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**The 23rd APT Policy and Regulatory Forum (PRF-23)**

20 - 22 June 2023, Nadi, Republic of Fiji (Hybrid)

**CONCEPT NOTE**

**1. Background**

The Asia-Pacific region is presently undergoing an exceptional surge in the field of Telecommunication/ICT sector. Nevertheless, the vast expanse and diverse nature of the region, encompassing a broad spectrum of geography, culture, climate, ethnicity, and other such factors, have resulted in Asia Pacific nations being at different stages of development.

The Asia-Pacific Telecommunity (APT) assumes a pivotal role in providing various high-level discussion platforms where members exchange best practices, experiences, views, and voices from every part of the region. And the APT Policy and Regulatory Forum (PRF) is an annual APT event where policymakers and regulatory authorities meet to discuss common Telecommunication/ICT policy and regulatory issues. It also serves as an important platform for industry leaders to share their concerns and views in relation to policy and regulatory measures. In particular, this event is a high-level forum where high-level officials of Ministries and Regulatory Authorities from the region partake to deliberate on key ICT issues and to find a mutual ground to collaborate.

On the other hand, the Strategic Plan of the APT for 2021-2023 provides guidelines for the activities of the APT. This year is the final year of the implementation period which aims to accelerate the digital transformation of the economy and society in the Asia-Pacific region by realizing the benefits of Telecommunication/ICT and coping with the challenges of rapidly evolving Telecommunication/ICT environments. Subsequently, in line with the visions outlined in the Strategic Plan for 2021-2023, PRF provides new insights and awareness that are key to driving the digital transformation of the economy and society in this rapidly evolving telecommunication/ICT ecosystem.

The primary objective of the forum is to bring policymakers, regulators, and industry leaders from the region together in a common arena for a dialogue on issues faced by them as a result of the unprecedented changes taking place in the Telecommunications/ICT sectors. The forum is also expected to recall and reaffirm the pledges/commitments of the Singapore Statement of the Asia-Pacific ICT Ministers on Co-creating a connected digital future in the Asia-Pacific. The forum will also feature thematic sessions on topics that are of interest to the region.

**2. Objectives**

APT PRF provides an opportunity to share and address the key issues and concerns of APT Members as well as to facilitate intra-regional collaboration on policy and regulatory issues as required. Industry leaders and other key stakeholders also share their views on major issues that are currently faced by the sector.

The specific objectives for PRF-23 are to:

* Share the recent best practices of digital government, smart nation and smart island as well as the policy strategies and approaches that allow governments, businesses, and citizens to leverage digital transformation.
* Share insights and experiences as well as engage in dialogue to identify the challenges, opportunities and possible way forward regarding digital connectivity and digital transformation for sustainable digital society.
* Highlight the importance of conducive ICT regulatory regime at evolving era.
* Address the requirements, challenges and impacts of satellite constellation in Asia Pacific.
* Share best practices, policies and strategies for sustainable, reliable, resilient and emergency telecommunication/ICT infrastructure and services to secure their availability during disasters.
* Share the developments of 5G for transformation of lives for better tomorrow.
* Address the opportunities and ethical challenges of Artificial Intelligence and social media and discuss the possible way forward.
* Share best practices, experiences, policies and regulations of digital forensics and incident response to combat cyber threats and online scams.
* Share best practices as well as focus on the challenges and prospects of inclusive and universal national digital policies, strategies, practices and activities to connect the unconnected.

**3. Expected outcomes**

The Provisional Agenda and Tentative Programme of PRF-23 are attached to this concept note (See Annex A and B for more information).

At PRF-23, there would be a special session of Ministers/Vice Ministers from APT Member Administrations where they will share insights, experiences, lessons learned, and policies being implemented in their countries.

There would also be a special roundtable session where the Heads of the Regulators from APT Member Administrations will share their insights and experiences as well as engage in dialogue to identify the challenges and opportunities.

In addition, PRF-23 will also arrange three business dialogue sessions that aim to create an interactive dialogue between industry representatives and policymakers, and regulators.

Other topics, such as disaster-resilient and emergency ICT infrastructure, emerging AI, the role and function of social media, cybersecurity, inclusive and universal service, etc. would be covered throughout the forum.

Specific outcomes include but are not limited to:

* Lessons learned from the recent best practices of digital government, smart nation and smart island as well as the policy strategies and approaches that allow governments, businesses, and citizens to leverage digital transformation.
* A better understanding of the challenges, opportunities, and possible way forward regarding digital connectivity and digital transformation for a sustainable digital society.
* Enhanced insight on conducive ICT regulatory regime in at evolving era.
* Improved understanding of requirements, challenges, and impacts of satellite constellation in the Asia Pacific.
* Enhanced awareness of the best practices, policies, and strategies for sustainable, reliable, resilient, and emergency telecommunication/ICT infrastructure and services to secure their availability during disasters.
* Improved insights on developments of 5G for the transformation of lives for better tomorrow.
* A better understanding of opportunities and ethical challenges of Artificial Intelligence and social media and discuss the possible way forward.
* Lessons learned on digital forensics and incident response to combat cyber threats and online scams.
* Better perception of the best practices as well as focus on the challenges and prospects of inclusive and universal national digital policies, strategies, practices, and activities to connect the unconnected.

**4. Timing and Venue**

PRF-23 will be a two- and half-day event from 20 to 22 June 2023. It will be held in Nadi, Republic of Fiji with physical attendance as well as virtual/online participation through Zoom meeting (i.e., hybrid meeting).

**5. Participation**

APT Members, Associate Members, Affiliate Members, International/Regional Organizations and eligible non-members can participate in the PRF-23.

**6. Contact Information**

For any further information about PRF-23, please contact to:

Mr. Tawhid Hussain, Project Coordinator (Email: [tawhid@apt.int](mailto:tawhid@apt.int))

Ms. Pornpan Sirayathorn, Secretary to DPD (Email: [pornpan@apt.int](mailto:pornpan@apt.int))

APT Secretariat

12/49, Soi 5, Chaeng Watthana Road, Lak Si, Bangkok 10210, Thailand

Phone: +66 2 573 0044

Fax: + 66 2 573 7479

Email: [aptpolicy@apt.int](mailto:aptpolicy@apt.int)

**Annex A**

**The 23rd APT Policy and Regulatory Forum (PRF-23)**

**PROVISIONAL AGENDA**

1. Opening
2. Adoption of the Agenda
3. Outcomes of the 46th Session of the Management Committee of the APT relevant to PRF
4. Ministerial Session: Digital and Smart Government: Initiatives, Strategies, Applications and Impacts
5. Regulators’ Roundtable: Digital Connectivity and Digital Transformation for Sustainable Digital Society
6. Business Dialogues:
   * Conducive ICT Regulatory Regime at Evolving Era
   * Satellite Constellations: Requirements, Challenges and Impacts in Asia Pacific
   * 5G Developments: Transforming Lives for Better Tomorrow
7. Thematic Sessions:
   * Disaster-resilient and Emergency ICT Infrastructure for Sustainable Development
   * Artificial Intelligence and Social Media: Opportunities and Ethical Challenges
   * Digital Forensics and Incident Response: Best Practices to Combat Cyber Threats
   * Inclusive and Universal ICT Services

1. Date and Venue for PRF-24
2. Any Other Matters
3. Closing

**Annex B**

**The 23rd APT Policy and Regulatory Forum (PRF-23)**

**Tentative Programme**

| TIME | PROGRAMME |
| --- | --- |
| **Day – 1**  (UTC +12) | **Tuesday, 20 June 2023** |
| 09:00 – 10:00 | **Registration** |
| 10:00 – 10:30 | **Opening**   * Welcome Remarks by Secretary General of APT * Opening Remarks by Chair of PRF * Inaugural Remarks by Republic of Fiji * Presentation of Token of Appreciation     (Group Photograph) |
| 10:30 – 11:00 | Coffee/Tea Break |
| 11:00 – 11:20 | **Session 1**: **Plenary**   * Adoption of the Agenda * Outcomes of the 46th Session of the Management Committee of the APT relevant to PRF |
| 11:20 – 11:30 | Intermission for Logistic Arrangement |
| 11:30 – 12:45 | **Session 2 (Ministerial Session): Digital and Smart Government: Initiatives, Strategies, Applications and Impacts**  This session will discuss how governments can best use information and communication technologies (ICTs) to embrace good government principles and achieve policy goals.  This session will discuss the recent best practices of digital government, smart nation, and smart island in Asia-Pacific countries as well as the policies, strategies and approaches that allow governments, businesses, and citizens to leverage digital transformation.  The session will invite Ministers/Vice Ministers from APT Member Administrations to share insights, experiences, lessons learned, policies being implemented in their countries, with regard to digital government and smart island.  The topics to be discussed in this session include:   * Sharing best practices of digital government, smart nation and smart island * Policies, initiatives, strategies and approaches to leverage digital government, smart nation and smart island * Socio-economic impacts of digital government, smart nation and smart island * Recommendation for better policies in this digital age   **Moderator:**  (TBD)  **Speakers:**   * Honorable Ministers/Vice Ministers from Member Administrations |
| 12:45 – 14:15 | Lunch Break |
| 14:15 – 15:30 | **Session 3 (Regulators’ Roundtable): Digital Connectivity and Digital Transformation for Sustainable Digital Society**  Digital connectivity and digital transformation influence the way governments, businesses, and citizens work and live. Hi-speed broadband connectivity and access, ICT centric innovative technologies and services, secured, trusted and resilient ICT networks and services, human and institutional capacity with basic and advanced ICT skills are key elements contributed to the sustainable digital society.  The Roundtable will invite the Heads of the Regulators from APT Member Administrations to share their insights and experiences as well as engage in dialogue to identify the challenges, opportunities and possible way forward towards digital connectivity and digital transformation for sustainable digital society.  The topics to be discussed in this session include:   * Sharing insights and experiences of digital connectivity and digital transformation * Administrative, economic and financial approach to forge digital connectivity and digital transformation * Policy dimensions as well as their opportunities and challenges to leverage digital connectivity and digital transformation * Recommendations for building sustainable digital society * Q&A   **Moderator:**  (TBD)  **Speakers:**   * Honorable Heads of the Regulators from Member Administrations |
| 15:30– 16:00 | Coffee/Tea Break |
| 16:00 – 17:15 | **Session 4 (Business Dialogue): Conducive ICT Regulatory Regime at Evolving Era**  The ICT industry is evolving at an unprecedented pace, and it is essential to have a regulatory regime that is conducive to innovation and growth while ensuring consumer protection and safeguarding public interest. The session will explore the latest developments and challenges in ICT regulation and discuss how to create a regulatory environment that is flexible, adaptive, and future-oriented.  The evolving ICT industry requires adaptive paradigm and pragmatic changes in the regulatory regime. To understand the roles and functions of both ICT Policymakers/Regulators and Industry at this evolving ICT era will be a key for the overall development of ICT sector.  The Roundtable will invite the CxOs of the ICT Industry to share their insights and experiences as well as engage in dialogue to identify the challenges, opportunities and possible way forward regarding the conducive policy and regulatory framework at this evolving ICT era.  The topics to be discussed in this session include:   * Roles of ICT Policymakers/Regulators and Industry players at evolving ICT era * Challenges of existing policy and regulatory framework * Administrative, economic and financial initiatives/approaches to build sustainable ICT ecosystem for emerging technologies * Fostering universal and reliable ICT services * Discussions for conducive policy and regulatory framework at evolving ICT era * Q&A   **Moderator:**  (TBD)  **Speakers:**   * ICT Industry CxOs |
| **Day – 2**  (UTC +12) | **Wednesday, 21 June 2023** |
| 10:00 – 11:15 | **Session 5 (Business Dialogue): Satellite Constellations: Requirements, Challenges and Impact in Asia Pacific**  Satellite Constellation is a group of communication satellites to cover a vast scope of the globe or even the whole land which is used for global communications coverage. Some of the satellite constellations have features of inter-satellite communication link also. In order to ensure the provision of reliable communication services, satellite access providers could utilize satellite constellations to deliver such services. It is necessary to address the issues for such space-based communications to facilitate the easy entry of satellite-based operators.  The topics to be discussed in this session include:   * Requirements, challenges and impact of satellite constellations. * International and regional standards and best practices. * Regulatory issues related to landing rights and spectrum assignment * Licensing issues, co-existence and sharing of spectrum and interference management * Sharing of information, best practices and telecommunication/ICT based solutions * Way forward * Q&A   **Moderator:**  (TBD)  **Speakers:**   * Industry Representatives |
| 11:15 – 11:45 | Coffee / Tea Break |
| 11:45 – 13:00 | **Session 6: Disaster-resilient and Emergency ICT Infrastructure for Sustainable Development**  The session expects sharing of best practices, policies and strategies for sustainable, reliable, resilient and emergency telecommunication/ICT infrastructure and services to secure their availability during disasters. The session will also discuss the feasible ways to provide support during all phases of disaster management including dissemination of information to assist public safety, health and disaster-relief efforts and removal of restrictions for an efficient mobilization of telecommunication resources.  The topics to be discussed in this session include:   * National telecommunication/ICT policies and strategies for sustainable, reliable and resilient telecommunication/ICT infrastructure and services during natural disasters * Challenges in mobilizing telecommunication resources * Challenges related to disaster preparedness, risk reduction and mitigation * New ICT technologies and their roles in disaster management * Sharing of information, best practices and telecommunication/ICT based solutions * Way forward * Q&A   **Moderator:**  (TBD)  **Speakers**:   * Member Administrations * International Organizations * Industry Representatives |
| 13:00 – 14:30 | Lunch Break |
| 14:30 – 15:45 | **Session 7: (Business Dialogue) 5G Developments: Transforming Lives for Better Tomorrow**  The advent of 5G is set to revolutionize the way we live, work, and communicate. 5G has a big impact on our daily lives. With the advent of new use cases, 5G is transforming our daily lives. 5G could also lead us to a new wave of technologies that have the potential to transform lives for the better tomorrow.Dynamic policy and regulatory approaches will play a vital role in achieving the maximum benefit from 5G.  The session will discuss experiences and insights regarding the latest trends and developments in 5G, including the impact on communication, healthcare, education, transportation, and entertainment. The session will also explore how 5G is enabling new applications and services, and how it is driving innovation in various industries.  The topics to be discussed in this session include:   * 5G use cases for transforming lives * Viable business models for 5G * Challenges in developing 5G ecosystem * Roles of ICT Regulators and Industry players * Way forward * Q&A   **Moderator:**  (TBD)  **Speakers:**  Industry Representatives |
| 15:45 – 16:15 | Coffee/Tea Break |
| 16:15 – 17:30 | **Session 8: Artificial Intelligence and Social Media: Opportunities and Ethical Challenges**  Social media has become an integral part of our daily lives, and with the usage of Artificial Intelligence (AI) services, it has the potential to become even more influential. However, this integration also raises some ethical challenges that need to be addressed.  The session will explore the opportunities and challenges that come with the growing influence of AI on social media. The session will also delve into the ethical considerations surrounding AI in social media, including issues of privacy, bias, and the potential for misuse. It will also examine how AI can be used to address challenges such as misinformation and the spread of harmful content.    The topics to be discussed in this session include:   * Policy and regulatory examples and private sector initiatives * Challenges, opportunities and way forward * Responsibilities of stakeholders * Q&A   **Moderator:**  (TBD)  **Speakers:**   * Member Administrations * International Organizations * Industry Representatives |
| **Day – 3**  (UTC +12) | **Thursday, 22 June 2023** |
| 09:30 – 10:45 | **Session 9: Digital Forensics and Incident Response: Best Practices to Combat Cyber Threats**  Digital forensics and incident response (DFIR) are considered as a part of cybersecurity initiatives that involve identifying, investigating, containing, remediating and potentially testifying related to cyberattacks, litigations or other digital investigations.  Due to the increase of cyber attacks in general, DFIR has become one of the critical parts of security strategy. The shift to the cloud, as well as the acceleration of remote-based work, has further required to ensure protection from a wide variety of cyber threats across all devices that are connected to the network.  The session will engage in discussing the current best practices and latest developments in digital forensics, incident response, and explore how these techniques can be used together to detect, prevent, and respond to cyber-attacks and online scams.  The topics to be discussed in this session include:   * Sharing best practices on techniques and procedures to combat cyber threats * Sharing information as well as experience, related policies and regulations of online scams * Challenges and Way forward * Recommendations for combating modern cyber threats * Q&A   **Moderator:**  (TBD)  **Speakers:**   * Member Administrations * International Organizations * Industry Representatives |
| 10:45 – 11:15 | Coffee/Tea Break |
| 11:15 – 12:30 | **Session 10: Inclusive and Universal ICT Services**  ICTs have transformed the way we communicate, work, and live. However, not everyone has equal access to the relevant ICT services, creating a digital divide that limits opportunities for many. The session will explore the challenges and opportunities of creating inclusive and universal ICT services. The session will also discuss how technology can be designed and implemented to meet the diverse needs of individuals and communities, from various aspects including gender, youth, people with disabilities, underserved areas, and socio-economic backgrounds.  The topics to be discussed in this session include:   * Policy and regulatory best practices to ensure inclusive and universal ICT services * Challenges and opportunities * Way forward * Q&A   **Moderator:**  (TBD)  **Speakers:**   * Member Administrations * International Organizations * Industry Representatives |
| 12:30 – 12:45 | **Session 11: Plenary**  Session Chair: Chair of PRF   * Way Forward * Date and Venue for PRF-24 * Any other matters |
| 12:45 – 13:00 | **Closing**   * Remarks by Secretary General of APT * Remarks by Republic of Fiji * Remarks and Closing by Chair of PRF |
| 13:00 – 14:00 | Lunch Break |
| 14:00 – 17:30 | (Networking Sessions) |