

**Tenth Meeting of the Regional Interagency Working Group on
Information and Communication Technologies (ICT)**

**1 December 2006 (0900-1200 hours)
United Nations Conference Centre (UNCC), Bangkok**

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First of all, on behalf of ITU, I would like to thank ESCAP, ICST Division in particular, for hosting this 10th inter-agency working group, which provides us a great opportunity to share our work with each other, build partnerships as well as avoid duplication among ICT-related agencies.

It is great pleasure to meet many of you today, with whom we have been interacting very closely to strengthen outputs and optimize our limited resources. For example, one of our initiatives with ESCAP is scheduled just two weeks ahead on disaster communications, while four of them are planned next year with the APT and others.

As introduced in earlier meetings, ITU as a leading UN Specialized Agency for telecommunications and now ICTs formally endorsed by the ITU Plenipotentiary Conference-06 (PP-06) has been entrusted to be the moderator for Actions of the WSIS: For instance, Action Line C2 entitled as “*Information and communication infrastructure*” and Action Line C5 aimed at “*Building confidence and security in the use of ICTs*”. These mandates and roles of ITU endorsed by the WSIS were re-enforced by Member States at the PP-06 held last week in Turkey through

adopting the relevant Resolutions: e.g., Bridging Digital Divide and Strategic Roles of ITU etc. A number of activities, initiatives and projects in this regard are ongoing which will be presented in the next session.

Another important mandate for ITU in the development sector emanates from the World Telecom Development Conference, held in Doha in March this year (called WTDC-06). As an outcome of this conference, ITU has a four-year regional initiatives for each of the five regions of the world in addition to its six global programmes. For the Asia Pacific region, the five regional initiatives adopted at the WTDC-06 will be explained more details later: e.g.,

1. Telecommunication/ICT policy and regulatory cooperation in the Asia-Pacific region
2. Rural communications – Infrastructure development
3. NGN planning
4. The unique telecommunication/ICT needs of Pacific islands and Small Island Developing States (SIDS) in the Asia-Pacific region
5. Strengthening the collaboration between ITU-T and ITU-D

All our work programs are structured keeping in view the regional requirements and the mandate provided to us by WTDC, WSIS and the supreme organ of ITU called Plenipotentiary Conference, which was just successfully completed last week in Antalya, Turkey (we call it as PP-06).

In accordance with the calls of the WSIS, WTDC, and PP-06 for enhanced partnerships and effective coordination to bridge the digital divide and build the Information Society with other international, regional and sub-regional organizations and other entities engaged in activities related to the development of

telecommunications/ICTs, ITU has built up significant partnerships sub-regionally, regionally as well as globally.

Our various planned activities include programs on Rural Communication, NGN and ICT legislation in Pacific Islands with APT as well as a possible study on Asia-Pacific ICT Statistics and a workshop on Disaster Communication with ESCAP. We are also coordinating with the Asian Development Bank (ADB) to collaborate in the implementation of ADB's Rural e-Development Initiative in the Asia-Pacific Region.

With ASEAN, we are forging a partnership through joint organizations of workshops, seminars, trainings, and study visits that are related to our Asia Pacific Regional Initiatives, particularly in the areas of (a) Telecom/ICT Policy and Regulatory Cooperation, (b) Rural Communications for Infrastructure Development and (c) NGN Planning.

ITU's activities in the Pacific sub-region include a specific regional initiative (2007 – 2010) to assist the Small Island Developing States (SIDS). We have partners such as PITA, with which we have been organizing and will continue to organize several workshops and training programs in the areas of telecommunications/ICTs. We also coordinate closely with PIFS in implementing our initiatives in the sub-region. Moreover, our teams at both Headquarters and Regional Offices are currently working on raising funds for the Pacific Island Countries from the European Commission (EC).

Likewise, I am sure, many of you have been and will plan to implement various ICT-related activities, which we would like to share as well as seek further partnership especially in such areas of various ICT or e-applications. For example, ITU and UPU have just signed a project on e-post for Nepal.

It is also an opportune moment to share with you that in October 2006, our stakeholders agreed to revive the Asia-Pacific Centre of Excellence program that would foster institutionalized telecommunication/ICT capacity building programs in the areas of Policy & Regulation, Technology Awareness, Spectrum Management, Rural ICT Development and Business Management through setting up five centres in the Asia-Pacific Region. These will be networking among themselves as well as with those in other regions such as America, Arab, Africa and Europe under the umbrella of ITU.

With this, now I am looking forward to hearing and learning from other colleagues and seeking to build partnerships that would supplement and compliment each other based on our respective competencies to build the information society and to eradicate the poverty eventually, through wisely utilizing the ICTs.

Thanks you very much for your kind attention.