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| APTlogogreen3 | ASIA-PACIFIC TELECOMMUNITY | **Document No.:** |
| **The 4th Meeting of the APT Preparatory Group for WTDC-21 (APT WTDC21-4)** | **APT WTDC21-4/**  **OUT-06 (Rev.1)** |
| 24 – 28 January 2022, Bangkok, Thailand (Hybrid) | 7 February 2022 |

Chair, WG1

PRELIMINARY ATP COMMON PROPOSAL

**Proposal on New Resolution of WTDC on “Use of Information and Communication Technologies to Combat Pandemics”**

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| **Priority area:** (Please mark “X” in front of the appropriate item)  \_\_\_ Declaration  \_\_\_ Thematic Priorities, Action Plan, Regional Initiatives and SG Questions  \_\_\_ Working Methods  X\_\_Resolutions and Recommendations  \_\_\_ Other proposals  **Summary:**  In the era of the pandemic, the importance of ICT has been highlighted more than ever. The call for efforts to address the health-related emergency, strengthen the resilience of critical infrastructure, and help overcome social and economic exclusion has been increasing.  This new resolution of APT calls attention to ITU and its Membership current and future challenges and responsibilities.  Asia-Pacific Telecommunity (APT) Member Administrations have developed and endorsed the PACP for New Resolution on “Use of Information and Communication Technologies to Combat Pandemics” for discussion and adoption in the World Telecommunication Development Conferences 2021 (WTDC 2021).  **Expected results:**  APT Member administrations invite WTDC to examine and approve this new resolution "Use of Information and Communication Technologies to Combat Pandemics", based on social challenges we are facing today as way to combat pandemics in the future.  **References:**     * Resolution 34 (Rev. Buenos Aires, 2017) of the of the World Telecommunication Development Conference * Resolution 136 (Rev. Dubai, 2018) of the Plenipotentiary Conference * United Nations General Assembly Resolution A/RES/74/270, on the global solidarity to fight the COVID-19 |

**PROPOSAL**

APT Member Administrations propose to adopt the new resolution on “Use of Information and Communication Technologies to Combat Pandemics”, according to the Annex below of World Telecommunication Development Conference 2021.

**Annex**

Resolution xxx (2021)

**Use of Information and Communication Technologies to Combat Pandemics**

The World Telecommunication Development Conference (2021),

*recalling*

1. § 20 of Action Line C7 (E-environment) of the Geneva Plan of Action adopted by the first phase of WSIS, calling for the establishment of monitoring systems using ICTs to forecast and monitor the impact of natural and man-made disasters, particularly in developing countries, LDCs and small economies;
2. § 91 of the Tunis Agenda for the Information Society adopted by the second phase of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS);
3. Resolution 34 (Rev. Buenos Aires, 2017) of the of the World Telecommunication Development Conference, on the role of telecommunications/information and communication technologies in disaster preparedness, early warning, rescue, mitigation, relief and response;
4. Resolution 136 (Rev. Dubai, 2018) of the Plenipotentiary Conference, on the use of telecommunications/information and communication technologies for humanitarian assistance and for monitoring and management in emergency and disaster situations, including health-related emergencies, for early warning, prevention, mitigation and relief,

*recognizing*

1. the seriousness and magnitude of spread of infectious diseases, including outbreaks of pandemics such as coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) infections;
2. the recent pandemic that clearly demonstrates the need for high-quality telecommunication/ICT infrastructure and for the availability and dissemination of information to assist public health and well-being;
3. the need to minimize risk to human life and to provide the necessary general public information and communication needs in such situations, and the use of telecommunication/ICT equipment and services is indispensable for the provision of effective and appropriate humanitarian assistance,

*recognizing further*

1. that there will be a continuing need to assist developing countries in the use of ICTs to preserve life by ensuring a timely flow of information to government agencies, consumers, humanitarian-oriented organizations and industry involved in the provision of medical assistance to those affected by pandemics such as COVID-19 infections;
2. that information needs to be accessible and available in local languages so as to ensure maximum impact;
3. that policy-makers need to create an enabling environment to leverage the use of telecommunication/ICT to provide infrastructure and information needs in emergency situations and to address pandemics such as COVID-19 infections;
4. that the contribution of the private sector is necessary in the prevention, mitigation and relief of pandemics such as COVID-19 infections;
5. that telemedical support plays an important role in providing mental telehealth services;
6. that a common understanding of the network infrastructure components is required in order to provide rapidly-installed, interoperable, robust telecommunication capabilities in humanitarian-assistance and disaster-relief operations for pandemics such as COVID-19 infections;
7. that the use of ICTs will be more prevalent post COVID-19 such as for working from home, electronic transactions, online learning and tourism,

*considering*

1. the United Nations General Assembly Resolution A/RES/74/270, on the global solidarity to fight the COVID-19;
2. that ICTs are critical for addressing all phases of pandemics such as COVID-19 infections;
3. that aspects of emergency communications associated with global pandemics such as COVID-19 infections include, inter alia, disaster prediction, detection, alerting and enabling the flow of information to keep individuals informed as to actions they can take to preserve life;
4. that the ITU Telecommunication Development Sector (ITU-D)’s role is designed to focus on the use of ICTs to empower communities and people,

*noting*

1. § 51 of the WSIS Geneva Declaration of Principles, on the use of ICT applications for disaster prevention;
2. that the unprecedented effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, including severe disruptions to societies and economies, has devastating impacts on the livelihood of people, which requires the use of telecommunication / ICTs to mitigate its impacts and recover from the pandemic,

*resolves*

*to instruct the Director of the Telecommunication Development Bureau, in coordination with the other Directors*

1. to collate and support sharing of digital solutions developed by member states to respond and address pandemics such as COVID-19 through existing, accessible repositories of such digital solutions, including WSIS database*;*
2. to develop guidelines and best practices, using experiences gained from collated solutions but not limited to, on how ICTs can be used to identify the communications infrastructure needed to support the exchange of timely information on pandemics, such as COVID-19;
3. to develop feasibility studies, project management tools and support to respond to and address pandemics, such as COVID-19;
4. to build support mechanism for helping member states to build digital preparedness for responding to pandemics in future;
5. to promote efficient and timely information dissemination for developing countries based on standards of ITU-T and ITU-R,

*to instruct the Secretary-General*

1. to collaborate with all relevant stakeholders, including World Health Organization and other United Nations agencies, in order to define and engage in information and telecommunication development programmes to respond to and address pandemics, such as COVID-19 infections, in areas within the scope and mandate of ITU;
2. to implement measures aimed at mobilizing support from governments, industry and other partners to address the spread of pandemics, such as COVID-19 infections;
3. to support the development of broadband ICT infrastructure and communication technologies and extend to rural and remote areas including isolated remote islands of SIDS and villages of LDC and LLDC to bridge the digital gap so all may have access to detailed information relating to health-related emergencies, such as infection, epidemiological distribution, and side effects of materials in a timely manner,

*invites Member States and Sector Members*

1. to cooperate with ICT industries in the whole process of responding and mitigating global pandemics, especially in the area of telemedicine and telehealth and provide all possible assistant and support to consumers, humanitarian-oriented organizations and other stakeholders;
2. to promote regional, subregional, multilateral and bilateral cooperation to address the need to use ICTs as a tool to support responses to pandemics, such as COVID-19 infections, so that infrastructure and information can be provided to local communities, especially in local languages;
3. to protect and manage confidentiality of personal data/information collected by tracking technologies;
4. to develop and share online contents and platform related to telemedicine and telehealth which have multiple benefits during the pandemic by expanding access to care and reducing disease exposure, especially for developing countries;
5. to advise administrations on the use and development of innovative ICT tools, and platform to minimize the spread of future pandemic.

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