by providing quality training programmes in the region;
- further promote the use of broadband networks in the region for early disaster warning systems, data collection, information sharing and distribution of recovery information;
- encourage the production of a legislative and standard strategy toolkit for effective ICT use and broadband deployment to mitigate the damage from natural disasters;
- expand information sharing activities by setting up APT high level meetings in the field of disaster management/communications;
- collaborate to increase awareness on the importance of submarine cables to regional and global connectivity, and intensify regional cooperation to protect submarine cables from man-made and natural disasters;
- recognize the need and importance of establishing a global air traffic monitoring system, including satellite services used for aviation safety, and support joint activities needed as appropriate;
- encourage and promote the collaboration with relevant parties including international organizations and the private sector to facilitate implementation of necessary activities in

disaster management such as establishment of the PPDR disaster management/ICT expert teams.

# C. Trust and Confidence in ICT

Digital inclusion has opened the doors to unprecedented opportunities and at the same time brought along threats as it has been abused to spread disharmony. We shall work together as a region and with global partners to protect our critical infrastructures and to ensure cyber-wellness for, and respect of ethical values of our citizens. The safe and secure use of ICT devices and applications has been an area of significant importance. The public confidence needs to be increased in the use of ICT devices and applications for moving towards a smart digital economy and all parties shall respect sovereignty.

In order to ensure cyber-wellness in the smart digital economy, we will:

- exert our best effort through mutual collaboration to build and strengthen trust and confidence in the use of ICT so that our people can use ICT for their progress and prosperity without any concern;
- encourage further cooperation among governments and the private sector to address safety and cybersecurity;
- encourage the development of more ICT experts on cybersecurity by providing quality training programmes in the region;
- assist members to develop cyber-legislation and support Computer Emergency Response Team/Computer Security Incident Response Team (CERT/CSIRT) activities through close coordination and technical assistance in various forms, including developing relevant guidelines and recommendations, and helping to set up CERT/CSIRT in countries where they do not exist;
- encourage increased exchanges and cooperation in anti-spam field by taking corresponding initiatives at the regional and national level;
- encourage governments and other stakeholders to proactively take initiatives to increase the users' awareness and capacity in on-line privacy protection;
- encourage adoption of safety standards, including those prescribed by relevant international bodies, in respect of Electro-Magnetic Field (EMF) radiation with a view to the safe use of ICT devices;
- enhance reliability and confidence in the use of ICT applications by helping Members to draw guidelines for the secure flow of information through telecommunication networks.

# D. Sustainable ICT Ecosystem for Innovation

ICT has been an engine for growth in the Asia-Pacific economy and its potential can be seen by its expansive use in other industry sectors. A sustainable ICT ecosystem comprises various stakeholders involved in infrastructure, network, devices, application, services and content interacting in an integrated manner. Creative applications and services allow us to make use of the network for the full benefit of the people in the region. The sustainable ICT ecosystem should provide a level playing field for all players, to encourage and nurture innovation as the catalyst for continuous economic growth.

To enable a sustainable ICT ecosystem, and encourage new ideas and innovation, we will:

- create an environment that fosters the development of next generation networks, IPv6 enabled infrastructure, smart devices, applications and services, including useful and creative content; encourage light-touch regulation and a market-driven approach to technology and services;
- encourage sharing of research information, development of applications and services by creating opportunities for developers in the region;
- encourage development of content in the local languages and platform to deliver it properly to help preserve culture and to serve as an accessible medium for the use by people at the community level;
- encourage the provision of incentives to businesses to develop applications and to provide appropriate mechanisms for sharing revenue for the use of their applications and content;
- promote ICT entrepreneurship, accelerate ICT uptake among Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs), and encourage the innovative use of ICT to foster a creative economy;
- continue to promote Public Private Partnership (PPP) and enhance innovative cross-sector partnerships;
- promote cooperation to reduce international mobile roaming charges on the basis of equality, reciprocity and mutual benefit to the extent that is consistent with the national laws, policies and regulations of Member countries to benefit consumers.

# E. Capacity Building and Institutional Development

A skilled ICT workforce and appropriate institutional mechanisms are indispensable for sustainable ICT development. We will prepare our region to embrace ICT by strengthening our capacity building to enhance our region's competitiveness.

Towards a sustainable smart digital economy, we will:
- enhance and expand training programmes in the Asia-Pacific region, including online training programmes, by focusing on the specific needs of the region in keeping abreast of the latest trends and challenges in ICT and by encouraging post-training exchange of experiences and knowledge amongst all APT trainees;
- provide expert missions in assisting Member countries on ICT issues;
- promote more collaboration amongst ICT experts in the region through exchange programmes of researchers, engineers, ICT pilot projects and start-ups;
- encourage the development of skills and ICT specialists and provide platforms for developers in the region to share their experiences, techniques, and challenges in developing ICT applications and services.

# F. Fostering Regional Cooperation for ICT Development

Regional cooperation in matters related to ICT plays a key role in accelerating the economic growth in the region, reducing poverty, bridging economic gap, increasing productivity and promoting employment. We should be engaged in bridging the digital divide among the Member countries on the basis of mutual benefits that promote cooperation to build Asia-Pacific smart societies.

To foster the cooperation in the Asia-Pacific region, we will:
- share best practices, skills, regulations, and technologies to reduce the ICT development gap and to further develop ICT infrastructure so as to promote the innovative growth in the Asia-Pacific region;
- strengthen cooperation with private sectors, seek financing through Public Private Partnership (PPP), increase expert resources and improve development capacity;
- encourage the APT to pursue multiple initiatives in cooperating with the private sector, research institutions, academia and universities in the region to participate in the APT events, so as to promote activities of the APT and increase the presence and influence of the APT;
- encourage the APT to increase exchanges and cooperation with the related international, regional and multilateral organizations, and as the only inter-governmental telecommunication organization in the Asia-Pacific region, to take the leading role in promoting various development agenda including telecommunication standardization, regional frequency spectrum coordination, cybersecurity and emergency communications in the region;
- encourage the APT to bring in synergies among international organizations working in ICT in the region by actively coordinating with the ITU and other international organizations for optimization of resources to avoid duplication of efforts.


**We welcome** valuable inputs and contributions from all stakeholders including public and private sectors, regional and international community, academic and research institutions, and donor agencies to work together to achieve these priorities through actions at the national, sub-regional and regional levels.

**We urge** the Asia-Pacific Telecommunity, to implement the initiatives towards our common vision and to cooperate closely with other relevant regional/international organizations in this regard. Keeping in mind the benefits of the APT Member countries, as well as the need for efficiency, relevance and accountability to achieve the objectives, we will review and follow up on the progress of the implementation of the key priority areas. The APT should create an online monitoring mechanism for monitoring and reviewing the progress by Member countries.

**We recommend** that in response to the changing needs of the dynamic ICT landscape, the APT shall regularly identify the needs of Member countries. The APT should not limit its activities to only those mentioned herein but rather have a forward-looking vision in leading the Asia-Pacific towards a smart and sustainable region. The APT should also be flexible in implementing its programmes and initiatives and open itself to innovations, ideas, initiatives and success stories from other regions for the benefit of our region.

**We reaffirm** our commitment and support to the APT in building a Smart Digital Economy through ICT in Asia-Pacific region.  We will continue to assist the APT in moving forward the Telecommunity and dynamically responding to the true needs of the Asia-Pacific region in this new era.

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