

**The 21st Meeting of the South Asian Telecommunication Regulators’ Council**

**(SATRC-21)**

Virtual Meeting, 27-28 October 2020

**CONCEPT NOTE**

1. **Background/Context**

The South Asian Telecommunication Regulator’s Council (SATRC) functions under the umbrella of the APT as one of the sub-regional activities and in-line with the *Singapore Statement of the Asia-Pacific ICT Ministers on Co-Creating a Connected Digital Future*. Currently nine South Asian countries are involved in SATRC activities. The SATRC meetings are held annually and attended by the head of telecommunication regulatory authorities in the South Asia region, senior officials of the Ministries and Departments, as well as senior officials /representatives of the industry. The SATRC meets annually to discuss the key policy and regulatory issues of concern to the SATRC members. In addition, it also adopted the action plans required to achieve the goals of SATRC.

The 43rd Session of the Management Committee of the APT (MC-43), held from 10 to 13 December 2019 in Bangkok, Thailand, approved the 21st Meeting of the South Asian Telecommunication Regulators’ Council (SATRC) to be held in 2020 hosted by the Communications Regulatory Authority (CRA), Islamic Republic of Iran. However, considering the situation due to COVID-19 pandemic in South-Asia and Asia-Pacific region, and in consultation with the head of the regulators of SATRC Members, it has been decided that SATRC-21 will be held virtually.

SATRC-21 will include Regulators’ Roundtable and Industry-Regulator dialogue. At the Regulators’ Roundtable, the heads of the regulators will exchange opinion and share experiences on regulatory challenges and discuss the possible way forward. Regulators will also identify the possible areas of cooperation in South Asia through SATRC. The Industry-Regulator Dialog will facilitate the exchange of opinions among Industry and Regulators on the challenging issues of regulations and ways to overcome the challenges collectively and facilitate the business environment.

The discussions at SATRC-21 will address the following issues, such as:

* Update and discuss policy and regulatory trends in South Asia
* Sharing experience on the lesson learned from the COVID-19 pandemic: Challenges and opportunities on policy and regulatory measures for post-COVID-19 era
* Ensuring the last mile access for providing affordable broadband services for all – Regulators’ role and its challenges
* Consideration of the regulatory framework including spectrum roadmap for the deployment of 5G.

SATRC-21 will also discuss the progress reports of all the work items under the two Working Groups of SATRC as part of implementation of SATRC Action Plan Phase VII. In addition, the Council will also discuss a way forward for the implementation of the SATRC Action Plan Phase VII which has been delayed due to COVID-19 pandemic.

1. **Objectives**

Based on the background and context above, the key objectives of the SATRC-21 will be to discuss key policy and regulatory issues as mentioned above and discuss how to address those issues and way forward for the regulators. It will also discuss the progress reports of all the work items under the two Working Groups of SATRC under the implementation of SATRC Action Plan Phase VII. In addition, SATRC-21 will also discuss a way forward for the implementation of the SATRC Action Plan Phase VII which has been delayed due to COVID-19 pandemic

1. **Expected outcomes**

* Through the discussion of the above-mentioned key areas, regulators/policy makers will be able to
* exchange their views and experiences**;**
* identify the challenges;
* take practical decision; and
* find the areas of mutual cooperation.
* Industry will be able to raise their views on those issues and interact with regulators/policy makers to address the possible way forward through collaborative approaches. It will provide a common platform to discuss the challenges and find possible way forwards.
* Progress report of the Work Items under SATRC Action Plan Phase VII

1. **Arrangement/Activity (if necessary)**

Following activities will be conducted at the SATRC-21:

* Regulators’ Roundtable
* Industry-Regulator Dialogue
* Sharing of Experiences by SATRC Members
* Progress report on work items by the Chairmen of the SATRC Working Groups

1. **Timing and location**

SATRC-21 will be held virtually using Zoom Meeting platform. The opening ceremony will be held on 27 October 2020 at 13:00 hours (UTC+7:00; Bangkok, Thailand).

1. **Contact person**

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1. **Provisional Agenda and Tentative Programme**

The provisional agenda and Tentative Programme are enclosed in Annex A, and Annex B respectively.

**Annex A**

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**PROVISIONAL AGENDA**

1. Opening
2. Adoption of Agenda
3. Outcomes of the 43rd Session of APT Management Committee relevant to SATRC
4. Implementation status of the Strategic Plan of the APT for 2018 – 2020
5. General Statements from the Heads of Regulators on sub-regional cooperation through SATRC
6. Regulators’ Roundtable
7. Industry-Regulator Dialogue
8. Sharing Best Practices and Experience by SATRC Members
9. Progress report of the implementation of SATRC Action Plan Phase VII
10. Consideration of implementation of SATRC Action Plan Phase VII

1. Approval of the output documents
2. Date and venue of SATRC-22
3. Closing

**Annex B**

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**Tentative Programme**

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| **Time (UTC+7:00)** | **Tuesday, 27 October 2020** |
| 13:00 – 14:30 | **Opening**   * Welcome Address by Asia-Pacific Telecommunity * Address by Chairman of SATRC   (Group Photograph)  **Session 1 – *Plenary***   * Adoption of Agenda * Outcomes of 43rd Session of the Management Committee relevant to SATRC * Implementation Status of the Strategic Plan of the APT for 2018 – 2020 * General Statements from the Heads of Regulators on sub-regional cooperation through SATRC (not longer than 3min each) |
| 14:30 – 15:00 | **Break** |
| 15:00 – 16:30 | **Session 2 –** ***Regulators’ Roundtables***  In this session the regulators will exchange their views and share experience on the following aspects:     * Update and discuss policy and regulatory trends in South Asia * Sharing experience on the lesson learned from the COVID-19 pandemic: Challenges and opportunities on policy and regulatory measures for post-COVID-19 era * Ensuring the last mile access for providing affordable broadband services for all – Regulators’ role and its challenges |
| **Time (UTC+7:00)** | **Wednesday, 28 October 2020** |
| 13:00 - 14:30 | **Session 3 – *Regulator-Industry Dialogue****: Deployment of 5G in South-Asia*  In this session the regulators and industry leader will engage in dialogue to identify the challenging issues and how to enhance cooperation between regulator and industry to deploy 5G in South-Asia. Among the issues will include the policy and regulatory framework including spectrum roadmap for the deployment of 5G. |
| 14:30 – 15:00 | **Break** |
| 15:00 - 16:30 | **Session 4** – ***Sharing Regulatory Experiences by SATRC Members***  This session will discuss and share policy and regulatory best practices and experiences on aspects new and emerging technologies to support the growth of the digital economy |
| 16:30 – 16:45 | **Break** |
| 16:45 – 18:00 | **Session 5** – ***Plenary***   * Report of the implementation of SATRC Action Plan Phase VII * Report of the Working Group on Policy, Regulation and Services * Report of the Working Group on Spectrum * Way forward for the implementation of SATRC Action Plan Phase VII * Adoption of the SATRC activities in 2021 * Date and Venue of SATRC-22   ***Closing***   * Closing Remarks by APT Secretariat * Closing Remarks by Chairman, SATRC |