|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| A picture containing text, clipart  Description automatically generated | ASIA-PACIFIC TELECOMMUNITY | **Document No:** |
| **The 14th APT Policy and Regulation Forum for Pacific (PRFP-14)** | **PRFP-14/OUT-02** |
| 21 – 23 September 2021, Virtual/Online Meeting | 11 November 2021 |

Secretary General

**SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 14TH APT**

**POLICY AND REGULATION FORUM FOR PACIFIC**

1. INTRODUCTION

The 14th APT Policy and Regulation Forum for Pacific (PRFP-14) was held virtually from 21 to 23 September 2021. The meeting was organized by the Asia-Pacific Tele community (APT).

The meeting was attended by 100 participants from APT Members, Associate Members, Affiliate Members, International Organization, and other organizations. Document: PRFP-14/ADM-03 contains the list of participants of the PRFP-14.

1. OPENING SESSION *(Tuesday, 21 September 2021, 08:00 – 08:15 hrs., UTC+7)*
   1. **Welcome Address by Mr. Masanori Kondo, Secretary General, APT**

Mr. Masanori Kondo, Secretary General, APT, welcomed all delegates to PRFP-14. He mentioned that PRFP-14 had more than 130 registered participants from 17 countries which illustrated the high interest of APT members in the topics of this PRFP-14. He added that due to challenges caused by COVID-19 pandemic, policy makers, regulators and industries need to find ways to leverage the benefits and advantages of ICTs, and the digitalization triggered by COVID-19 would stimulate socio-economic transformation in every field. He mentioned that PRFP-14 had a special high-level roundtable to share insights and experiences learned during the combat against the COVID-19 pandemic, and other sessions on connectivity, cybersecurity, OTT, and disaster management. He thanked Excellencies for joining and thanked speakers and panelists for their contributions.

The full text of his address is provided in Document: PRFP-14/INP-01.

* 1. **Opening Address by Mr. John Jack, Chairman of PRFP**

Mr. John Jack, Chairman of PRFP mentioned that it was his greatest joy and heartfelt gratitude to make the opening address at this PRFP-14. He mentioned that the participants should have been gathering in person to have a joyful moment and share friendship and hospitality of the Pacific. He mentioned that the COVID-19 pandemic had exposed existing vulnerabilities and alerted the threats of new ones. He mentioned that the online gathering was showcasing powerful examples of the value and capability of a connected society and that they could achieve a lot when they were connected. He congratulated and thanked participants who had made commitment to join PRFP-14 for making the right decision to be part of this significant gathering where many unique Telecommunication/ICT development issues and challenges would be shared. He looked forward to concrete and positive participants during this gathering.

The full text of his remarks is provided in Document: PRFP-14/INP-02.

1. SESSION 1 - PLENARY *(Tuesday, 21 September 2021, 08:15 – 08:30 hrs*., *UTC+7)*
   1. **Adoption of the Agenda *(Document: PRFP-18/ADM-01)***

Mr. John Jack, Chairman of PRFP, introduced the Provisional Agenda of the Meeting. He sought comments on the document. As there was no comment, it was adopted.

* 1. **Outcomes of the 15th Session of the General Assembly and the 44th Session of the Management Committee of the APT Relevant to PRFP *(Document: PRFP-14/INP-03)***

APT Secretariat presented outcomes of the 15th Session of the General Assembly (GA-15) of the APT and 44th Session of the Management Committee of the APT (MC-44) relevant to PRFP. Secretariat further explained the actions to be taken by PRFP including:

1. Consider the Strategic Plan of the APT for 2021-2023 and implement the Strategic Plan within the scope of PRFP.
2. Report the implementation of the Strategic Plan of the APT for 2021-2023 relevant to PRFP to the next session of the Management Committee.
3. Follow the Guidelines for Remote Participation to APT meetings; and
4. Provide views on the proposed draft Guidelines on Public Access to APT documents including proposed category of information for public access to be reported to a future Working Group of Management Committee on APT Instruments (WGMC) meeting and subsequent Management Committee (MC).

The Secretariat noted that item 4 might require extra time to discuss at PRFP. The Secretariat suggested to set up an Ad-hoc group to discuss the issue and report the outcome of the group back to the Plenary.

The Plenary noted the outcomes of the GA-15 and MC-44 relevant to the work of PRFP and agreed to set up an Ad-hoc group for further discussion on Document Access Policy to which all participants were invited.

New Zealand made an intervention regarding the output of PRFP-13 that the issue had been elevated to the MC-44 and suggested to take offline discussion as necessary. The Chairman thanked New Zealand for the comment and mentioned that the issue would be discussed at the Ad-Hoc meeting on Thursday.

* 1. **Working Methods of PRFP *(****Document: PRFP-14/INP-04)*

The Secretariat introduced the proposed revision of Working Methods of PRFP as contained in PRFP-14/INP-04. The Secretariat recalled the meeting of the discussion at the PRFP-12 in Tonga regarding the request to establish a working group under PRFP in order to make it possible to conduct inter-sessional work. It was mentioned that if the Plenary decided to set up a designated working group, the PRFP working group needs to conduct its work primarily through electronic means such as a correspondence group or virtual/online meeting. The Secretariat also explained the proposed revision including the Terms of Reference of the Working Group that it could be used as a reference when considering the establishment of the working group.

The Chairman thanked the Secretariat for the presentation and invited participants to look through the document which was available on the website and provide comment and views if any.

1. SESSION 2 – (MINISTERIAL OR REGULATOR SESSION) ROUNDTABLE ON UPDATES OF POLICY AND REGULATION IN THE PACIFIC *(Tuesday, 24 August 2021, 11:15-12:30 hrs., UTC+7)*

Moderator: *Mr. Masanori Kondo, Secretary General, APT*

* 1. **Presentation by Mr. Kila Gulo-Vui, Chief Executive Officer of National Information and Communication Technology Authority (NICTA), Papua New Guinea (***Document: PRFP-14/INP-25)*

Mr. Kila Gulo-Vui, Chief Executive Officer of National Information and Communication Technology Authority (NICTA), Papua New Guinea presented the policy and regulatory update for Papua New Guinea. The presentation discussed the Digital Transformation Policy and Digital Government Transformation Bill 2020 driven by the Department of ICT. It also highlighted PNG responses in mitigating the effect of COVID-19 with programs including regulatory forbearance, priority licensing and resource allocation, staff support, and UAS levy offsets. He then explained a number of major regulatory projects that had been undertaken recently and talked about the legislation review and development and ratification of the Final Acts of WRC-19. He also highlighted some development in ICT infrastructures and services.

The detailed presentation is provided in Document: PRFP-14/INP-25.

* 1. **Statement by H.E. Bob Loughman Weibur, Prime Minister and Minister responsible for ICT and Media, Republic of Vanuatu** *(Document. PRFP14/INP-21)*

Dr. Gregoire Nimbtik, the Director General of the Ministry of Prime Minister delivered the statement on behalf of H.E. Bob Loughman Weibur, Prime Minister and Minister responsible for ICT and Media, Republic of Vanuatu. He mentioned that Vanuatu celebrated its 40 years of Independence on 30 July 2020 and in the same year it graduated from the Least Developed Country status to Developing Country Status. He mentioned that there were many challenges and opportunities brought by the COVID-19 pandemic especially the challenges of misinformation which had spread like wildfire as it made use of social media and they had experienced more of it during the COVID-19 pandemic. He added that COVID-19 had unwrapped the power of connectivity, while connectivity was the key catalyst of their economy to thrive in these challenging times. He highlighted the outcome of the universal access policy, the progress on their first domestic submarine cable network and second international submarine cable, the initiatives taken to cope with the COVID-19 pandemic, and digital transformation initiatives taken to prepare post-COVID-19 era.

The full text of his statement is provided in Document: PRFP-14/INP-21.

* 1. **Presentation by Mr. Enota Ingintau, CEO Communications Commission of Kiribati, Kiribati***(Document: PRFP-14/INP-24)*

Mr. Enota Ingintau, CEO Communications Commission of Kiribati, Kiribati presented Kiribati ICT Policy and Regulatory Response to a Pandemic/Natural Disaster. The presentation introduced the vulnerability of Kiribati and potential of ICT to bridge scattered islands and the developments undertaken by Kiribati in terms of ICT policy and regulations. He explained that, in launching the ICT development program, the Kiribati ICT Infrastructure Development Model was based on a Two-pronged development approach consisting of the first mile ICT solution and a last mile ICT solution. His presentation further explained mobile network rollout, broadband satellite internet Wi-Fi network rollout, and submarine optical fiber cable to Kiritimati and Tarawa. He then presented the major issues affecting ICT connectivity and online service in Kiribati including connectivity, content and application; funding and sustainability; collaboration and coordination; legislations and regulations; and product delivery and transportation. The final part of the presentation talked about leveraging the full benefits of ICT to build better with an ICT cross sectorial approach.

The detailed presentation is provided in Document: PRFP-14/INP-24.

* 1. **Statement by H.E. Toelupe Poumulinuku Onesemo, Minister, Ministry of Communications & Information Technology and Office of the Regulator, Samoa** *(Document: PRFP-14/INP-23)*

Mr. Talatalaga Mata’u Matafeo, Chief Executive Officer, Ministry of Communication and Information Technology, Samoa delivered statement on behalf of H.E. Toelupe Poumulinuku Onesemo, Minister, Ministry of Communications & Information Technology and Office of the Regulator, Samoa. He mentioned that COVID-19 had had an immediate and far-reaching impact on how the Government of Samoa operates. The Government of Samoa had recognized the increasing use of ICT tools and technologies to maintain communications and information flows. He highlighted the importance of managing the proper dissemination of information and accelerating the transition to digital. The statement also addressed other issues such as the progressive increase of the use of technological devices, the communication process with the citizen at the center of its action, the necessity of video conferencing platforms for the government, private business and individuals, the benefit brought by the existence of submarine cables, and the importance of the critical roles the government must play in preparing service deliveries to be more resilience for any future crisis.

The full text of his statement is provided in Document: PRFP-14/INP-23.

1. SESSION 3 – ADVANCING BROADBAND CONNECTIVITY IN THE PACIFIC (*Tuesday, 21 September 2021, 09:45-11:00 hrs., UTC+7)*

Moderator: *Mr. Enota Ingintau, CEO Communications Commission of Kiribati, Kiribati*

* 1. **A new way of pricing submarine cable capacity** *(Document: PRFP-14/INP-06)*

Mr. Bernard Hill, Chair, Communications Regulatory Authority (CRA) of the Cook Islands and Mr. John Deridder, Consultant to the Communications Regulatory Authority (CRA) of the Cook Islands presented the document about a new way of pricing submarine cable capacity. They raised the issue that in traditional pricing of submarine cable bandwidth is treated as a scarce commodity. They explained a new way of pricing which charges what data is put through the pipe (pricing traffic in Gigabytes, GB). They also introduced the first use of this pricing structure in the Solomon Islands, which has deployed this form of pricing which encourages new entrants who help achieve the benefits that aid agencies expect from submarine cable connectivity.

* 1. **Towards Universal Digital Access in Pacific** *(Document: PRFP-14/INP-05)*

Ms. Yoonee Jeong, SDCC-DT/Asian Development Bank (ADB) presented the document. She outlined the strategy and activities of the ADB in the area of digital connectivity and infrastructure, the renewed imperatives to improve digital connectivity and areas of opportunities in telecommunications policy and regulations. She also introduced upcoming ADB engagement and Private Sector (Non-sovereign) Financing.

* 1. **A Connected Asia Pacific with Satellite Broadband (***Document: PRFP-14/INP-07)*

Mr. Jacques-Samuel Prolon, Executive Vice President of Kacific Broadband Satellites Ltd. presented the document under the title of “A Connected Asia Pacific with Satellite Broadband”. He introduced their next-generation satellite technology which is revolutionizing prices in the rural areas and bridging the Digital Divide in various sectors by illustrating some use cases in Vanuatu, Timor-leste, and Tuvalu.

* 1. **Connectivity in Kiribati***(Document: PRFP-14/INP-08)*

Mr. Ivan Fong, Chief Executive Officer for Amalgamated Telecom Holdings Limited (ATH) presented the document. He presented on the topic of the network upgrade implementation in Kiribati after the acquisition of Telecom Services Kiribati Limited, the further extension of services to the outer islands and a discussion of successes and challenges.

1. SESSION 4 – BUILDING CYBERSECURITY CAPABILITY IN THE PACIFIC FOR TRUSTED AND SECURED CYBERSPACE *(Wednesday, 22 September 2021, 08:00 – 09:15 hrs., UTC+7)*

Moderator: *Mr. Klee Aiken, Principal Pacific Partnership Advisor, CERT NZ*

The Moderator invited each panelist to make an introductory presentation/remark.

* 1. **Building Cybersecurity Capability in the Pacific for trusted and secured cyberspace** *(Document: PRFP-14/INP-09)*

Mr. Craig Gillies, Director, Cyber Cooperation Cyber Affairs and Critical Technology Branch, International Security Division, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Australia, presented the document on Australia’s vision for a trusted and secure cyberspace, and Australia’s approach to this through the Australian International Cyber and Critical Technology Engagement Strategy (ICCTES). He explained in detail how Australia is contributing to the cyber security capability of the Pacific, including details of Australia’s Cyber and Critical Tech Cooperation Program (CCTCP).

* 1. **Working together to build cybersecurity capacity** *(Document: PRFP-14/INP-10)*
  2. Dr. James Boorman, Head of Research and Capacity Building, Oceania Cyber Security Centre (OCSC) and Mr. Edward Albert, IT Manager, FSM Department of Transportation, Communications, & Infrastructure (FSM TC& I) presented the document. They introduced The Cybersecurity Capacity Maturity Model for Nations (CMM) which has helped over 86 countries around the world understand where they stand now and inform them in the next steps to take regarding the development or revision of their national plans.

They also explained the FSM and OCSC have been co-developing a roadmap for the national cybersecurity and cybercrime strategy taking the recommendation of a CMM review in 2020 as part of an APT Expert Mission, working with the OCSC.

* 1. **Strengthening Cyber Security Together** *(Document: PRFP-14/INP-11)*

Mr. Siosaia Vaipuna, Head of CERT Tonga, who is also on behalf of Tonga is the current Chair of the Pacific Cyber Security Operational Network (PaCSON). Mr. Vaipuna presented the document and introduced key activities of PaCSON which builds robust international cyber security relationships and structures for cooperation in tackling the global cyber security challenge by sharing best practices, information and developing incident response capability.

* 1. **Building Cyber Security Capability in an Island State** *(Document: PRFP-14/INP-12)*

Dr. Jeffery Garae, Cyber Security Advisor, Office of the Government Chief Information Officer, Republic of Vanuatu presented the document. He introduced that Vanuatu is commencing the implementation of its National Cyber Security Strategy (NCSS) that greatly addresses the need to build Cyber Security capability. This will ensure Vanuatu works towards building a trusted and secured Cyberspace environment that is safe, promote cyber hygiene and protects all businesses, processes, citizens and tourists who use the Internet while in Vanuatu or abroad.

* 1. **Introductory remarks by Amazon Web Services**

Ms. Min Livanidis, Cybersecurity Policy Lead for ANZ for Amazon Web Services (AWS) acknowledged the previous speakers and thanked them for illustrating that cyber security is so much more than just a technical issue, and there is a lot of emphasis on cyber security from a public policy. She highlighted security is the top priority for AWS and that they do need to take a holistic view of cybersecurity, what it is and how it is not just a technical problem but a political problem as well.

* 1. **Panel Discussion**

The moderator invited panelists to give one piece of advice to either the user community or the small and medium enterprise community to really boost their cybersecurity, and to tackle that challenge. The key points from the panelists were:

* Minimizing data breaches and avoiding cybercrime which might cause damage to businesses.
* The necessity of protecting and controlling the digital identity with a strong password and multi-factor authentication.
* Using unique strong passwords, not applying SNS’s password for online banking.
* Raising the awareness of the risks and the threats which new applications or new services might include.
* An active understanding of what is being implemented before installing a new product or service.

In response to the request from a participant, Dr. Jeffery Garae explained the expanded National Cyber Security Strategy for 2020-2030 in Vanuatu and noted that its implementation will commence next week.

The moderator also invited panelists to share a project, initiative, or trend that they've seen in the region that inspires the hope that things are getting better when it comes to cyber security in the region.

Mr. Craig Gillies suggested the things that bring him hope is that the role of ICT is the tremendous enthusiasm and attention, the cyber security is taken particularly amongst Pacific Island Members. It can be seen from the fact that the Australian foreign minister signed a number of MOUs on Cybersecurity matters with other Members in the Pacific.

Dr. James Boorman mentioned it's quite impressive to see how much has been achieved by reviewing the national cybersecurity capacity maturity with CMM. He also highlighted the key is building capacity who can talk about and take initiatives more on Cybersecurity through collaborations between all the different countries who are part of these communities.

Mr. Edward Albert mentioned that the FSM is undertaking the Digital FSM project and the government has moved forward since the Pacific Islands Forum started two years ago.

Mr. Siosaia Vaipuna mentioned that it's good to see the increase in interest and need for cyber security from the Pacific and things are looking up. He also reorganized the following challenges; how to coordinate to meet the needs and provide the resources and, not just establish institutions and strategies but implement and make a portfolio.

The moderator invited Dr Jeffery Garae to how to translate those ideas from being on paper into operational and sustainable efforts.

Dr. Jeffery Garae highlighted that having platforms like the PRFP and sharing ideas is very important to move forward. He also mentioned that a more joined up approach like international cooperation or collaboration would be required, not just dependent on policy direction in individual countries.

Ms. Min Livanidis mentioned the things that give her cause for optimism is the people who are in the field of cybersecurity which rewards curiosity and invites ingenuity. She also suggested that a diversity of mindsets is required to be able to take an idea and turn it into something practical, which make her think that is something that cyber security as a discipline is really starting to do quite well.

The moderator made a short comment that diversity is the strength of cybersecurity as was demonstrated in the panel discussion and he concluded the session with an expression of appreciation to the panelists.

1. SESSION 5 – RECENT DEVELOPMENT OF OTTS AND SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORM SERVICES *(Wednesday, 22 September 2021, 09:45 – 11:00 hrs., UTC+7)*

Moderator: *Mr. John Jack, Chairman of PRFP*

The Moderator invited each panelist to make a short introductory presentation before beginning the panel discussion.

* 1. **OTT Trends in OECD Countries** *(Document: PRFP-14/INP-14)*

Ms. Lauren Crean, Economist/Policy Analyst, OECD presented the document. She firstly reflected on the increasing convergence seen in the communications and broadcasting sectors and their policy implications. She secondly considered the increasing role of over-the-top services (OTTs) and the regulatory questions they raise. Finally, she presented the general trends in policy responses to over-the-top services (OTTs) among OECD member countries, focusing on voice over IP (VoIP) and audio-visual OTTs.

* 1. **Over the Top Technology Status in the Pacific - Challenges and Options** *(Document: PRFP-14/INP-15)*

Mrs. Lematua Gisa Fuatai Purcell, Regulator, Office of the Regulator, Samoa presented the document. She summarized the challenge related to OTT in the Pacific and introduced the study that the Commonwealth Telecommunication Organization published. She suggested that regulators in each country have to define OTT, and then look at their national status within the Pacific and to work together.

* 1. **Introduction to FB connectivity initiatives and recommendations for way forward for OTT policy** *(Document: PRFP-14/INP-16)*

Ms. Renuka Rajaratnam, Manager, Connectivity and Access Policy, APAC, Facebook presented the document. She provided an overview of Facebook’s Connectivity initiatives and programs partnering with the local telco ecosystem exploring new technologies, business models and partnerships to bring more people online to faster internet. She also introduced Facebook’s perspective on a best practice approach to OTT policy.

* 1. **Panel Discussion**

The Moderator invited panelists to share their comments about the mobile network operators’ concern about the Impact of OTTs on the revenue and costs.

Ms. Renuka Rajaratnam, Manager, Connectivity and Access Policy, APAC, Facebook, initially made a comment that Facebook does not take lightly, how important telecom operator partners and ISP partners are. She also mentioned that Open-Source Access Technology Solutions bring down operator’s network costs and help them build out networks where it previously has not made business sense for them to develop them. She highlighted that they're doing this out of their own initiative because it makes business sense for them, because it's part of their innovation, and not because governments mandated it.

Ms. Lauren Crean, Economist/Policy Analyst, OECD, pointed out that OTT services in general can be seen as a very important driver of demand for broadband services. She mentioned that increased competition has been seen in some cases to spur traditional operators’ efforts to innovate, for instance by developing video streaming or other new services and to drive down prices of broadband services. She also pointed out some regulators are considering the question of complementarity versus substitutability of OTT services versus traditional offers, while also taking into account instances where traditional providers (e.g., MNOs) are partnering with OTTs. OCED regulators are looking at these questions on a on a case-by-case basis.

The Moderator invited Ms. Lauren Crean, OECD for her thoughts about a clear definition of OTTs, that is believed to help policy policymakers and regulators to come up with the right policies.

Ms. Lauren Crean, OECD noted others’ definitions of OTTs and mentioned that the OECD had considered the topic in past reports and had considered a typology of different types of OTT services. She further highlighted the importance of metrics as well as definitions. Monitoring is something that is very much on the mind of OECD regulators and policymakers. It is important to put in place specific metrics to establish a baseline in order to measure the impact any policy has on the domestic market.

The Moderator invited Mrs. Lematua Gisa Fuatai Purcell, Regulator, Office of the Regulator, Samoa, to share government consideration on if the increasing revenue of OTT services can be taxed as part of revenue generation.

Mrs. Lematua Gisa Fuatai Purcell, Regulator, Office of the Regulator, Samoa, mentioned that Samoa introduced an OTT fee in 2018, and charges users who use social media on a per day basis. She also referred to the Indian Supreme Court order on adjusted gross revenue that will be applicable to all telecom licenses.

The Panelists also discussed the issue depending on the questions from a participant, whether OTT will be regulated or not, and how to regulate OTT, some key highlights were:

* When policymakers regulate OTT, it is crucial for the regulation to specify a certain target, to fit the purpose and to have a reasonable policy framework. The process should be taken considering that the OTT providers and telecom operators don't have the same business models, the same customer base, and even don't provide the same type of services.
* Standards need to be looked into so that regulators can determine how to define fair competition, and that income which includes costs and taxes, with OTTs that continue to compete with traditional voice calls and texting services. It is significant for network operators to generate revenue so that they will enable them to invest in network infrastructure.
* There are three things that regulators should really think about how to define and how to target regulations by the types of OTTs. Firstly, if one really needs the regulations and secondly what the purpose of it is, and thirdly, how one can lessen the regulatory burden on the telecom industry itself

The moderator thanked all panelists for giving a comprehensive description and their views on the challenge and opportunities related to OTT.

1. AD-HOC GROUP ON APT DOCUMENT/INFORMATION POLICY *(Wednesday, 22 September 2021, 07:00 – 08:00 hrs., UTC+7)*

The Ad-Hoc Group was chaired by Chairman of PRFP. The Secretariat presented the draft Guideline on APT Documents/Information Policy. After the presentation, the following issues were raised and discussed:

* The discussions and progress of other Work Programmes of APT, such as ADF, APG, ASTAP, APT PP prep meeting, PRF were introduced.
* The ITU practice on Document Access Policy should be considered in establishing APT’s Document Access Policy,
* The categorization of the work programme should be clearer and exhaustive.

New Zealand endorsed the proposal from Australia

After the discussion, it was concluded that:

* The Ad-Hoc Group decided to defer the decision to the PRFP-15 due to the limited time for the deliberation with the hope to make a prudent decision.
* Nevertheless, the Ad-Hoc Groupe decided to recommend APT to set up rules in line with ITU Document Access policy. Moreover, the Ad-Hoc Group recommended to consider financial implication of this proposal and consult it with APT Member administration accordingly as it might entail the impact to the membership fee; and
* The Ad-Hoc Group took a note that there was a support from New Zealand on the proposal, and the suggestion from Palau to revisit the categorization of the work programme contained in section 3 of Annex 1 to be clearer and exhaustive.

1. SESSION 6 – CLOSED SESSION FOR POLICYMAKERS AND REGULATORS (*Thursday, 23 September 2021, 08:00 – 09:00 hrs., UTC+7)*

Moderator: *Mr. John Jack, Chairman, PRFP*

* 1. **Discussion**

The Chairman mentioned that island nations in the Pacific have shared some of common challenges such as climate change. However, many countries were concentrating on combating COVID-19 which had struck the entire world. He raised the issue on role and responsibility of regulators and policy makers in the Telecommunication/ICT industry to assist government and citizen in addressing COVID-19 issues. He recalled the statement from Prime Minister of Vanuatu at the Ministerial Session on the first day of the meeting, on the importance of learning from each other. He then requested the meeting to discuss how to get all PRFP Members to participate more constructively to tackling some of the challenges. Discussion was also undertaken on the experience of meeting/networking with other regional/international organizations in providing support in response to COVID-19.

The Secretariat recalled the discussions at the meeting PRFP-12 regarding establishment of a Working Group under PRFP. The Secretariat invited suggestions from PRFP Members for suitable topics to be discussed at the Working Group. The Secretariat encouraged Members to submit proposal by the next PRFP meeting. Some Members suggested that cybersecurity issues should remain a priority topic.

1. SESSION 7 – DISASTER MANAGEMENT IN THE PACIFIC: ENHANCING DISASTER PREPAREDNESS, MITIGATION, AND RECOVERY PROCESS THROUGH ICT *(Thursday, 23 September 2021, 09:10 – 10:30 hrs., UTC+7)*

Moderator: *Ms. Susanna Stowers, Assistant CEO, MCIT, Samoa*

* 1. **WFP Presentation** *(Document: PRFP-14/INP-17)*

Mr. Oscar Caleman, Regional IT Emergency Preparedness and Response (EPR) Officer, World Food Program Regional Bureau Asia & Pacific (Bangkok) presented the document. He outlined the unmanned aircraft system (UAS) and drones for damage assessment. He noted the work being undertaken with the Bhutan government on flood modeling which is monitoring potential impact of damage. He also noted how the program aims to understand the rules for Wi-Fi in this era of UAS and drones, both in the Pacific and globally.

* 1. **2019/2020 Australian Bushfires – Impact on Telecommunications Facilities and Response Package** *(Document: PRFP-14/INP-18)*

Mr. Matt Skinner, Assistant Director of the Telecommunications Resilience team within the Australian Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications, presented the document. He indicated the impact the 2019/2020 bushfires in Australia had on telecommunications facilities and the Australian Government’s Strengthening Telecommunications Against Natural Disasters Package, which is consist of 4 pillars, including the Mobile Hardening Component.

* 1. **Disaster Risk Prevention Information System** *(Document: PRFP-14/INP-19 (Rev.1))*

Mr. Yoshiji Hieda, Group Manager of Business Development Group, International Business Management Department, Solution Business Division, Japan Radio Co., Ltd. presented the document. He shared their solution which is related to the disaster risk prevention information systems such as flood warning systems, oceanographic radar for real-time monitoring of Tsunamis. He also introduced the project case study that is being undertaken in Tonga.

* 1. **Satellite Connectivity in Disaster Management** *(Document: PRFP-14/INP-20)*

Mr. Lim Zhi Guo, Market Access and Spectrum Policy, Asia Pacific

Telesat presented the document. He shared information on the key system features of Telesat Lightspeed, how they meet such needs in climate-related extreme weather events and the importance of a common satellite licensing approach in the Pacific region.

* 1. **Discussion**

The Moderator took a question from the floor and invited Speakers to answer the questions.

First, Mr. Oscar Caleman answered the question about the challenge during the project of unmanned aircraft system and drones. He mentioned that licensing process and how they should approach it from a regulatory perspective is often a challenge. To deal with it, he suggested that the key was early engagement, building capacity, building coordination structures and collaboration.

Mr. Myer Techitong from Palau asked a question to Mr. Oscar Caleman about the availability of the resources through ECP (Economic Contingency Plan) coordinator. Mr. Oscar Caleman introduced the coordinator in Fiji.

In response to the question from Vanuatu on the connectivity chart of Satellite options, Mr. Oscar Caleman mentioned that although there was capacity available to deploy into the theatre across the Pacific, expanding it across the Pacific itself was a challenge.

Mr. Crispian Wong from Access Partnership requested Mr. Lim Zhi Guo’s view on what could be done to encourage new complementary technologies at the end-user point with existing satellite phones.

Mr. Lim Zhi Guo shared his view that the ultimate goal was a situation where everyone can connect directly with each other no matter what forms of technology they use, whether it is a satellite phone or a mobile phone. He also added that in order to achieve such a goal, various approaches would be needed, including the aspects of liberalizing relevant regulations in the convergence of technologies that would play an important role in realizing this goal.

1. SESSION 8 – PLENARY – WAY FORWARD AND CLOSING

*(Thursday, 23 September 2021, 10:30 – 11:00 hrs., UTC+7)*

* 1. **Approval of Output Document**

The APT Secretariat presented the Revised Working Methods of PRFP which was uploaded as Document: PRFP-14/OUT-04. The Secretariat briefly explained the changes which had been presented earlier at the opening Plenary. It was noted that that the Secretariat had received no comments and presented it to the Plenary for its discussion and decision.

The Chairman thanked the Secretariat for the work and preparation of the document. As there was no further comment, the meeting adopted the Revised Working Methods of PRFP.

* 1. **Way Forward**

The Chairman reported the outcomes of the Ad-Hoc Group (as the chairman of the Ad-Hoc Group). There was no comment on the report and the meeting agreed on how to report and handle the issue of the document access policy as PRFP.

The Chairman encouraged Members to propose possible topics for discussion at the Working Group to the Secretariat.

* 1. **Date and Venue for PRFP-15**

The Chairman informed that the Steering Committee meeting had agreed that in terms of the date of the next meeting, this time of the year would be a good time for the next PRFP. Vanuatu had proposed to host the PRFP-15 meeting and he suggested that Vanuatu and the Secretariat would work together to finalize the date for the next meeting.

The Secretary General noted that 2022 would be a busy year since there would be three major ITU Conferences as well as many APT Meetings. The potential date would likely be around August, or early September since the ITU Plenipotentiary Conference was scheduled to start at the end of September 2022.

* 1. **Any Other Matters**

No issue.

* 1. **Closing**

Mr. Masanori Kondo, Secretary General of APT, delivered his closing remarks. He mentioned that the meeting could exchange interesting views and important ICT issues related to the Pacific. He highlighted that this PRFP organized the special high-level roundtable inviting Ministers, Head of Regulators, and high-level officials to share insights and experiences in combating the COVID-19 pandemic and expressed his sincere appreciation for their participation. He mentioned that the meeting also covered other issues such as broadband connectivity, cybersecurity, OTT, and disaster management. He added that he has learned many new things which stimulated the development of ideas of how APT could collaborate with other stakeholders. He believed that PRFP was a very useful and informative discussion platform, and he would like to strengthen the cooperation ecosystem among stakeholders in the Pacific on an ongoing basis. He also thanked the Chairman and Vice-Chairmen of PRFP, moderators, speakers, and participants for making this PRFP-14 successful.

Mr. John Jack, Chairman of PRFP, delivered his closing remarks. He commended all delegates for having made time out of busy schedule to attend this important meeting. He mentioned that the PRFP-14, despite being undertaken in a virtual meeting room, was organized successfully. He expressed his heartfelt gratitude to the Secretariat for the good work in all effort in making this meeting success. He added that it showed that they could adapt and continue to find way to harness their collective commitments to move forward. He mentioned that COVID-19 had alerted Members in the Pacific to new challenges, and they need to collaborate. He mentioned that PRFP was a successful discussion platform for APT Members in the Pacific, and he believed that they would continue to use opportunity like this to share their knowledge, learn from other, and build their capacity. He mentioned that the success of PRFP was the active participation, and he thanked all panelists, speakers and moderators for their contributions.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_