

Bali Statement of the Asia-Pacific Ministers on Strengthening Regional Collaboration towards a Broadband Economy in the Asia-Pacific

We, the Ministers responsible for Information and Communication Technology (ICT) from the Asia-Pacific region, have assembled in Bali, Republic of Indonesia, on 12th and 13th of November 2009, to commemorate the 30th Anniversary of the APT and to discuss our joint efforts in strengthening regional collaboration for the development of the ICT infrastructures and services in the Asia-Pacific, and to work towards a broadband economy that would truly contribute to the benefit of our people in improving the quality of their lives.

We believe, the full potential of ICT can only be realized through a broadband economy that stimulates sustainable economic growth and prosperity. Such an economy should be characterized by policy and regulatory regimes that support innovation, improve confidence and provide security for industry and people, minimize environmental impact, establish a system that promotes investment in broadband connectivity, and fosters creativity in the development and use of content and applications.

We recognize, the governments are primarily to facilitate, while it is the ICT industry that plays a key role in the physical realization of the policy decisions and contributes significantly towards the goals that we set for the sector. Therefore, we will continue to enhance the engagement of the ICT industry in our joint efforts to create a healthy and vibrant broadband economy in the Asia-Pacific Region.

We are determined, to work collaboratively as a region to achieve the most effective and efficient use of our regional resources and share our experiences and expertise in reaping the full benefit of a broadband economy for our people and the ICT industry. We believe the Asia-Pacific Telecommunity, as the leading regional organization for ICT development, should play a key role in promoting and coordinating the activities that we have envisioned for the region, and in executing the Plan of Action.

We resolve, to work collectively with all stakeholders within reasonable period before the next APT Ministerial Meeting to review and to implement, as appropriate, the following objectives that are considered crucial for a successful broadband economy in the region:

- A. Widen broadband connectivity
- B. Provide a secure, safe and sustainable environment through ICT initiatives
- C. Facilitate effective convergence of services
- D. Encourage development of content and applications
- E. Develop human resources capacity

A. Widen broadband connectivity

The full benefit of the broadband economy can be realized through wider accessibility to broadband services. Although the Asia-Pacific region has done well in the development of ICT infrastructure, there is still much that needs to be done in widening connectivity to enable people access to ICT. In order to widen broadband connectivity, and to reap the full benefits of the digital inclusion we will:

- establish effective policy and regulatory frameworks that would stimulate synergies in investment and competition in the development of broadband infrastructure, and in the delivery of services within and across borders
- ensure that broadband networks and services are reasonably available with the greatest practical national coverage and use
- ensure that provisions are made for people with special needs so that they can use broadband services to improve their quality of life
- provide community facilities for those who cannot afford individual service
- promote the use of broadband services and increase awareness and knowledge to use ICT for the betterment of their lives
- take better advantage of wireless technologies to speed up delivery of broadband services, especially where fixed line services are not available
- collaborate regionally to promote the establishment of affordable and reliable international broadband connectivity where appropriate

B. Provide a secure, safe and sustainable environment through ICT initiatives

The successful implementation of a broadband economy will require the confidence of its stakeholders. The users, suppliers, investors and our governments need to have confidence in the use of ICT in our daily business and social interactions, and for the enhancement of our livelihood without fear. The broadband economy should be 'green' and more environmentally friendly. The broadband economy should provide protection to people to the extent that technology can be reasonably deployed. In order to provide a protected and safe environment for all, we will:

- enhance our regional collaborative efforts in combating cybercrimes, enhancing cybersecurity and protecting intellectual property rights, digital identities, personal data and the privacy of individuals online
- provide special measures for the protection of children in cyberspace and provide them with a safe environment for education and enhancement of their creativity through ICT
- make collaborative efforts in the region to manage harmful waste and to improve energy efficiency in the ICT industry

- encourage the governments and private sector to harness the full potential of ICT in tackling global challenges related to improving energy efficiency and addressing climate change
- enhance national and regional efforts in improving the infrastructure and use of ICT for public safety and disaster management including disaster preparedness, relief and recovery efforts
- enhance regional and country level efforts to improve intellectual property rights and patents for research and development (R&D) and for the products of our countries

C. Facilitate effective convergence of services

The efficiency of a convergent ICT environment has to be fully realized in a broadband economy. The regulatory environments need to be aligned to provide the full benefits of convergence through facilitating licensing schemes with provisions for the efficient use of limited resources. To take the full advantage of convergence in technology and services, we will:

- encourage development and adoption of common standards in the region for deployment of broadband technologies and convergent platforms for multiple services and maintaining acceptable quality of service
- review licensing schemes wherever necessary to facilitate full benefits of the converged technologies and services to the service providers, operators and end users
- collaborate regionally where possible to harmonize the radio frequency bands allocated for broadband ICT application and services
- facilitate advancement and adaptation of ICT broadband technologies in the region through regional collaboration
- collaborate regionally to promote lower international mobile roaming charges where appropriate

D. Encourage development of content and applications

Content and applications will be the main drivers of a broadband economy. The environment for a broadband economy needs to facilitate creativity in the production and use of content and applications. Governments will continue to enhance their services and to make “citizen friendly” services available via broadband services. The broadband systems should be open to businesses, particularly Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) and individuals, to develop applications and services that may be seamlessly carried over networks to reach end users within the country and across the region. Proper revenue sharing mechanisms should be developed to encourage use and creativity. To facilitate development of content and application for the broadband economy, we will:

- encourage policies that support the sharing of research information, promote innovation, entrepreneurship and business transformation

- encourage our governments and other public services to enhance their integration with the ICT broadband system in providing easy to use, transparent, and quality services to our citizens
- encourage development of content in the local languages to help preserve culture and to serve as an accessible medium for the use of the people at community level
- provide incentives to businesses, particularly SMEs and individuals, to develop applications and to provide appropriate mechanisms for sharing revenue for the use of their application and content
- encourage use of regional content and applications for widening the scope and extent of the regional market and to take the best advantages of regional needs and strengths
- encourage content and application sharing among member countries in a non-commercial scheme for non-commercial use

E. Develop human resources capacity

To take full advantage of the broadband economy, there is a need for adequate and timely development of human resources. Especially for our members from the developing and least developed countries, emphasis needs to be given to develop appropriate skills for proliferation of broadband economy in the region. We will cooperate in opening our facilities for the development of human resources in the Asia-Pacific region as we believe that realization of a regional broadband economy will highly depend on how successful we are in bringing on board most members of the Asia-Pacific to the broadband economy. In developing the human resources and building capacity for the broadband economy, we will:

- collaborate among member countries to identify and to develop training programs and facilities for the special skills that are needed for the broadband economy
- encourage development of specialized training programs to meet the needs of the region and increase availability of such programs by providing online training facilities
- encourage our experts and ICT professionals to be available for regional needs and coordinate through APT to establish a 'pool' of accredited ICT professionals for the service of the Asia-Pacific region
- support collaborative research and development works in the field of ICT and its applications, and that are conducted jointly within the region, for sharing information and for transferring knowledge to build research and development capability of personnel in the region

We believe, the above objectives can only be realized through the dedicated efforts we put in individually as member countries and collectively as a region. This requires well-coordinated efforts and a practical time-bound Plan of Action that has been designed to be realized through this joint statement.

We invite, other sectors in our countries, the regional and international community, the donor organizations and others who are interested in the success of a broadband economy in the Asia-Pacific region to contribute and to work with us for realizing a truly successful broadband economy in the Asia-Pacific region.

We task the Management Committee of APT, to pursue regional collaboration for the successful implementation of our initiatives towards a broadband economy to the Asia-Pacific Telecommunity. We will continue our dedicated efforts to provide necessary support and assistance to the Management Committee of APT in the implementation of the Plan of Action which we have agreed to be the guideline for regional actions that would be required for the realization of a broadband economy in the Asia-Pacific region.

We acknowledge, the dedication and support that the APT has provided to the member countries in coordinating regional efforts in ICT development, and its unique position and excellent contributions to the region.

We will, continue to support and assist the APT in developing the telecommunity and in shaping it further to best suit the requirements of Asia-Pacific region.

=====