

ASIA-PACIFIC DECLARATION

(SINGAPORE DECLARATION)

JUNE 1992



ASIA-PACIFIC TELECOMMUNITY

ASIA-PACIFIC DECLARATION ON
STRATEGIES FOR
ACCELERATING THE GROWTH OF
TELECOMMUNICATIONS

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Although telecommunications has already been recognized as an important infrastructure for economic development, many countries of the Asia-Pacific region are struggling to provide even the basic services within easy reach of the people. Growth of telecommunications in developing countries of the region has suffered due to the low priority allotted to the sector and inadequate investment made in the past. The sudden spurt in demand for reliable telecommunication services at affordable prices has placed enormous strain on the scarce resources of the developing countries in the region. Shortage of funds - more seriously that of hard currency - and lack of technological and human resources are some of the other factors affecting the growth of telecommunications in the region. It has become essential that all sectors involved in or benefitted by telecommunications make co-ordinated efforts to meet these challenges.
- 1.2 Strategies for accelerating the growth of telecommunications involve policy decisions on the restructuring of the telecommunication sector, planning and implementation of domestic, sub-regional and regional networks, financing telecommunications development and strengthening regional co-operation in matters relating to network development, introduction of new services, transfer of technology, promotion of international standards, setting up of accredited

acceptance testing centres, development of human resources, and promotion of trade in equipment and services. Organizations like the Asia-Pacific Telecommunity (APT) and International Telecommunication Union (ITU) have a leading role to play in these matters.

- 1.3 The benefits of advances made in several areas of telecommunications technologies such as Optical Fibre, Satellite Communications, Mobile and Personal Communications etc. can be assisted through a mechanism of closer regional co-operation.

2. **ACTIONS URGED**

2.1 **GENERAL**

The governments of the countries and territories of the Asia-Pacific region should:

- recognize the importance of telecommunication development in facilitating economic and trade growth throughout the Asia-Pacific region.
- give higher priority to the development of the telecommunications sector in their national plans and endeavour to promote policies that will facilitate raising funds for the development of telecommunications.
- where possible seek solutions to network expansion, particularly in rural areas, that lead to self-sustaining growth in their telecommunications sector.
- restructure their telecommunication sector to make it more efficient and responsive to market forces according to the economic conditions in their own country.

- strengthen mechanisms of regional and sub-regional co-operation through existing organizations such as the APT and ITU aimed at exploring the potential for the development of solutions on a regional basis.
- request the UNDP, the World Bank, the Asian Development Bank and other funding organizations to allocate a higher priority to the funding of the telecommunication sector.

2.2 **RESTRUCTURING OF TELECOMMUNICATIONS SECTOR**

Depending upon socio-economic conditions existing in the country, telecommunication administrations in the Asia-Pacific region should:

- promote restructuring of their telecommunication sector to make it more responsive to the market and infrastructural needs of the society.
- consider separating the responsibility for policy formulation and regulation from the delivery of services.
- depending upon the status of telecommunications in the country, carry out further deregulation to foster participation of the private sector in the telecommunication market.

2.3 **NETWORK DEVELOPMENT**

Where appropriate, telecommunication administrations should:

- provide at least the basic telephone services within easy reach of the people.

- review the status of their existing networks with special regard to quality of service, traffic congestion, utilization of existing capacity and projected requirements for the decade.
- consider the preparation of regional and sub-regional projects to meet the traffic and service requirements of the future.
- discuss these proposals and implementation plans in co-ordination meetings with concerned organizations.
- develop regional co-operation in improving the quality of networks through appropriate installation practices, acceptance testing procedures, service standards, maintenance programmes and upgradation schemes.

2.4 FINANCING TELECOMMUNICATION DEVELOPMENT

- Administrations of the Asia-Pacific region are urged to accord a higher priority to the telecommunication sector and endeavour to promote policies that will facilitate raising funds for the development of telecommunications including the consideration of setting up of an Asia-Pacific Telecommunications Fund.
- Telecommunication administrations of the Asia-Pacific region are requested to:
 - generate internal resources by achieving revenue growth through increased business efficiency and cost-reductions.
 - mobilize funds generated through efficient customer charging arrangements for promoting telecommunications development.

within the framework of their national telecommunications policy, encourage innovative financing arrangements, including where appropriate, joint ventures, foreign participation, BOT, revenue sharing and other schemes as a means of financing telecommunications developments.

3. REGIONAL CO-OPERATION IN TELECOMMUNICATIONS

3.1 INTRODUCTION OF NEW TECHNOLOGIES AND SERVICES IN THE REGION

- Telecommunication administrations should encourage regional telecommunication organizations including the APT to strengthen their usual activities to promote the exchange of information among member countries concerning the introduction of new services and technologies. These activities include co-operation in regional planning and implementation, utilization of frequency spectrum, and geostationary satellite orbits, acceptance testing of systems, new technology applications, maintenance support etc.
- Regional organizations like the APT are requested to promote agreements on matters concerning policy and regulatory aspects, liberalization of telecommunication services and inter country operations, tariffs etc.

3.2 PROMOTING TRANSFER OF TECHNOLOGY IN THE REGION

- Telecommunication administrations in the region are requested to take effective steps in association with other

concerned organizations/departments in their countries to promote the development of cost effective technologies to suit their local needs.

- Organizations such as the APT and the ITU have a leading role to play in promoting the transfer of telecommunication technology in the region. This will involve on-going assessment of the requirements of administrations, identifying possible areas of co-operation, providing assistance in the implementation of plans concerning transfer of technology, and co-ordination with the other concerned organizations and administrations.

3.3 *PROMOTING INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS*

- APT in association with ITU, and concerned regional organizations is urged to take necessary steps in developing, adapting and promoting international standards in the region, and in particular, to promote regional co-operation and co-ordination on type approval, acceptance testing and standardization matters.

3.4 *DEVELOPMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES*

- Organizations such as APT and ITU have an important role to play in assisting with the training and development needs of member countries in the region.
- These organizations at regional level should also take steps to strengthen regional co-operation in utilizing the collective resources of the region to fulfill training needs of individual countries and where appropriate encourage the setting up of regional training centres to meet the various training needs, such as production technology.

Telecommunication administrations in the region should pay particular attention to future human resource development needs, and should take practical steps to identify any areas where they will need assistance.

In witness whereof the undersigned have signed the Asia-Pacific Declaration on Strategies for Accelerating the Growth of Telecommunications.

Dated, 2 June, 1992, Singapore.

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