

APT Asia-Pacific Summit on the Information Society

31 October - 2 November 2000 Tokyo, Japan

Action Plan for the Asia-Pacific Renaissance through ICT creating a successful information society based on a person to person networks

Recognizing that in order to establish in the Asia-Pacific region an information society in which all can enjoy the benefits of information and communications technology (ICT) various issues must be tackled immediately, Ministers adopted the following Action Plan for the Asia-Pacific Renaissance through ICT. Ministers will make every effort to implement the Action Plan as soon as possible, aiming with the priority on achieving the Internet access for people in the Asia-Pacific region by 2005 to the extent possible.

Forming a Shared Vision

1. Member administrations should recognize that ICT, including the Internet, has the power to bring about enormous changes in every sector of the economy and society and to provide many benefits. Therefore, member administrations should form a shared vision to give high priority to using ICT as a national agenda. They should also share this common understanding with leaders of every sector in their countries, as well as with citizens and communities. Along with these efforts, in each member country the public and private sectors should co-operate to promote relevant activities.
2. Having formed a shared vision of ICT for the Asia-Pacific region, member administrations and APT should promote international co-operation on ICT policy issues, and APT should strengthen its function as a regional forum in this regard.

Bridging the Digital Divide

3. To give everyone the opportunity to have access to ICT as soon as possible, member administrations should promote the establishment of ICT access points in each community at public facilities, such as post offices or schools, following the model of the Multipurpose Community Telecenters (MCTs) promoted by the International Telecommunication Union (ITU).
4. Member administrations should make efforts to promote pilot projects that help to enhance ICT literacy and to diffuse electronic commerce in rural areas. APT should develop and make available a database of experiences in this field in the Asia-Pacific region.
5. Member administrations should promote the development of ICT equipment designed for elderly or disabled people or the socially under-privileged, such as mobile terminals.
6. APT should continue to consider measures to overcome the problems of the digital divide and to promote digital opportunities for achieving economic and social development by using ICT. For this purpose, APT should launch regional, sub regional and country projects on a priority basis.

7. To establish effective co-operation with the activities of other international bodies in bridging the digital divide, including considering ways to encourage more participation from the private sector, APT should make efforts to share information and knowledge on this issue with other international organizations.

Developing Information and Communication Infrastructure

8. For the improvement of Internet access, member administrations should encourage the introduction of mobile and satellite systems, the adoption of new technologies into access networks such as FTTH, xDSL as well as FWA, and the development of broadband backbone networks.

9. Member administrations should promote standardization of ICT both to enable the interconnection and interoperability of infrastructure and to minimize the cost of its development. In this regard, each administration should promote standardization within its borders, as well as participating in the activities of the APT Standardization Program (ASTAP) and the APT Conference Preparatory Group for WRC (APG).

10. Member administrations should participate in international joint research and experiment in the Next Generation Internet (NGI) and promote their smooth implementation.

11. Member administrations should make efforts to transfer technology between developed and developing countries.

Essential Applications for the Information Society

12. Through sharing their experiences, member administrations should promote e-government, so as to improve public services and to enhance peoples' participation in the community.

13. Recognizing that tele-medicine and distance-learning are useful tools in overcoming the difficulties of geographic conditions in the Asia-Pacific region, member administrations should promote the development of relevant applications in these fields.

14. Member administrations should promote the development of content that reflects the various languages and the diversity of cultures of the Asia-Pacific region.

15. Member administrations should promote the development of applications useful for various languages in the Asia-Pacific region, such as translation applications.

16. Member administrations should improve the environment for online economic activities, through such measures as establishing laws on electronic signatures and authentication of network users' identities. Member administrations should also promote their mutual recognition of electronic signatures and authentication procedures, as well as the exchange of information on security technologies, and consider introducing an APT initiative to help countries spread electronic commerce.

17. Member administrations should promote international co-operation on security in cyberspace, including the prevention of cyber crime.

18. Member administrations should aim to take measures to protect users' privacy on information networks, and prevent the circulation of indecent or illegal information.

Human Resource Development and Enhancement of ICT Literacy

19. To develop, introduce and share new ICT in the Asia-Pacific region, member administrations should consider ways to nurture the development of researchers and engineers in this field, by sharing knowledge of advanced ICT and exchanging staff among institutions of higher education and research. APT should facilitate the implementation of such projects.

20. Member administrations are encouraged to establish centers of excellence which are adequately equipped in their respective countries to promote advanced training and research on ICT. Member administrations should assist each other by offering experts, knowledge, systems, and equipment to the extent possible. APT should actively assist in facilitating such arrangements as well as in networking the said centers of excellence.

21. To help the development of human resources effectively in response to the rapid progress of ICT, APT should improve its current training programs and develop a database of the training it provides, so as to make it better known and to ensure its more effective implementation. Furthermore, APT should consider how to implement effective new training programs in the areas of policy-making, regulatory issues and applications, including Electronic Commerce in addition to the training it already offers in ICT technologies and infrastructure.

22. Member administrations should formulate and implement programs to enhance ICT literacy among the general population, making use of ICT access facilities established in each community in such public facilities as schools or post offices.

23. Using distance learning, member administrations should expand opportunities for training or education for people living in remote locations.

24. Member administrations and APT should strengthen co-operation between the public and private sectors in developing human resources and improving ICT literacy, as well as international co-operation.

Regional and Global Co-operation

Regional Co-operation

25. In line with the concept of the Asia-Pacific Information Infrastructure (AII), member administrations and APT should pursue activities to promote the regional development of information and communication infrastructure, and reconsider the role of the AII meeting in order to review the implementation of the Tokyo Declaration and this Action Plan. Also the Executive Director of APT should keep the Ministers informed about progress in the implementation.

26. To strengthen its function as a regional forum for policy co-ordination, APT should expand its activities on emerging ICT-related issues, such as bridging the digital divide, development of applications, electronic commerce and prevention of cyber crime. APT should plan and implement regional, sub regional and country projects for this purpose on a priority basis.

27. To promote standardization in the field of telecommunications, as well as co-ordinate policy on the management of frequencies in the Asia-Pacific region, member administrations should give stronger support to the activities of ASTAP and APG.

28. APT members should also explore the possibility of establishing a trust fund for creating a successful information society based on person to person networks.

Global Co-operation

29. Since the establishment of APT in 1979, it has supported and collaborated with the International Telecommunication Union (ITU). For example, APT has supported such ITU achievements as adoption of Recommendation on "International Internet Connection". This co-operative relationship between the two bodies is important in meeting the global challenges of the ICT revolution. In this regard, APT should contribute to the World Summit on the Information Society, planned by the ITU for 2003.

30. The enormous changes caused by the ICT revolution have led to calls for the ITU to make itself more efficient and flexible, as well as to calls for the reform of APT. APT strongly supports appropriate reforms of the ITU, particularly those that will impact on the development of the Information Society in the Asia Pacific region, taking into consideration the attached concept paper on ITU Reform.

31. To harmonize regional progress in ICT, APT should strengthen its relationship with the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), which works for the economic and social development of the region. APT should organize annual international conferences for the member administrations to facilitate regular and timely exchange of information and knowledge.

32. APT and member administrations should promote co-operation and share experience with other international organizations to take effective and well-co-ordinated action aimed at bridging the digital divide. Especially, they should promote co-operation with the Digital Opportunity Taskforce (dot force), which the 2000 summit of G8 nations agreed to establish, through frequent exchange of information on the ICT situation and activities in the Asia-Pacific region.

33. APT and member administrations should further promote co-operation with the private sector, through appropriate international forums, as well as co-operation with relevant activities of NGOs.

ITU REFORM

The International Telecommunication Union (ITU) is the specialized agency of the United Nations responsible for telecommunications and traces its origins back to 1865. Throughout its long history, the ITU has had to evolve to adapt its role to new technologies and services. However, with the accelerating pace of change in the telecommunications industry, reform of the Union has become of vital importance.

Reform of the ITU, if it is to be effective, must take account of the major and profound trends sweeping through the industry. These trends include the convergence of new technologies, the emergence of open and competitive markets for telecommunications networks and services. In many countries, the telecommunications sector has shifted from a monopoly structure to a community of interests that includes governments and network operators, as well as equipment and service suppliers. The majority of the world's telecommunications are now provided by firms that are largely privately-owned.

To better meet the needs of its membership and of the telecommunications sector, reform at the ITU should draw upon the following principles:

- The three traditional missions of the ITU, namely management of the radio frequency spectrum, adoption of global standards for telecommunications and development, need to be adjusted to better meet the urgent needs of industry and of the developing world.
- The nature of the public/private sector partnership at the ITU should be redefined to better reflect the growing role of the private sector in the modern, competitive telecommunications environment.
- The ITU should give increased emphasis to policy matters, by serving as a center of expertise and as a focal point where global discussion and coordination can help to facilitate harmonization of different national policies and rules, including issues related to Internet and e-commerce within its areas of competence.
- The present rigid, federal structure of the ITU, with its three sectors, should be reviewed with the aim of facilitating a more comprehensive approach to technical, operational and policy issues, so as to provide integrated solutions to the changing demands of its membership.
- The work methods and procedures of the ITU, including the number and types of meetings, should be re-engineered to promote more timely and effective results and rapid action on pressing matters.
- The introduction of more flexible and modern management tools would serve to enhance the executive authority of the Secretary-General and spur greater efficiency in the Secretariat.