

## First Session of the Asia-Pacific Information Superhighway (AP-IS) Steering Committee

1-2 November 2017

### CONCEPT NOTE

#### Background:

The 73<sup>rd</sup> session of the ESCAP Commission in May 2017 adopted resolution 73/6 on the implementation of the Asia-Pacific Information Superhighway (AP-IS) through regional cooperation. The resolution invited members and associate members to cooperate in the implementation of the Master Plan for the Asia-Pacific Information Superhighway<sup>1</sup> and the Asia-Pacific Information Superhighway Regional Cooperation Framework Document<sup>2</sup> as endorsed by the Committee on Information and Communications Technology, Science, Technology and Innovation at its first session<sup>3</sup>. It also invited members and associate members to promote broad-based partnerships, including North-South, South-South and triangular cooperation and highlighting the importance of such partnerships, for the implementation of the Master Plan for the Asia-Pacific Information Superhighway and the Asia-Pacific Information Superhighway Regional Cooperation Framework Document.

The AP-IS governance structure<sup>4</sup> stipulates that a Steering Committee will address the regional dimension—four pillars of AP-IS (connectivity, Internet traffic & network management, e-resilience and broadband for all), while each subregional corridor will be supported by the respective subregional steering group and implementation group consisting of telecommunications operators. Activities will be developed around the four pillars and should facilitate the implementation of the subregional and national ICT initiatives. The governance structure is designed to capitalize on relevant international expertise from international and specialized agencies. Monitoring, coordination and advisory functions will be conducted at the regional level through the Steering Committee which will subsequently report to various intergovernmental bodies through the ESCAP secretariat.

#### Objectives:

Against this background, the objectives of the first Steering Committee meeting are to:

- a) discuss the operationalization of the governance structures, as stipulated in the AP-IS Master Plan;
- b) discuss regional and subregional implementation plans of the AP-IS initiative and to identify challenges and opportunities in implementing the initiative;
- c) develop partnerships with relevant international and regional organizations for the implementation of the AP-IS Master Plan;

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.unescap.org/resources/asia-pacific-information-superhighway-ap-master-plan>

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.unescap.org/our-work/ict-disaster-risk-reduction/asia-pacific-information-superhighway/master-plan-for-the-ap-is-and-ap-is-regional-cooperation-framework-document>

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.unescap.org/events/committee-information-and-communications-technology-science-technology-and-innovation-first>

<sup>4</sup> Page 13 of the AP-IS Master Plan

- d) provide an update on state of ICT at regional and subregional levels to support the deliberations.

**Expected outcomes:**

The meeting is expected to produce detailed regional and subregional implementation plans in partnerships with international and regional organizations for 2017 and 2018. In addition, to establish the modality of monitoring, coordination and advisory functions through the AP-IS Steering Committee.

The progress made in the implementation of the AP-IS Master Plan will be reported to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Session of the ESCAP Committee on Information and Communications Technology, Science and Innovation (CICTSTI) in 2018. The outcome of this meeting contributes to the overall objectives of ESCAP resolution 73/6<sup>5</sup> on the implementation of the Asia-Pacific Information Superhighway initiative. In particular, follow-up on the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) processes; support the development of universal access to the Internet by 2020 under the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011-2020; support the development of ICT sector under the Vienna Programme of Action for Landlocked Developing Countries for the Decade 2014-2024; enhance and promote connectivity and use of for Small Island Developing States(SIDS), under the SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway; contribution to the achievement of the 2030 Agenda (SDG 9 on establishing resilient infrastructure).

**Participants:**

Senior government officials nominated from ESCAP member countries, and other various stakeholders including UN Agencies, subregional organizations, international financial institution, and ICT policy think-tanks, will be invited to the meeting. Private sectors will also be invited to participate as subregional implementation group members.

**Venue:**

Dhaka, Bangladesh, (Preparatory Meeting on 31 Oct) 1-2 November 2017.

**Contact Person:**

Mr. Sakollerd Limkriangkrai , Tel: +662 288 1146, Fax: +662 288 1085 E-mail: [escap-ids@un.org](mailto:escap-ids@un.org).

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<sup>5</sup> [http://www.unescap.org/commission/73/document/E73\\_RES6E.pdf](http://www.unescap.org/commission/73/document/E73_RES6E.pdf)