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|  | **Document** **RPM-ASP21/15-E** |
|  | **29 March 2021** |
|  | **English only** |
| Chairman, Regional Preparatory Meeting for WTDC-21 for Asia and the Pacific (RPM-ASP) |
| Report by the RPM-ASP Chairman |

# Introduction

The Regional Preparatory Meeting for Asia and the Pacific (RPM-ASP) was organized by the Telecommunication Development Bureau (BDT) of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) and held online from 9 to 10 March 2021.

The objective of RPM-ASP was to identify regional topics of interest and challenges that need to be addressed to foster the development of telecommunications/information and communication technologies (ICTs), and help Member States and Sector Members set common priorities, taking into account contributions submitted by the ITU membership from the region. The meeting concluded with a set of proposals on priority issues that will serve as a basis for the formulation of contributions to the World Telecommunication Development Conference (WTDC-21), to be held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, from 8 to 19 November 2021. WTDC-21 will consider the activities that the ITU Telecommunication Development Sector (ITU-D) will carry out over the next four-year period (2022-2025).

The following is a summary of the work and results of RPM-ASP.

# Participation

The meeting was attended by 158 participants including 98 delegates representing 25 Member States from Asia and the Pacific region, 24 participants from Sector Members, 15 participants representing 8 observer Member States, 1 participant from Academia, 3 participants from the United Nations and its specialized agencies, and 19 guests. Of this number, 73 were women and 85 were men participants. The list of participants can be found [here](https://ituint-my.sharepoint.com/%3Ab%3A/g/personal/andreas_christiono_itu_int/Ef81iYaYVBxIiE_t28mkyAQBU63Lv84sRjllnGnYBaCB1Q?e=65NJO1).

# Informal meeting of heads of delegation

The informal meeting of heads of delegation was held on 9 March 2021 and recommended Dr Ahmad Reza Sharafat (Islamic Republic of Iran) as Chairman of RPM-ASP for WTDC-21.

The meeting also recommended the appointment of Ms Gisa Fuatai Purcell (Samoa), Ms Mina Seonmin Jun (Republic of Korea) and Ms Philomena Gnanapragasam (Asia-Pacific Institute for Broadcasting Development — AIBD) as Vice-Chairmen.

The draft agenda, time management plan and allocation of documents were also informally agreed upon, pending adoption on the first day of the RPM-ASP. In addition it was agreed, on an exceptional basis, to consider late contributions and information documents, taking into account their value for the discussion of the regional priorities during the RPM-ASP.

# Opening ceremony

The opening ceremony included several high-level speeches (posted on the [RPM-ASP website](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Conferences/WTDC/WTDC21/Pages/RPM-ASP.aspx)) from the following dignitaries:

**Ms Doreen Bogdan-Martin**, Director, Telecommunication Development Bureau, ITU

**Mr Masanori Kondo**, Secretary-General, Asia-Pacific Telecommunity (APT)

**Ms Bolor-Erdene Battsengel**, Chairwoman, Communications and Information Technology Authority (CITA)

**Mr Mesfin Belachew,** Senior Strategic Advisor, Ministry of Innovation and Technology of Ethiopia, delivering a message on behalf of His Excellency, Dr Ahmedin Mohammed, Minister of Innovation and Technology

# Election of the chairman and vice-chairmen

Following the recommendations from the heads of delegation meeting, Dr Ahmad Reza Sharafat, Adviser to the Minister, Ministry of Information & Communication Technology (MICT) of the Islamic Republic of Iran, was unanimously elected as Chairman of RPM-ASP for WTDC-21.

The meeting also endorsed the recommendation from the heads of delegation regarding the vice-chairmanship of RPM-ASP, electing Ms Mina Seonmin Jun, Policy Advisor, Korea Information Society Development Institute (KISDI); Ms Gisa Fuatai Purcell, Regulator, Office of the Regulator, Samoa; and Ms Philomena Gnanapragasam, Director, Asia-Pacific Institute for Broadcasting Development as Vice-Chairmen.

Ms Atsuko Okuda, Regional Director of the ITU Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific, was nominated by the Chairman as the Secretary of RPM-ASP.

# Adoption of the agenda and time management plan

The meeting approved the agenda as presented in [Document 1](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-RPMASP-C-0001/en).

The secretariat noted that RPM-ASP had received **12** contributions, including **5** from ITU Member States and ITU-D Sector Members, **4** from the secretariat and **3** from working groups of the Telecommunication Development Advisory Group (TDAG). In addition, **2** information documents were considered, including **1** from a specialized agency of the United Nations and **1** from the secretariat.

RPM agreed to accept all late contributions and information documents for consideration, with the understanding that this approach was being applied on an exceptional basis.

The agenda was approved.

Having examined all the inputs related to ITU-D action areas, the meeting adopted the proposed draft time management plan ([Document DT/1](https://www.itu.int/md/meetingdoc.asp?lang=en&parent=D18-RPMASP-210309-TD-0001)). All the meeting documents are available on the [RPM document management website](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-RPMASP-210309/sum/en).

# Digital trends in Asia and the Pacific

[**Document 2**](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-RPMASP-C-0002/en): The document entitled ***“Digital trends in Asia and the Pacific in 2021”*** was presented by Ms Atsuko Okuda, Regional Director for the ITU Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific. This document provides an overview of trends and developments in ICT infrastructure, access and use in Asia and the Pacific, which includes 38 ITU Member States and is home to a population of 4.2 billion people. The document highlights changes in ICT adoption since the last World Telecommunication Development Conference in 2017 (WTDC-17), held from 9 to 20 October 2017 in Buenos Aires, Argentina; tracks the evolution of policies and regulations, digital services and applications, cybersecurity, and digital skills; and reviews progress and challenges in implementing the ITU regional initiatives for Asia and the Pacific. The document serves as a reference for the ITU membership in reviewing progress and identifying ICT development priorities in Asia and the Pacific.

# RPM-ASP noted the contribution with appreciation. Reporting on the implementation of the Buenos Aires Action Plan (including the regional initiatives) and contribution to the implementation of the WSIS Plan of Action and the Sustainable Development Goals

Ms Gisa Fuatai Purcell, Vice-Chairman, assumed the chairmanship of the session and invited the contributors to present the documents.

[**Document 3**](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-RPMASP-C-0003/en): The document entitled ***“Result-Based Management (RBM) implementation in BDT”*** was introduced on behalf of the Director of BDT by Mr Stephen Bereaux, Deputy to the Director. In 2019, BDT embarked on a comprehensive overhaul of its use of RBM to equip itself for the challenges of a rapidly changing development landscape and make itself fit for purpose. This reform introduces RBM for the implementation of all work programmes, as a managerial decision and monitoring tool, and to provide the evidence to demonstrate BDT's impact. RBM also serves as the platform to engage with internal and external partners, and to replicate and scale up successful projects and work programme initiatives.

[**Document 4**](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-RPMASP-C-0004/en): The document entitled ***“Reporting on the implementation of the WTDC-17 Buenos Aires Action Plan (including regional initiatives), and contribution to the implementation of the WSIS Plan of Action and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)”*** was presented by Mr Stephen Bereaux, Deputy to the Director of BDT and Chief, Field Operations Coordination Department. [Annex 2](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-RPMASP-C-0004/en), entitled “Detailed information on work towards the achievement of the regional initiatives for Asia-Pacific”, was presented by Ms Atsuko Okuda, Regional Director for ITU Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific.

WTDC-17 adopted the [Buenos Aires Action Plan](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Conferences/WTDC/WTDC17/Documents/WTDC17_final_report_en.pdf) (BaAP). The plan, which includes the ITU-D programmes, a set of regional initiatives, and new and revised resolutions, recommendations and study group Questions, defines the mandate, objectives and priorities of ITU-D for the period 2018-2021. The plan also aligns the work of ITU-D with the strategic objectives of ITU so as to assist countries in harnessing the full benefits of ICTs.

Document 4 reports on the implementation of the BaAP, and its contribution to the implementation of the WSIS Plan of Action and SDGs. It highlights the change that BDT, the executing arm of ITU-D, has undergone to ensure that it is able to keep pace with the fast-changing environment in which it serves.

**Annex 1** provides a mapping of linkages between thematic priorities, study groups, regional initiatives, SDGs and WSIS.

**Annex 2** outlines all activities undertaken by ITU between 2018 and early 2021, as a direct response to the expected results of the ITU regional initiatives for Asia and the Pacific region. Activities presented in this annex depict outcomes per regional initiative. They are grouped in chronological order per topic. All activities carried out under the ITU regional initiatives for Asia and the Pacific are directly linked to, and coordinated within the corresponding, BDT thematic priority areas, thus strengthening ITU’s delivery and impact at the regional and national levels.

Regional initiatives represent the five priority areas that were elaborated and agreed by the members of the Asia-Pacific region and approved by WTDC-17 and are described in the Buenos Aires Action Plan. Regional initiatives are intended to address specific telecommunication/ICT priority areas that require special action of the ITU at the regional level. Under each regional initiative, a set of activities, initiatives, partnerships, and projects have been developed to meet the region's needs. The ITU Regional Development Forums have been serving as coordination mechanisms facilitating implementation of the regional initiatives. The ITU regional initiatives for Asia-Pacific are as follows:

* ASP1: Addressing special needs of least developed countries, small island developing states, including Pacific island countries, and landlocked developing countries
* ASP2: Harnessing information and communication technologies to support the digital economy and an inclusive digital society
* ASP3: Fostering development of infrastructure to enhance digital connectivity
* ASP4: Enabling policy and regulatory environments
* ASP5: Contributing to a secure and resilient environment

RPM-ASP welcomed the document and noted the contribution.

# Report on the implementation of outcomes of other ITU conferences, assemblies and meetings related to ITU-D work: PP-18, WRC-19, RA-19, and WTSA-16

[Document 5](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-RPMASP-C-0005/en): The document entitled “*Report on the implementation of outcomes of other ITU Conferences, Assemblies and meetings related to ITU-D work: PP-18, WRC-19, RA-19, and WTSA-16*” was introduced on behalf of the Director of BDT by Mr Marco Obiso, a.i. Chief of the DNS Department.

The document provides a comprehensive view of the implementation of the ITU conferences relevant to the work of ITU-D, based on a mapping exercise conducted by BDT to link the BDT thematic focus areas with the relevant ITU resolutions, the WSIS action lines, the BDT study groups, SDGs and the targets of the Connect 2020 Agenda.

RPM-ASP welcomed the document and noted the contribution.

# Preparation for WTDC‑21

Ms Mina Seonmin Jun, Vice-Chairman assumed the chairmanship of the session and invited the contributors to present their inputs.

# Report of the TDAG Working Group on WTDC Resolutions, Declaration and Thematic Priorities

[**Document 7**](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-RPMASP-C-0007/en)**:** The document entitled ***“Report of the meeting of the TDAG Working Group on Resolutions, Declaration and Thematic Priorities (TDAG-WG-RDTP)”*** was presented by Dr Ahmad Reza Sharafat. It contains the progress report of the meeting of TDAG-WG-RDTP. The group will continue its work and submit its final report to TDAG-21.

RPM-ASP welcomed the document and noted the contribution.

# TDAG Working Group on Strategic and Operational Plans

**[Document 8](https://www.itu.int/md/meetingdoc.asp?lang=en&parent=D18-RPMASP-C-0008):** The document entitled ***“Report on the meeting of TDAG Working Group on Strategic and Operational Plans (TDAG-WG-SOP)”*** was introduced by Ms Blanca González, Chairman of this group and Head of Unit, Cabinet of the Secretary of State for Telecommunications and Digital Infrastructures, Ministry of Economic Affairs and Digital Transformation (Spain). It contains the report on the activities of TDAG-WG-SOP since its creation. It also contains some recommendations on the way forward that TDAG approved at its meeting in November 2020.

RPM-ASP welcomed the document and noted the contribution.

# Priority setting for regional initiatives, related projects and financing mechanisms

Ms Mina Seonmin Jun, Vice-Chairman, invited the contributors to present their inputs on regional priorities. Upon her proposal, RPM-ASP agreed to establish a dedicated drafting group led by Ms Memiko Otsuki, International Policy Division, Global Strategy Bureau, Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications (Japan) as Chairman of the drafting group and Ms Anna Amalina Imam Baweh, Deputy Undersecretary, Ministry of Communications and Multimedia (Malaysia) as Vice-Chairman.

# Member contributions

[**Document** **9**](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-RPMASP-C-0009/en): The document entitled ***“Responses to COVID-19 and its impact on infrastructure and affordability”*** was introduced by Ms Joyce Chen, Senior Advisor, Strategic Engagement, Asia Pacific Network Information Centre (APNIC). The document proposes to explore the key initiatives and measures undertaken in the Asia-Pacific region to ensure seamless Internet connectivity for users as a response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The proposal aims to promote greater understanding of the key initiatives and measures that were undertaken by the technical community to support the infrastructure and economic needs in the region and also contribute to the work of REG4COVID. In addition, the proposal aims to provide technical training for network operators, particularly in developing economies, that can help narrow the digital divide and reduce inequalities between and within economies. These training programmes, where APNIC offers to partner with ITU, will increase the overall resiliency and network capabilities of the ITU membership in the Asia-Pacific region.

RPM-ASP noted the document and agreed to take this into consideration in the drafting group.

**[Document 10](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-RPMASP-C-0010/en)**: The document entitled ***“Digital Economy-Inclusive Society and Importance of High-Speed, High-Quality Broadband”*** was presented by Mr Turhan Muluk, Government and Telecom Policy Director, Intel Corporation. The document highlights the growing importance of high-speed and high-quality broadband for e-health, e-learning, remote working, and other services post-COVID-19, and the ongoing economic recovery programmes worldwide. It proposes to continue work on ASP 2 (digital economy and inclusive digital society) and ASP 3 (infrastructure to enhance digital connectivity) initiatives, prioritizing the successful implementation of economic programmes for digital economy-inclusive society and high-speed, high-quality broadband networks and services for the next four-year period.

RPM-ASP noted the document and agreed to take this into consideration in the drafting group.

[**Document 11**](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-RPMASP-C-0011/en): The document entitled ***“Over-the-air Radio and Television Broadcasting: Assuring a Sustainable Future”*** was presented by Ms Philomena Gnanapragasam, Director, AIBD. The document recognizes the value of over-the-air (OTA) radio and television broadcasting, highlighted by the COVID-19 pandemic, during which OTA served as the most resilient and reliable disaster management communication mechanism used by national authorities, and provided education when students were locked down. AIBD proposes to continue collaboration with ITU to achieve a vibrant and cohesive electronic media environment, especially OTA broadcasting in the Asia-Pacific region, and work with ITU to promote sustainable, energy- and spectrum-efficient radio and television broadcasting for the populations in the respective countries through policy and resource development.

RPM-ASP noted the document and agreed to take this into consideration in the drafting group.

[**Document 12**](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-RPMASP-C-0012/en): The document entitled ***“APT view on draft regional initiative - ASP"*** was introduced by the representative of the Asia-Pacific Telecommunity. The document provides APT’s view of five draft regional initiatives and their respective objectives, was adopted by the 18 member administrations who had attended the second meeting of the APT Preparatory Group for WTDC-21 (APT WTDC21-2). The proposal highlighted the need for the current Asia-Pacific regional initiatives to be updated to take into account recent developments.

RPM-ASP noted the document and agreed to take this into consideration in the drafting group.

[**Document** **13**](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-RPMASP-C-0013/en)**:** The document entitled ***“Proposal for Expected Results Parts of APT Regional Initiatives"*** was introduced by the representative of China. The document presented a proposal for updating the “Expected Results” section of the regional initiatives submitted by APT ([Document 12](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-RPMASP-C-0012/en)).

RPM-ASP noted the document and agreed to take this into consideration in the drafting group.

***Other documents***

Ms Mina Seonmin Jun, Vice-Chairman, drew the attention of participants to contributions received from the UN agencies and the ITU secretariat, explaining that in line with the rules and regulations of ITU, these contributions can be only considered as information documents.

[**Document** **INF/1**](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-RPMASP-INF-0001/en), entitled ***“Inputs by UNIDO to RPM-ASP - UNIDO, Telecommunications, and ICTs”***, shared the enhanced role of digital technologies, post-COVID-19 in particular. The document highlighted that the “new normal” in the post-pandemic world will increasingly be driven by Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR) technologies and their applications for inclusive and sustainable industrial development (ISID). The document also shared UNIDO's role in facilitating digital transformation.

RPM-ASP noted the document.

# Preparation for WTDC‑21 (continued)

Ms Philomena Gnanapragasam, Vice-Chairman, assumed the chairmanship of the session and invited the contributors to present their inputs.

# Report of the TDAG Working Group on WTDC Preparations (TDAG-WG-Prep)

[**Document 6:**](https://www.itu.int/md/meetingdoc.asp?lang=en&parent=D18-RPMASP-C-0006) The document entitled “Final report of the TDAG Working Group on WTDC Preparations (TDAG-WG-Prep)” was introduced by Mr Santiago Reyes-Borda, Senior Policy Advisor for ITU and Policy at the Department of Innovation, Science and Economic Development of Canada (ISED) and Canada’s Councillor to ITU. It contains a final report on the work of TDAG-WG-Prep, along with some recommendations on the way forward that TDAG approved at its meeting in November 2020.

RPM-ASP welcomed the document and noted the contribution.

# Priority setting for regional initiatives, related projects, and financing mechanisms (continued)

# Asia and the Pacific Regional Priorities for 2022-2025

RPM-ASP agreed to create a drafting group to draft the Asia and the Pacific regional initiatives. The drafting group met twice, elaborating a set of regional initiatives for approval by RPM-ASP.

The consolidated proposal ([Document DT/3](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-RPMASP-210309-TD-0003/en)) was presented to the plenary by Ms Memiko Otsuki, Chairman of the drafting group , and discussed in detail.

RPM-ASP approved five proposed regional priorities for Asia and the Pacific for the period 2022-2025, as follows:

* RP-ASP 1: Addressing special needs of least developed countries, small island developing states, including Pacific island countries, and landlocked developing countries
* RP-ASP 2: Harnessing information and communication technologies to support the digital economy and inclusive digital societies
* RP-ASP-3: Fostering development of infrastructure to enhance digital connectivity and connecting the unconnected
* RP-ASP-4: Enabling policy and regulatory environments to accelerate digital transformation
* RP-ASP-5: Contributing to a secure and resilient ICT environment.

RPM-ASP also developed the details on the expected results of regional initiatives, which can be found in Annex 1 to this document.

The APT representative said that APT would remain available if members wished to make any further refinements to the Asia-Pacific regional initiatives.

The Chairman of RPM-ASP conveyed his appreciation to the chairman of the drafting group and all other RPM-ASP officials for the excellent outcome.

RPM-ASP approved the document with appreciation.

# Other business

***Generation Connect Asia and the Pacific: Draft Action Plan 2022-2025***

[**Document INF/3**](https://www.itu.int/md/D18-RPMASP-INF-0003/en), entitled ***“Generation Connect Asia and the Pacific: Draft Action Plan 2022-2025 – Empowering Youth for a Digital Future”,*** was introduced on behalf of the Director of BDT by Mr Ashish Narayan, Programme Coordinator, ITU Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific.

In line with the ITU Youth strategy, the ITU Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific is supporting the establishment and launching of the Generation Connect Asia and the Pacific Youth Group (GC-ASP). GC-ASP will serve to enhance the mainstreaming of youth engagement and participation in the work of ITU. GC-ASP has 26 members (12 girls and 14 boys) between 18 and 24 years of age. The document provided an outline for an action plan 2022-2025 being developed by the GC-ASP group.

RPM-ASP noted the document, supported the work being undertaken to develop an action plan, and encouraged greater engagement of GC-ASP in ITU work.

Ms Philomena Gnanapragasam, Vice-Chairman, reminded participants about two important initiatives Asia-Pacific region is involved in, namely: meaningful youth engagement through the Asia and the Pacific Youth Group set up under the [[Generation Connect](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Regional-Presence/AsiaPacific/Pages/Events/2021/Generation%20Connect%20ASP/Generation-Connect---Asia-and-the-Pacific-Youth-Group-%28GC-ASP%29.aspx?PagePreview=true&amp;DeviceChannel=Default)](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Regional-Presence/AsiaPacific/Pages/Events/2021/Generation%20Connect%20ASP/Generation-Connect---Asia-and-the-Pacific-Youth-Group-%28GC-ASP%29.aspx?PagePreview=true&amp;DeviceChannel=Default) initiative, and the [[[Network of Women (NoW)](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Conferences/WTDC/WTDC21/Pages/NoW/Europe/default.aspx)](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Conferences/WTDC/WTDC21/Pages/NoW/Europe/default.aspx)](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Conferences/WTDC/WTDC21/Pages/NoW/Europe/default.aspx) for the Telecommunication Development Sector, officially launched during RPM-ASP. For the first time, these initiatives are part of the preparatory process for WTDC. The Chairman also informed participants of the side event on I-CODI and information session series on digital innovation.

***Network of Women***

RPM-ASP established the Network of Women for the ITU Telecommunication Development Sector. This initiative aims at building a community to support women delegates, expand their network, and advocate and share experiences and knowledge with other women delegates. The Network of Women also aims at promoting the active participation of women in ITU activities and in the technology sector in general.

NoW encourages gender balance in the activities leading up to WTDC-21.

I-CODI and Information Session on Digital Innovation

As a side event of RPM-ASP, an information session was held to allow for exchanges on the I-CODI programme of ITU and progress made. The side event recognized the need to advance innovation in the digital environment. Information was shared on progress in connectivity, identity and digital innovation in India, and the potential for partnership with the I-CODI programme.

# Main outcomes

RPM-ASP, after considering all input documents and discussions, came to the following conclusions:

* RPM-ASP discussed five regional priorities for Asia and the Pacific region for the next cycle 2022-2025, for submission to WTDC-21 as follows:
* **ASP 1**: Addressing special needs of least developed countries, small island developing states, including Pacific island countries, and landlocked developing countries
* **ASP 2**: Harnessing information and communication technologies to support the digital economy and inclusive digital societies
* **ASP-3**: Fostering development of infrastructure to enhance digital connectivity and connecting the unconnected
* **ASP-4**: Enabling policy and regulatory environments to accelerate digital transformation
* **ASP-5**: Contributing to a secure and resilient ICT environment
* RPM-ASP welcomed the report on “Digital trends in Asia and the Pacific in 2021” as an important contribution to developing the regional initiatives taking into account the developments and challenges at the regional level in field of ICTs.
* RPM-ASP noted the implementation of the Asia-Pacific regional initiatives with appreciation.
* RPM-ASP considered the final report of the TDAG Working Group on WTDC Preparations and noted the document.
* RPM-ASP considered the progress report of the TDAG Working Group on Resolutions, Declaration and Thematic Priorities and noted the contribution.
* RPM-ASP considered the progress report of the TDAG Working Group on Strategic and Operational Plans and noted the contribution.
* RPM-ASP recognized that the ITU-D regional initiatives constitute an effective mechanism for fostering implementation of the WSIS outcomes and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, including achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.
* RPM-ASP launched the Network of Women (NoW) for the ITU Telecommunication Development Sector, paving the way for the involvement of more women in WTDC-21.
* RPM-ASP welcomed the creation of the GC-ASP Youth Group, which could serve as a means for meaningful engagement, empowerment and participation of youth in the work of ITU. RPM-ASP also welcomed the ongoing work of the Youth Group towards the development of a Generation Connect Asia and the Pacific action plan for 2022-2025.

# Closing ceremony

The Chairman of RPM-ASP thanked the vice-chairmen and the chairman of the drafting group, the ITU membership, the RPM-ASP participants and the ITU secretariat for their support towards the successful conclusion of RPM-ASP.

The Director of BDT paid homage to the two ITU staff members, Mr Marcelino Tayob and Ms Maygenet Abebe, who had lost their lives in the fateful crash of flight ET302 exactly one year ago. The Chairman of RPM-ASP echoed the feelings expressed by the Director of BDT and conveyed his condolences.

In her closing remarks, the Director emphasized the success of RPM-ASP as an important step towards WTDC 21 and thanked the participants for the wide-ranging discussions on the regional issues, trends and areas that required more work. She congratulated the participants for achieving an impressive list of concrete results, in particular a clear set of regional priorities which would serve as important contributions to WTDC-21.

She expressed her conviction that by working together ITU could achieve a WTDC outcome that would be concrete, solution-driven, results-focused, and measurable.

Highlighting the importance of the new programmes around youth, gender balance and innovation, she expressed her pleasure in noting that RPM-ASP had welcomed the side events around Generation Connect – Asia and the Pacific, Network of Women and I-CODI and digital innovation.

The Director thanked the Chairman, Dr Ahmad Reza Sharafat; as well as the Vice-Chairmen, Ms Mina Seonmin Jun;, Ms Gisa Fuatai Purcell; and Ms Philomena Gnanapragasam for their excellent leadership of the meeting and for facilitating consensus on the issues discussed during the meeting. She thanked all delegates for their engagement, enthusiasm, and dedication, and APT for its continued support, cooperation and partnership.

The Director thanked Ms Atsuko Okuda for her work as Secretary of RPM-ASP, and all ITU Asia-Pacific region staff and other ITU colleagues who had contributed to the success of the meeting.

She looked forward to advancing the joint efforts throughout the preparations for WTDC-21, including this region's contributions, the three interregional meetings and WTDC-21 itself.

The representative of the African Telecommunications Union congratulated the ITU membership from the Asia-Pacific region on the successful completion of RPM-ASP and expressed the hope that in the run-up to WTDC-21, side events would be an integral part of the conference itself.

Dr Ahmad R. Sharafat
Chairman, RPM-ASP for WTDC‑21
10 March 2021

**Annex 1**

**Outcome of the drafting group on regional initiatives for Asia-Pacific (2022-2025)**

Draft regional initiatives for the asia-pacific region (2022-2025)

| **(Draft) Asia-Pacific regional initiatives (2022-2025)** |
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| **ASP1**: Addressing special needs of least developed countries, small island developing states, including Pacific island countries, and landlocked developing countries**Objective**: To provide special assistance to least developed countries (LDCs), small island developing states (SIDS), including Pacific island countries, and landlocked developing countries (LLDCs) in order to meet their priority telecommunication/information and communication technology (ICT) requirements.**Expected results**:1. Development of policy and regulatory frameworks for broadband infrastructure and ICT applications and cybersecurity, taking into account the special needs of LDCs, SIDS, including Pacific island countries, and LLDCs, and strengthening of human capacity to address future policy and regulatory challenges.
2. Promotion of affordable and meaningful broadband universal access in LDCs, SIDS, including Pacific island countries, and LLDCs.
3. Assistance to LDCs, SIDS, including Pacific island countries, and LLDCs in adopting telecommunication/ICT applications in disaster management relating to disaster prediction, preparedness, adaptation, monitoring, mitigation, response, rehabilitation and recovery of telecommunication/ICT networks based on their priority needs.
4. Assistance to LDCs, SIDS, including Pacific island countries, and LLDCs in their efforts to achieve internationally agreed goals, such as the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, the Istanbul Programme of Action for LDCs, the Samoa Pathway for SIDS and the Vienna Programme of Action for LLDCs.
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| **ASP2:** Harnessing information and communication technologies to support the digital economy and inclusive digital societies**Objective**: To assist Member States in utilizing information and communication technologies (ICTs) and emerging technologies to reap the benefits of the digital economy by addressing the human and technical capacity challenges, including improving and expanding digital skills to reduce the gender gap, and assisting vulnerable groups[[1]](#footnote-2) to bridge the digital divide.**Expected results**:1. Planning and elaboration of national strategic frameworks on the digital economy as well as associated toolkits for selected ICT applications and services.
2. Establishment and annual updating of a repository of all work done within ITU relating to the digital economy since the World Telecommunication Development Conference (Buenos Aires, 2017).
3. Development of policies, strategies and guidelines for efficient and timely implementation of the digital economy including the use of the Internet of Things (IoT), ICT-centric applications and platforms, AI, 5G and big data.
4. Acceleration of digital infrastructure readiness by timely deployment of optical fibre, 4G and 5G technologies as well as that of ICT/mobile applications to improve the delivery of value-added services in sectors such as health, education, environment, agriculture, governance, energy, financial services, and e-commerce. In doing so, economic recovery funds and resources of development banks can also be utilized.
5. Identification, collation and sharing of knowledge, best practices and case studies on various telecommunication/ICT applications.
6. Development of cross-sectoral national/regional programmes on digital literacy and skills for inclusiveness, especially for women, youth, older persons and persons with specific needs.
7. Enhancement of international cooperation related to new and emerging technologies pertaining to telecommunications/ICTs to ensure that all countries on the global value chain can benefit from digital transformation.
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| **ASP3**: Fostering development of infrastructure to enhance digital connectivity and connecting the unconnected**Objective**: To assist Member States in the development of telecommunication/ICT infrastructure in order to facilitate the provision of services and applications taking into consideration the availability, affordability and accessibility of the infrastructure for connecting the unconnected.**Expected results**:Migration/transition of analogue networks to appropriate digital networks, application of affordable wired and wireless technologies (including interoperability of ICT infrastructure) and optimized use of the digital dividend.Maximized use of new and emerging technologies for the development of communication networks, including 5G and smart grid infrastructure and services.Review and revise, if necessary, existing national broadband objectives and enhance capacity to develop and implement national broadband plans (including support to study the status of national broadband networks and international connectivity) in order to provide broadband access to unserved and underserved areas; promote affordable access, especially for youth, women, indigenous peoples and children; select appropriate technologies; develop and use universal service funds effectively; and develop business models that are financially and operationally sustainable. Promotion of Internet exchange points (IXPs) as a long-term solution to advance connectivity and deployment of IPv6-based networks and applications and facilitation of the transition from IPv4 to IPv6. Strengthening of the capacity to implement conformance and interoperability (C&I) procedures and facilitating the establishment of common regional/subregional C&I regimes (including the adoption and implementation of mutual recognition arrangements).Paying attention to spectrum-management issues, including radio-frequency planning, harmonization of the use of spectrum allocated and identified for International Mobile Telecommunications (IMT), enhancement of spectrum monitoring systems, and facilitating implementation of WRC decisions. Building of skills for the development and use of terrestrial and space services. Enhancing regional ICT connectivity and strengthening cooperation with international/regional organizations in programmes such as the Asia-Pacific Information Superhighway (AP-IS). |
| **ASP4**: Enabling policy and regulatory environments to accelerate digital transformation**Objective**: To assist Member States in developing appropriate policy and regulatory frameworks, digital services across various sectors of the economy, fostering innovation, enhancing skills, increasing information sharing and strengthening regulatory cooperation, thereby contributing to a supportive regulatory environment for all stakeholders.**Expected results**:1. Sharing of information on developments in policy, legal and regulatory frameworks as well as market developments in the information and communication technology (ICT) sector and the digital economies it enables.
2. Development, implementation and review of strategies, policies and legal and regulatory frameworks, including for next-generation universal service obligation (USO), consumer protection, transformation of small; and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) to digital enterprises, and innovation and entrepreneurship.
3. Encouraging inclusive dialogues and strengthening cooperation among national and regional regulators, policy-makers and other telecommunication/ICT stakeholders, as well as with other sectors of the economy, on topical policy, legal, regulatory and market issues.
4. Strengthening institutional, human and technical capacity on topical policy, legal and regulatory issues, as well as on economic and financial issues and market developments.
5. Improved awareness of policy and regulatory frameworks relating to data privacy and cross-border data.
6. Development of strategic frameworks to support research and development activities in ICT in developing countries.
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| **ASP5**: Contributing to a secure and resilient ICT environment**Objective**: To assist Member States to develop and maintain secure, trusted and resilient networks and services, and to address challenges related to climate change and the management of global pandemics and disasters.**Expected results**:1. Compilation of national/regional cybersecurity strategies, establishment of national/regional cybersecurity capabilities such as computer incident response teams (CIRTs), and sharing of good practices to nurture a culture of cybersecurity.
2. Strengthening of institutional cooperation and coordination among key actors and stakeholders at the national, regional and global levels (including through organizing cyberdrills) and enhancing the capacity to address issues related to cybersecurity.
3. Development of national emergency telecommunication plans and ICT-based initiatives for providing medical (e-health) and humanitarian assistance in disasters and emergencies.
4. Incorporation of disaster-resilient features in telecommunication networks and infrastructure, and development of ICT-based solutions (including the use of wireless and satellite-based technologies) to enhance network resilience.
5. Development of standards-based monitoring and early-warning systems linked to national and regional networks, and enhanced use of active and passive terrestrial/space-based sensing systems for disaster prediction, detection and mitigation.
6. Formulation of comprehensive strategies and measures to help mitigate and respond to the devastating effects of climate change, including e-waste policy.
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1. Refers to people with specific needs, including children, women, older persons and persons with disabilities. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)