ANNEX III.

Other important initiatives in the area of ICT

Asian Development Bank's ICT initiatives

ADB recognizes that ICT is a powerful force in shaping the social and economic development of Asia and the Pacific. ADB will assist its developing member countries in using ICT to enhance the impact of its poverty reduction and other development activities by promoting ICT literacy, e-learning and awareness programmes and the development of ICT applications and information for ADB-supported activities.

Asia-Pacific Development Information Programme[1]

The Asia-Pacific Development Information Programme is an initiative of UNDP which aims to promote the development and application of ICT for poverty alleviation and sustainable human development in the Asia-Pacific region. It has three core programmes: policy development and dialogue, access and content development and knowledge management. The Programme supports activities ranging from advocacy and capacity-building to promoting ICT policies and equitable access to tools and technologies. Its programmes rely on strategic public-private sector partnerships and opportunities for technical cooperation among developing countries.

Asia-Pacific Telecommunity

APT was established by ESCAP in 1979 as a regional telecommunication organization. It has been actively engaged in bridging the digital divide in the region, focusing on developing telecommunications. In 2000, it organized Asia-Pacific Initiatives for the Information Society. It also organizes training and seminars on human resources development in telecommunication sector development.

UNESCO's regional initiatives

The UNESCO Asia and Pacific Regional Bureau for Education has launched a web site *<http://www.unesco.org/bangkok/education/ict/index.htm>* to promote the use of ICT for education, a recent phenomenon in Asia and the Pacific. The site serves as a portal for initiatives and experiences generated by the UNESCO project on ICT for education in Asia and the Pacific funded by Japanese funds-in-trust. It has explored different dimensions of ICT use in education, ranging from the integration of ICT into both formal and non-formal

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[1] See *<http://www.apdip.net/>*.

education to the collection, processing and dissemination of innovative practices and successful approaches. It also serves as a clearing house for a wealth of resources arising from ICT-based education programmes throughout the region and elsewhere.

Japan's Regional Broadband Programme

The Government of Japan launched this Programme in March 2003 to promote the application of broadband in the region. It will assist countries of the region in building national and regional information interchange carriers and connecting them to a regional broadband network. This will facilitate information exchange for trade, services, cultural exchanges and public domain applications such as e-government, e-learning, e-health and distribution of digital content through machine translation. The implementation of the Programme requires wide regional cooperation to create an enabling policy framework, ensure security, develop content and promote standardization.

Asia-Pacific Multilateral Cooperation in Space Technology and Applications

During the International Space Year in 1992, China, Pakistan and Thailand agreed to promote cooperation in space technology and applications in the Asia-Pacific region and to set up Asia-Pacific Multilateral Cooperation in Space Technology and Applications. One of the major programmes taking shape under this initiative is the Small Multi-Mission Satellite project involving Bangladesh, China, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Mongolia, Pakistan, the Republic of Korea and Thailand. The organization, whose secretariat is in China, is working on the establishment of the Asia-Pacific Space Cooperation Organization.

Asia-Pacific Regional Space Agency Forum

The Asia-Pacific Regional Space Agency Forum was set up in 1992 to mark the International Space Year. Its main purpose is to bring together space agencies in the Asia-Pacific region to exchange information on national space programmes and discuss the possibility of future cooperation. The National Space Development Agency of Japan plays a central role in planning and organizing the annual meeting of the Forum, including undertaking secretariat functions. The Forum has discussed cooperation in using space technology for monitoring disasters and environmental protection and satellite communication applications in information, space education and commercialization. The conclusions of the Forum's meetings are non-binding.

Asia-Pacific Satellite Communications Council

The Asia-Pacific Satellite Communications Council was conceived at the United Nations Workshop on Space Communication for Development in the Asia-Pacific Region in 1992 and formally established in 1994. It coordinates

and implements satellite programmes that could meet the growing demand for satellite services in the Asia-Pacific region. The Council is a non-profit regional organization which aims to promote satellite communications and broadcasting in the region through regional cooperation among its members to enhance the social, cultural and economic prosperity of the region. It also seeks (a) to exchange views and ideas on policies, technologies, systems and services which have potential benefits for the region, (b) to accelerate the introduction of services via satellite and (c) to develop and broaden the national and regional satellite communication and broadcasting services of Asia-Pacific countries. The Council promotes cooperation among member countries to minimize technical or regulatory barriers and works towards expanding the impact of IT on development and promoting digital opportunities through the greater use of space technologies. The secretariat of the Council is hosted by the Republic of Korea.