Sixth session of the Asia-Pacific Information Superhighway Steering Committee.

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Excellencies,  
Esteemed Representatives of UNESCAP Member States  
Distinguished Guests  
Ladies and Gentlemen

It is my pleasure to be here today and indeed a privilege to be part of the Sixth Session of the Asia Pacific Information Superhighway Steering Committee.

I take this opportunity to acknowledge and congratulate the Government of Thailand and UNESCAP for hosting this important meeting for the Asia Pacific. I also thank the secretariat for successfully coordinating this event. This meeting marks our commitment to be strong together, as our world becomes more and more uncertain due to the impacts of COVID and the activities brought by such pressing times we are guided with the hope that our collaboration and sharing will bring future change that will ensure the well been of our members in the days ahead.
Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

The Government of Samoa in the few years leading up to this conference has committed herself to ensuring that Samoa and its people are given the ability to enjoy what has been brought by secure, fast, and reliable connectivity for herself and those around it. Samoa have partnered with friends in building its Internet capacity through the development of the Tui-Samoa and Manatua Submarine cables to ensure that Samoa does not get left behind in the Information Super highway, it has shared these submarine cables with its brothers and sister nations, in the pacific to also ensure that Samoa is moving together with these pacific nations in building a well-informed pacific population.

In the Pacific context, projects such as the Pacific IXP and the rural connectivity projects supported by ESCAP and its partners in continuing to build on these development in ensuring that the Asia Pacific region is well resourced and capable of reaching the targets of the Sustainable Development Goals.

As Samoa continues to strengthen its capacity through digital developments and initiative such as strengthening School Connectivity’s, National Digital ID, Domestic IXP Support, Development of eAgriculture Tools, FinTech Support, Support for Health and Transport in various digital transformation initiative across the sectors. Also the development
of relevant policies, adopting regulations and define sustainable financing models to provide affordable and secure access to ICT services for all.

While Government of Samoa continues to find partners and support in ensuring that its commitment to supporting the development of sound initiative for the Information Technology and Communication space it has many challenges that is looks at when aiming to improve access, resilience and affordability.

While coverage in Samoa is recommendable, the challenge of affordable and secure access was recognized as, Pacific regional challenges which led to the commitment of Governments and Stakeholders across the Pacific, to work together and strive for a common vision - that is the Digitalization of the Pacific. In the past years Samoa has hosted the Pacific Digital Conference to encourage and assist our pacific family in areas of best practice sharing and collaboration in building the Pacific Digital Agenda in meeting the same goals of improved access to information. Which is the same attributes which the Information super high way seeks to overcome and strengthen.

Through today’s deliberation and collaboration the Pacific Island States believe that through these discussions that it will include the improving of local and cross boarder connectivity, building multistakeholder
consensus on how we can work together, and work towards our common vision of digital inclusion and ICT developments for all. Samoa continues to building partners and who is willing to work with the people of Samoa and the Pacific in building meaning full connectivity through adoption of connectivity based applications and enhanced access to information through improved connectivity infrastructure to empower the people of all member states.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

In concluding Samoa offers its support to the implementation of the Asia-Pacific Information Superhighway, and invites all ESCAP member countries to work together on implementing the new AP-IS action plan 2022 - 2026.

Also Samoa prioritizes digital transformation for Sustainable Development and requests the support of the ESCAP secretariat on this area. In addition, Samoa is interested to attend the AP-IS Working Group 2 on Digital Technologies and Applications.

Samoa will continue to play its part as a Global member and regional members in collaborating with all partners of ESCAP in driving for a digital future that we all hope and endeavor to build together.
With that, I wish you all the very best in our deliberations and way forward during this Forum.

Thank you

Soifua ma Ia Manuia