



Secretary General

WELCOME ADDRESS

H.E. Mr. Gregorio B. Honasan II, Secretary, Department of Information and Communications Technology (DICT), The Philippines,

Distinguished guests, speakers and participants,

Ladies and gentlemen,

Good morning.

It is my great pleasure to welcome you all to the APT Symposium on Disaster Management 2019, here in Quezon City, the Philippines.

First and foremost, on behalf of the Asia-Pacific Telecommunity (APT), allow me to take this opportunity to express my sincere gratitude and appreciation to H.E. Gregorio B. Honasan II for presiding over the opening ceremony of the Symposium despite his busy schedule. It is a great honour and privilege for the APT and all delegates that His Excellency has taken time from his busy schedule to be with us today.

I would like to extend my sincere thanks and appreciation to the Government of the Republic of the Philippines, in particular, the Department of Information and Communications Technology (DICT), for hosting this Symposium and for the warm hospitality extended to all of us.

I would also like to express my sincere appreciation to the Government of Australia and Japan for the support through their Extra-Budgetary Contributions.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Disaster management is an issue of particular concern to the Asia-Pacific region where countries are facing various forms of disasters, which in many cases are of very serious level and massive scale. The Asia-Pacific region is listed among the top of the disaster risk profile countries in the world. Many countries in our region including the Philippines lie on the ring of fire where many earthquakes and volcanic eruptions occur.

Recognizing the importance of disaster management and preparedness, the APT had organized the APT Workshop on Disaster Management/ Communications as an annual programme during 2010-2017 in order to promote security and trust in ICT of Asia-Pacific region. The workshop was initiated under the Bali Plan of Action adopted in 2009.

The Strategic Plan of the APT for 2018-2020, which serves as the guideline for APT's activities from 2018 to 2020 contains five (5) Strategic Pillars: Connectivity; Innovation; Trust; Capacity Building, and Partnership.

Under “Trust” Pillar, APT would promote security and resilience through ICT. In recognizing the vulnerability of APT members to malicious cyber activities and natural disasters, APT shall assist them to develop and maintain secure, trusted and resilient ICT network services, as well as to address challenges related to disaster preparedness, risk reduction and mitigation.

In order to take the disaster management workshop to the next level, the 42nd Session of the Management Committee of the APT held last year in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia gave approval to organize the APT Symposium on Disaster Management 2019. The objective of this Symposium is to address and facilitate an information exchange on the use of ICT for disaster management and communications with special focus on preparedness, risk reduction, response and recovery phases for major natural disasters.

This APT Symposium on Disaster Management 2019 will address those issues in line with the Strategic Pillar “Trust” of the Strategic Plan of the APT for 2018-2020.

In addition, the Asia-Pacific ICT Ministerial Meeting 2019, which was held from 25 to 26 June 2019 in Singapore, adopted the Singapore Statement on Co-creating Connected Digital Future in the Asia-Pacific.

The Singapore Statement provides strategic guidance and the pathways to the development of telecommunication/ICT in the Asia-Pacific region for the next five years. The preparation of the new Strategic Plan of the APT for 2021-2023 will take the Singapore Statement as the basis for developing the details of the plan.

One of the five Strategic Goals of Singapore Statement relevant to Disaster Management is **Digital Trust**. In particular, it is described under the Priority Area: **Resilience and Disaster Management** that APT will promote policies and strategies for sustainable, reliable and resilient telecommunication/ICT infrastructure and services to secure their availability, including during disasters, and to support all phases of disaster management, including dissemination of information to assist public safety, health and disaster-relief efforts.

Therefore, this Symposium will also recap and follow up the Singapore Statement in order to implement the relevant visions of the Ministers.

The APT Symposium on Disaster Management 2019 will cover policy and regulatory issues for the use of ICT in Disaster Management, and also technical aspects such as technical solutions for use ICT in disaster management, uses of IoTs and Sensors, Satellite, mobile and other technologies in disaster management. Network resilience is another important topic to improve resilience of ICT network against disaster and provide reliable emergency communication.

For disaster management, the best way to learn to is through real experiences. We have arranged sessions so that participants have opportunities to hear the case study of our member countries and exchange lessons learned with each other in disaster management. Towards the end of the Symposium, there will also be a panel discussion on International Collaboration for Disaster Management which will induce the potential collaboration in the area of disaster management in the region.

We are lining up diverse list of expert speakers from the APT member countries, international organizations, and industry sectors for this Symposium to make it a relevant, informative, and fruitful platform. I am certain that the Symposium will facilitate information sharing and

exchange of viewpoints, build capacity, and more importantly encourage further collaboration in our Asia-Pacific region.

Excellency,
Ladies and gentlemen,

I would like to take this opportunity to mention that this year the APT celebrates the 40th Anniversary of its establishment. All work programmes of the APT in this year including this Symposium join the celebration.

The Asia-Pacific ICT Ministerial Meeting 2019 in June in Singapore was one of the highlights of the celebration.

Ladies and gentlemen,

To conclude, I would like to once again express my sincere gratitude to H.E. Secretary Gregorio B. Honasan II for being with us today and for DICT, the Philippines, for hosting this event and for the excellent preparations and arrangements.

I wish the Symposium successful and fruitful deliberations.

Thank you.