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|  | ASIA-PACIFIC TELECOMMUNITY | **Document:****PRFP-13/OUT-02** |
| **13th APT Policy and Regulation Forum for Pacific (PRFP-13)** |
| 29-30 September 2020, Virtual Meeting | 18 January 2021 |

Secretary General

 *(draft)* **SUMMARY RECORD OF THE**

**13TH APT POLICY AND REGULATION FORUM FOR PACIFIC**

1. INTRODUCTION

The 13th APT Policy and Regulation Forum for Pacific (PRFP-13) was held from 29 to 30 September 2020 as a virtual meeting.

The meeting was attended by 78 participants from APT Members, Associate Members, Affiliate Members, International Organization, other organizations and APT Secretariat. Document: PRFP-13/ADM-03 contains the list of participants of the meeting.

1. OPENING SESSION *(Tuesday, 29 September 2020, 09:00 – 09:15 hrs.)*
	1. **Welcome Remarks by Ms. Areewan Haorangsi, Secretary General, APT**

Ms. Areewan Haorangsi, Secretary General, APT, welcomed all delegates to the PRFP-13. She informed the meeting that Ms. Unutoa Fonoti, Chairman of PRFP has resigned. Therefore, she had invited Mr. John Jack, one of the Vice-Chairmen of PRFP to assume the responsibilities of Acting Chairman of PRFP. She expressed her sincere gratitude to Ms. Fonoti for her kind support and contribution to the PRFP during her terms as the Vice-Chairman of PRFP and as the Chairman of PRFP. She also sincerely thanked Mr. John Jack, the Vice-Chairman of PRFP, for accepting to take the role of the Acting Vice-Chairman for this PRFP. She mentioned that the meeting was originally planned to be held in Vanuatu but due to the COVID-19 pandemic, she had consulted the Chairman and Vice-Chairmen of the Management Committee of the APT as well as the Vice-Chairmen of the PRFP. It had been decided to organize a virtual meeting for this PRFP. Nevertheless, she expressed her appreciation to Vanuatu for the kind offer to host the PRFP-13. She mentioned that the thematic sessions of the PRFP-13 would be focused only on specific topics due to the time constraints. She also mentioned that this was the first time to organize PRFP as a virtual meeting, so it is necessary for the PRFP to revisit the Working Methods to include this new modality.

The full text of her address is provided in Document: PRFP-13/INP-01.

* 1. **Opening Remarks by Mr. John Jack, Vice-Chairman of PRFP Acting Chairman of PRFP**

Mr. John Jack, Vice-Chairman of PRFP Acting Chairman of PRFP, delivered his remarks. He mentioned that the participants should have been gathering in Port Vila, Vanuatu, for this great event. It would have been a proud moment for Vanuatu to be the host. However, it was not possible in this time of uncertainly and peril. He mentioned that even though we were not able to travel or be together in person, we could continue to find ways to harness our collective commitments with the vision to move forward with our development initiatives. He mentioned that PRFP wished to convey heartfelt gratitude to the Management Committee of the APT for approval to organize the PRFP-13 in 2020.

The full text of his address is provided in Document: PRFP-13/INP-02.

1. SESSION 1 - PLENARY *(Tuesday, 29 September 2020, 09:15 – 09:30 hrs*.*)*
	1. **Adoption of Agenda *(Document: PRFP-13/ADM-01)***

Mr. John Jack, Acting Chairman of PRFP, invited APT Secretariat to introduce the document. APT Secretariat briefly introduced the Provisional Agenda of the Meeting. Chairman sought comments on the document. As there was no comment, the Agenda was adopted.

* 1. **Outcomes of the 43rd Session of the Management Committee of the APT relevant to PRFP *(Document: PRFP-13/INP-03)***

APT Secretariat presented the outcomes of the 43rd Session of the Management Committee of the APT (MC-43) relevant to PRFP. He highlighted that MC-43 adopted the report of the PRFP and approved the holding of PRFP-13 in 2020. He also explained the actions to be taken by PRFP relevant to the Strategic Plan of the APT for 2018-2020.

The meeting noted the outcomes of the MC-43 relevant to the work of PRFP.

* 1. **Implementation Status of the Strategic Plan of the APT for 2018-2020 *(Document: PRFP-13/INP-04)***

APT Secretariat presented the document on the Implementation Status of the Strategic Plan of the APT for 2018-2020. The document included the attachment, which was the report on the implementation of the Strategic Plan of the APT for 2018-2020 by all APT Work Programmes including PRFP during 2018 and 2019 that had been submitted to the MC-43. After PRFP-13, APT Secretariat would compile the activities during PRFP-13 in the report and submit to the next session of the Management Committee of the APT.

The meeting noted the implementation status of the Strategic Plan of the APT for 2018-2020.

* 1. **Working Methods of PRFP *(Document: PRFP-13/INP-05)***

APT Secretariat presented the revised Working Methods of the PRFP. He mentioned that the main change was to capture the status of having online meeting which had not been mentioned in the current Working Methods. He also presented some editorial changes proposed in this revision.

Papua New Guinea and Vanuatu supported the proposal made by the Secretariat.

Samoa raised an issue of using the gender neutrality term in the Working Methods such as Chairperson instead of Chairman.

The meeting also discussed the terminology of online/virtual meeting.

Secretary General informed that the term Chairman and Vice-Chairmen had been used widely in other Work Programmes. In terms of terminology used for online/virtual meeting, the final decision would be made by the Management Committee of the APT to be in line with other Work Programmes.

Fiji, Palau also supported Samoa’s proposal regarding the term Chairman. Due to the time limitation, APT Secretariat requested members to provide their suggestions on the Working Methods so that Secretariat could compile all the feedbacks for adoption at the closing plenary.

1. SESSION 2 – ROUNDTABLE on updates of policy and regulation in the pacific (*Tuesday, 29 September 2020, 09:30 – 13:45 hrs., Bangkok Time)*

Moderator: Mr. John Jack, Acting Chairman of PRFP

* 1. **Panel Discussion**

Moderator invited panelists to share recent development and achievement of policy and regulation in the Pacific and lessons learned from the COVID-19 outbreak and the initiatives taken, and address policy and regulatory measures for post-COVID-19 era.

Ms. Cathy Rainsford, General Manager, Content and Consumer Division, the Australian Communications and Media Authority (ACMA) outlined the approach the ACMA took to regulatory forbearance in the context of COVID-19 pandemic. She also talked about proposed reforms around the telecommunications consumer protection regulatory model in Australia, and new works that ACMA was doing aiming at protecting consumer from misinformation in digital platforms.

Ms. Tupou’tuah Baravilala, Director-General for Digital Government Transformation, Cybersecurity and Communications, Ministry of Communications, Fiji, shared brief update regarding COVID-19 cases in Fiji. She also introduced the careFIJI App which was the digital contact tracing application developed based on the TraceTogether App, privacy and security safeguards issues, its ease of use and accessibility, adoption rate, adoption strategy, and independent assessment of careFIJI App.

Mr. Kila Gulo-Vui, Director, Economics, Consumer & International Affairs, NICTA, Papua New Guinea, presented the Papua New Guinea Regulatory and Policy Update including policy and regulatory framework, key industry metrics, connectivity status, policy and regulatory initiatives.

A representative of Ms. Lydia Lemalu Jahnke, Ministry of Communications and Information Technology, Samoa, provided updates on major policy and regulatory works that Samoa had been working on regarding COVID-19, preparatory works in case that Samoa would be affected by COVID-19, major public and private works in terms of solution and way forward through the use of digital services.

Ms. Tepua Hunter, ICT Director, Office of the Prime Minister, Cook Islands, shared policy and regulatory development including telecommunication market competition policy endorsed in 2019, the Competition and Regulatory Authority Act 2019, the Telecommunications Act 2019, the appointment of Chairperson of the Authority, new service provider. She also shared lessons learned from COVID-19 including immediate change of working hours, the need for affordable and reliable internet access from anywhere, challenges with the Internet speed, and contact tracing app. She also shared initiative developed to support businesses to move into digital economy.

Moderator also invited other Members in the Pacific to provide their updates.

Mr. Jolden Johnnyboy, Federated State of Micronesia, shared their update regarding COVID-19 cases. He also shared regulatory update since 2014 including establishment of Telecommunication Regulatory Authority, establishment of open access entity, structure of telecommunication regulatory in the country, FSM digital project, and key framework of the law on infrastructure sharing.

Mrs. Renga Teannaki, Ministry of Communications, Transport & Tourism Development, Kiribati, also shared update on their construction of their COVID-19 website providing preventive measures, repatriation process, guidelines for quarantine. Radio and TV were also used for awareness. She also shared on policy encouraging use of new technologies and mobile rollout to connect underserved islands.

Moderator provided updates of Vanuatu regarding the challenges in providing response to different disasters they had faced including the category 5 Cyclone. He also shared activities they had taken to address COVID-19 pandemic, various consultations issued by the Office of the Regulator including consultations on universal access program, consultation on SIM card registration, and activities regarding national security strategy.

Inmarsat raised an issue regarding the effort to harmonize regulatory best practices among the Pacific Islands nations. He suggested that a more harmonized approach between Members particularly in handling this kind of pandemic situation would be more effective and beneficial to everybody.

1. SESSION 3 – CONNECTIVITY IN THE PACIFIC *(Tuesday, 29 September 2020, 11:00 – 12:15 hrs.)*

Moderator: Mrs. Renga Teannaki, Ministry of Communications, Transport & Tourism Development, Kiribati.

* 1. **Submarine Cables *(Document: PRFP-13/INP-08)***

Mr. Vivek Anand, Senior Engineer for Communications, Ministry of Communications, Fiji, presented the document. He highlighted the importance of submarine cable to the Pacific Islands and introduced various submarine cables in Pacific. The presentation covered the status of the cables in the Pacific, submarine cables in Fiji, Tui-Samoa Cable Project, Southern Cross Cable Network and its benefits, and comparison between cable and satellite.

* 1. **Facebook Connectivity: Bringing more people online to a faster internet *(Document: PRFP-13/INP-09)***

Mr. Tom Varghese, Head of Connectivity and Access Policy, APAC, Facebook, presented the document. He introduced the reasons Facebook was working on Connectivity. He then talked about importance of the Internet during the COVID-19 pandemic, the innovation people use Facebook page and group to build resilience. The presentation also covered value chain for connectivity, Facebook infrastructure investments, Facebook operator facilitation initiatives including Express Wi-Fi, Open Transport Networks, and Pacific Islands Digital Citizenship and Safety program.

* 1. **New Satellite Technologies and Services in the Pacific *(Document: PRFP-13/INP-10)***

Mr. Tare Brisibe, Senior Legal & Regulatory Counsel, Asia-Pacific SES World Skies, presented the document. He introduced SES next generation Medium Earth Orbit (MEO) Satellite known as O3b mPower. The presentation talked about the journey with high-throughput, low-latency MEO satellite communication systems of O3b which started since 2014, the justification for choosing MEO. It then highlighted the capacity of O3b, Ground systems and user terminals, Adaptive Resource Control (ARC) System, and what it takes to deliver fibre-like services anywhere.

* 1. **Meaningful Connectivity *(Document: PRFP-13/INP-11)***

Ms. Anju Mangal, Head of Asia Pacific Region, and Mr. Teddy Woodhouse, Research Manager, Alliance for Affordable Internet, Web Foundation, presented the document. The presentation first talked about the global investments needed to achieve universal access, investments by regions and income groups, and how A4AI work in member countries. The presentation then talked about building partnerships for affordable backhaul infrastructure, how we measure internet access today, how we can do better, what meaningful connectivity is, and how we can use this standard. It further discussed why we need a new definition, aspects of internet access, dimensions of meaningful connectivity, measuring dimensions of meaningful connectivity, what the goal is, and what the next step is.

* 1. **Discussion**

Inmarsat, Palau, and Papua New Guinea participated in the discussion on issues relating to the Meaningful Connectivity presentation from Web Foundation including network service level agreement to end customer, contention ratio, quality of service that customer would get, cases where certain population didn’t even have 2G services and Internet, community based Wi-Fi network with satellite backhaul, issues on access to public infrastructure such as utilities.

Web Foundation also shared its works with APCICT of ESCAP on sectoral and cross sectoral infrastructure sharing for broadband module and happy to discuss with APT in the future if there was interest in the module in terms of what policy makers need to understand and how to take it forward.

FSM mentioned that the presentation from Web Foundation was an interesting topic and relevant to the country situation and also interested to be educated what Web Foundation was doing.

The meeting also discussed on Facebook applications during the COVID-19 and innovative use of Facebook page and Instagram profile.

1. SESSION 4 – MANAGING DISASTER AND CLIMATE CHANGE IN THE PACIFIC *(Wednesday, 30 September 2020, 09:00 – 10:15 hrs.)*

Moderator: Mr. Talatalaga Mata’u Matafeo, Chief Executive Officer, Ministry of Communications and Information Technology, Samoa

* 1. **Vanuatu Disaster Response *(Document: PRFP-13/INP-21)***

Mr. Presley Tari, Senior Communications Officer, National Disaster Management Office, Ministry of Climate Change, Vanuatu, presented the document. The presentation provided an overview of the National Disaster Management Office in Vanuatu. It then provided information on ongoing response and in progress in 2020 including Coconut Rhinoceros Beetle, Drought, COVID-19, Tropical Cyclone Harold, Yasur Volcano Ash fall. The presentation also covered Disaster Response Management cycle.

* 1. **Solomon Telekom Perspectives**

Mr. Arthur Yen, Chief Executive Officer, Solomon Islands Telekom, Solomon Islands, presented high-level status updates on Solomon Telekom Perspectives on its approach to crisis management. The presentation provided background on Solomon Telekom as well as issues and challenges in the Solomon Islands. It also covered update on strategy and preparation, COVID-19 response plan, key strategic response areas, initial operational focus and policy observation, National Disaster Management Office, external policy observations, internal policy considerations. It also shared example on how it supported the national effort regarding COVID-19.

* 1. **ETC in the Pacific – Preparedness + Response to Cyclone Harold *(Document: PRFP-13/ INP-14)***

Mr. Oscar Caleman, Regional IT Emergency Preparedness and Response Officer, World Food Programme, presented the document. The presentation talked about the Pacific Islands preparedness and emergency telecommunications preparedness checklist which had been developed by the ETC and ITU-D as a resource for a country to examine the readiness of its telecommunications infrastructure for disaster management. It then explained the ETC response to COVID-19 in the Pacific as well as Cyclone Harold.

* 1. **Discussion**

Mr. John Jack, Acting Chairman of PRFP expressed his appreciation to the WFP for the support and assistance provided to Vanuatu during response to the Cyclone Harold. He also raised a concern regarding difficulties in getting the support from Satellite operators on Ku Band terminals especially when the operator was not a signatory to the Crisis Connectivity Charter. WFP took note of the issue and would pass it to the person managing Crisis Connectivity Charter to see how it could improve the process.

Inmarsat added that during the crisis, it was at the forefront for helping both through the ITU and other organizations to ensure that the communication link for survival was there for the people in the Pacific Islands. He added that communication network available was very resilient, reliable, available, and covered all of the Pacific Islands.

1. SESSION 5 – OUTCOMES OF WORLD RADIOCOMMUNICATION CONFERENCE 2019 (WRC-19) AND IMPACTS ON THE PACIFIC *(Wednesday, 30 September 2020, 10:30 – 11:45 hrs.)*

Moderator: Mr. Christopher Hose, Executive Manager, Spectrum Planning and Engineering, the Australian Communications and Media Authority, Australia

* 1. **Information on key outcomes from RA 19 and WRC 19 *(Document: PRFP-13/INP-15)***

Mr. Philippe Aubineau, BR Counsellor for ITU-R Study Groups, ITU, presented the document. He first provided a brief summary of the Radiocommunication Assembly 2019 and then explained the structure of ITU-R Study Groups. The presentation then described the main objectives of WRC, benefits of the work of WRC, some figures from WRC-19, where to find information on WRC-19 outcomes & follow up, and the WRC Process. He further presented the key outcomes of WRC-19 including number of countries in additional spectrum for IMT, harmonization of IMT bands below 5GHz at WRC-15 and WRC-19, the Bands identified for HAPS, outcomes on Maritimes issues, non-GSO satellite systems issues, BSS & FSS Plans and ESIM issues. Finally, he introduced some topics on the WRC-23 agenda and main steps for the preparatory works towards WRC-23.

* 1. **WRC-19: outcomes & WRC-23 *(Document: PRFP-13/INP-16)***

Mr. Cristian Gomez, Director, Spectrum Policy & Regulatory Affairs, Asia Pacific, GSMA, presented the document. He first introduced some major investment going into the Pacific Islands in the last 4 years mainly in the submarine cables. These connection via submarine cable brought another aspect on high-speed broadband which was the access/mobile part. His presentation then discussed WRC-19 outcomes relating to mobile industry including mmWave 5G. He then introduced the opportunity that WRC-23 would provide to the mobile industry and all countries when it comes to infrastructure in various aspects, the WRC-23 IMT Agenda items overview, harmonization issue, WRC-23 solutions for three familiar challenges (Harmonization, Cost-Efficiency, Coverage). Finally, he shared some case studies on expanding mobile coverage.

* 1. **Outcome on Key Issues for the Pacific Islanders @WRC-19 Agenda *(Document: PRFP-13/INP-17 Rev.1)***

Mr. Bashir Patel, Senior Regional Advisor & GSC Coordinator, Policy, Regulatory & Spectrum Management, Inmarsat, presented the document. He first introduced the Global Satellite Coalition Partners which was the body that provides common vision for unified action. He then talked about unique characteristics of the Pacific Islands and WRC-19 key Agenda Items for Pacific Islanders from Satellite perspective. He then further explained more details on outcomes on those Agenda Items regarding ESIMs, GMSDD, IMT2020, HAPs, S-band, and Unauthorized Earth stations. The presentation also covered spectrum Bands requirements, example of Bands used by MSS, key WRC-23 Agenda Items, and Satellite Solutions for Pacific Islanders.

* 1. **Introduction to AFIS *(Document: PRFP-13/INP-20)***

APT Secretariat presented the document. He mentioned that it was important for Members to have a complete picture of the spectrum used in the country. He then introduced the APT Frequency Information System (AFIS) and explained why the AFIS was important, what AFIS was, what information was in AFIS, current status of AFIS, initiatives in Pacific countries and continued efforts. He mentioned that the video tutorial was also available in APT website. He also showed the example of AFIS usage and APT website for AFIS.

* 1. **Discussion**

The meeting widely discussed on WRC-23 Agenda Items including the issue on harmonization of 6 GHz at WRC-23 which covers 5,925 to 6,425 MHz Bands, 6,425 to 7,025 MHz Bands , and 7,025 to 7,125 MHz Bands which was used differently in different regions. It also discussed on Ka Band for Non Geo-Stationary ESIM. SES World Skies, GSMA, Inmarsat, and the moderator participated in the discussion.

1. SESSION 6 – PLENARY- WAY FORWARD AND CLOSING *(Wednesday, 30 September 2020, 11:45 – 12:15hrs.)*
	1. **Adoption of Output Document (Revised Working Methods of PRFP)**

APT Secretariat presented the revised Working Methods of PRFP taking into account the comments from the first session of the Plenary. He further added that other Work Programmes including ADF, APG, AWG, and PRF also had similar expression regarding virtual/online meeting. He mentioned that the final decision would be made at the Management Committee of the APT to standardize the naming. With regard to the additional proposed revision made by Bangladesh in terms of steering committee, APT Secretariat informed that the original proposed change used similar text with other Work Programmes so it was proposed to keep the same expression across all the Work Programmes.

With regard to the gender neutrality issue in terms of the Chairman and Vice-Chairman, APT Secretariat informed that the term “Chairman” was used in the Constitution of the APT, Rules of Procedure of the General Assembly and Rules of Procedure of the Management Committee. Therefore, APT Secretariat would like to keep the terms as they were. However, this issue would be proposed to the Management Committee of the APT to make a policy to govern all APT Work Programmes in terms of the Chairman and Vice-Chairman in the sense of gender neutrality.

Samoa and Papua New Guinea supported the proposal from the APT Secretariat.

The meeting adopted the revised Working Methods of PRFP (Document: PRFP-13/OUT-01). It would be submitted to the 44th Session of the Management Committee of the APT (MC-44) for approval.

* 1. **Nomination of Chairman and Vice-Chairmen of PRFP *(Document: PRFP-13/INP-06 and PRFP-13/INP-07)***

APT Secretariat informed that it received a letter from Samoa administration informing the resignation of Ms. Unutoa Fonoti from her role as Regulator for Samoa and so as Chairman of PRFP, and the nomination of Mr. Talatalaga Mata’u, Chief Executive Office for the Ministry of Communications and Information Technology as a candidate for the Vice-Chairman of PRFP (Document: PRFP-13/INP-06). He further informed that APT Secretariat had received a nomination from the government of Vanuatu nominating current Vice-Chairman from Vanuatu, Mr. John Jack, as the new Chairman of PRFP (Document: PRFP-13/INP-07).

Papua New Guinea seconded by Cook Islands supported the nominations from Samoa and Vanuatu.

Secretary General added that at the PRFP-11 in Samoa, the meeting proposed that PRFP has one Chairman and two Vice-Chairmen, and all of them would be the combination from three sub-regions including Polynesia, Melanesia, and Micronesia. Currently the forum had 2 nominations for the Chairman and one Vice-Chairman. She furthered mention that Mr. Criden Appi from Nauru had been nominated as a Vice-Chairman at PRFP-11, but he could not attend this meeting. She further mentioned that according to the Working Methods of PRFP, the term of Vice-Chairman was two years extendable once. She proposed that the meeting could consider nominating him for another term, and if he expressed his intention to discontinue his term then the meeting could consider nominating a new Vice-Chairman at the next plenary at the next PRFP meeting.

The meeting agreed to nominate Mr. John Jack (Vanuatu) as the new Chairman of PRFP and Mr. Talatalaga Mata’u (Samoa) as a new Vice-Chairman of PRFP. The meeting also agreed to nominate Mr. Criden Appi (Nauru) as a Vice-Chairman for the second term.

Mr. John Jack thanked all delegates for their trusts and confidence in supporting him as a new Chairman as well as Mr. Talatalaga Mata’u as a new Vice-Chairman of PRFP.

* 1. **Date and Venue of PRFP-14**

Mr. John Jack, Acting Chairman of PRFP mentioned that Vanuatu proposed to host PRFP-13 but it was not possible due to the COVID-19 pandemic. He informed that such offer would be postponed to host PRFP-14 in 2021 in Vanuatu.

Chairman asked the Secretariat whether there were any other countries offering to host the PRFP-14. APT Secretariat informed that Palau offered to host the PRFP in 2021. Therefore, he proposed Palau to kindly accept to postpone the opportunity to 2022. Palau agreed to host PRFP-15 in 2022.

Chairman thanked Palau for accepting to host PRFP-15 in 2022 and looked forward to visiting Palau in 2022. He invited all delegates to go to Vanuatu for PRFP-14 in 2021 and hoped that the COVID-19 would go away and the border would be opened for the meeting in 2021.

The meeting welcomed the offer of Vanuatu and Palau to host the PRFP-14 and PRFP-15 respectively. APT Secretariat would coordinate with the host countries on the dates of the meeting.

* 1. **Any other matters**

There was no other matter.

* 1. **Closing**

Ms. Areewan Haorangsi, Secretary General of APT delivered closing remarks. She mentioned that the PRFP-13 could not covered many topics due to COVID-19 and hoped that the PRFP-14 could be a physical meeting in order to address more issues and side event could be organized. She thanked Mr. John Jack, acting Chairman for this PRFP for his excellent leadership. She also thanked all moderators and speakers for their contribution. She mentioned that this was the last PRFP she attended before her term end on 8 February 2021. She expressed her heartfelt gratefulness to all participants for their contributions to the PRFP. She ensured ongoing support of the APT Secretariat to the Pacific and for the PRFP.

Mr. John Jack, Acting Chairman of PRFP delivered his remarks. He thanked all delegates for their attendance and thanked APT Secretariat for the good work through great commitment in organizing PRFP-13. He thanked the Secretary General for her leadership and guidance in making sure that even though COVID-19 had prevented APT members from physical meeting, we had adapted to the impact of COVID-19 and continued to find way to harness our commitment to move forward. He believed that Members in the Pacific would continue to use opportunities like PRFP to continue sharing of knowledge, learn from others and to build their capacity. He thanked all moderators and panelists for their great leadership and insightful presentations.

He then declared the meeting closed.

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