



Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific**Seventy-third session**

Bangkok, 15-19 May 2017

Items 3 (b) and (e) of the provisional agenda*

Review of issues pertinent to the subsidiary structure of the Commission, including the work of the regional institutions:**Trade and investment****Information and communications technology, science, technology and innovation****Report of the Committee on Information and Communications Technology, Science, Technology and Innovation on its first session***Summary*

At its first session, the Committee on Information and Communications Technology, Science, Technology and Innovation reviewed trends and policy implications of information and communications technology (ICT) and science, technology and innovation issues for sustainable and inclusive development.

With regard to ICT, the Committee noted with satisfaction the progress made on the Asia-Pacific information superhighway initiative, including the analysis of the region's widening digital divide. The Committee further reviewed and noted the importance of utilizing space applications and ICT as vital tools for addressing disaster risk reduction. The Committee noted the proposed framework and elements of the regional review of the implementation of the World Summit on the Information Society action lines. The Committee reviewed the activities of the Asian and Pacific Training Centre for Information and Communication Technology for Development during the period 2014 to 2016. In recognition of the importance of science, technology and innovation to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, the Committee discussed ways to develop an action agenda for science, technology and innovation for sustainable development in Asia and the Pacific.

The Committee called upon the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) to consider taking action in the following areas: (a) supporting the implementation of the Master Plan for the Asia-Pacific Information Superhighway and the Asia-Pacific Information Superhighway Regional Cooperation Framework Document; (b) according high priority to ICT connectivity initiatives, in particular the Asia-Pacific information superhighway, through analytical work, capacity-building, promotion of regional cooperation, sharing of best practices and development and promotion of common standards; (c) facilitating disaster risk reduction initiatives in the Asia-Pacific region, including by sharing lessons learned on building e-resilience through the use of ICT; and (d) strengthening ICT human capacity development in the region and promoting ICT-enabled entrepreneurship of women.

* E/ESCAP/73/L.1.

With regards to science, technology and innovation, the Committee requested the secretariat to (a) better facilitate and support identified priorities in science, technology and innovation in the Asia-Pacific region; promote science, technology and innovation; fill gaps in servicing the special needs of developing countries; and ensure an inclusive approach to marginalized groups and (b) continue to promote North-South, South-South and triangular cooperation in terms of knowledge-sharing, on mutually agreed terms, of technologies that have a high impact on sustainable development.

The Committee recognized the need to define priorities within the vast field of science, technology and innovation and that in selecting those priorities attention should be paid to what member States can learn from each other and how the ESCAP intergovernmental platform could contribute to that goal. In that regard, the Committee requested the secretariat to identify and suggest focus areas on sustainable development themes related to science, technology and innovation and to facilitate the sharing of research outcomes, best practices and capacity-building across member countries.

The Committee also requested the secretariat to make the necessary arrangements to organize a biennial Asia-Pacific innovation forum as a means of enhancing knowledge-sharing and facilitating collaboration and the interface between science and policy. The Committee recommended holding the innovation forum in 2017 on a trial basis and deciding on further modalities based on the outcome of that forum.

The Commission may wish to provide guidance on these matters and to endorse the report of the Committee.

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I. Matters calling for action by the Commission or brought to its attention

1. The Committee endorses the Master Plan for the Asia-Pacific Information Superhighway and the Asia-Pacific Information Superhighway Regional Cooperation Framework Document, noting the satisfactory outcomes of the 1st and 2nd meetings of the Working Group on the Asia-Pacific Information Superhighway and expressing its appreciation to the members of the Working Group and the secretariat.

2. The Committee calls for the active participation of Governments, the private sector, international and regional institutions and other relevant stakeholders in the implementation of the Asia-Pacific information superhighway initiative.

3. The Committee welcomes the offer by Bangladesh to host the next meeting of the Asia-Pacific Information Superhighway Steering Committee, to be held in Dhaka in 2017.

4. The Committee requests the secretariat to continue to accord high priority to information and communications technology (ICT) connectivity, in particular the Asia-Pacific information superhighway, through analytical work, capacity-building, promotion of regional cooperation, sharing of best practices and development and promotion of common standards.

5. The Committee reiterates the importance of utilizing space applications and ICT as vital tools for addressing disaster risk reduction and recovery, noting that the Asia-Pacific region continues to be one of the most disaster-prone regions of the world.

6. The Committee requests the secretariat to continue to facilitate disaster risk reduction initiatives in the Asia-Pacific region, including by sharing lessons learned on building e-resilience through the use of ICT and space applications and facilitating the implementation of the Asia-Pacific information superhighway.

7. The Committee notes with concern the widening digital divide in the Asia-Pacific region and underlines the central role of broadband connectivity in addressing this divide and in accelerating the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals in the region.

8. The Committee emphasizes the need to continue strengthening ICT human capacity development in the region, and in this regard notes in particular the importance of ICT-enabled entrepreneurship of women and welcomes the new flagship programme of the Asian and Pacific Training Centre for Information and Communication Technology for Development entitled the Women and ICT Frontier Initiative, which calls for support from all relevant stakeholders in its implementation at the national level.

9. The Committee requests the secretariat to take advantage of the existing conference structure and fully utilize in-house expertise and resources to better facilitate and support identified priorities in science, technology and innovation in the Asia-Pacific region; promote science, technology and innovation; fill gaps in servicing the special needs of developing countries; and ensure an inclusive approach to marginalized groups.

10. The Committee also requests the secretariat to continue to promote North-South, South-South and triangular cooperation in terms of

knowledge-sharing, on mutually agreed terms, of technologies that have a high impact on sustainable development.

11. The Committee recognizes that there is a need to define priorities within the vast field of science, technology and innovation and, that in selecting these priorities, attention should be paid to what member States can learn from each other and how the ESCAP intergovernmental platform could contribute to this goal. In this regard, the Committee requests the secretariat to identify and suggest focus areas on sustainable development themes related to science, technology and innovation and facilitate the sharing of research outcomes, best practices and capacity-building across member countries.

12. The Committee requests the secretariat to make the necessary arrangements to organize a biennial Asia-Pacific innovation forum as a means of enhancing knowledge-sharing and facilitating collaboration and the interface between science and policy. The Committee recommends holding the innovation forum in 2017 on a trial basis and deciding on further modalities based on the outcome of that forum.

13. The Committee notes the further specific changes within the proposed terms of reference for the Asia-Pacific innovation forum (E/ESCAP/CICTSTI(1)/8) which are reflected in the updated terms of reference in annex II of the present document. The Committee also recommends that the terms of reference be finalized by the Advisory Committee of Permanent Representatives and Other Representatives Designated by Members of the Commission.

II. Proceedings

A. Policy issues for information and communications technology

1. Towards the Asia-Pacific information superhighway

14. The Committee had before it the note by the secretariat entitled “Towards the Asia-Pacific information superhighway” (E/ESCAP/CICTSTI(1)/1), the note by the secretariat on the Master Plan for the Asia-Pacific Information Superhighway (E/ESCAP/CICTSTI(1)/2) and the note by the secretariat on the Asia-Pacific Information Superhighway Regional Cooperation Framework Document (E/ESCAP/CICTSTI(1)/3).

15. Statements were made by the representatives of the following member countries: Bangladesh; Bhutan; China; Japan; Mongolia; Nepal; Pakistan; Republic of Korea; Russian Federation; and Tonga.

16. Statements were also made by the representative of the following specialized agency: International Telecommunication Union (ITU).

17. The Committee noted with appreciation the rapid progress that was being made at the national level through programmes such as Digital Bangladesh aimed at bridging the digital divide and bringing transformative development outcomes for accelerated implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals.

18. The Committee also noted that notwithstanding the progress achieved, concerns on availability, affordability, reliability, resilience and security of ICT networks remained, and it called for collaboration among ESCAP member States in improving those aspects of ICT infrastructure, as well as multi-stakeholder involvement.

19. The Committee also noted the need to pay special and particular attention to security and resilience when developing and implementing the Asia-Pacific information superhighway.

20. The Committee requested the secretariat to continue to accord high priority to analytical work and capacity-building in the area of building ICT connectivity, including e-resilience of ICT infrastructure, through the Asia-Pacific information superhighway, and recognized the importance of regional cooperation and the sharing of best practices on both supply and demand aspects of ICT for sustainable development. The Committee noted a view that was expressed that the operations of the Asia-Pacific information superhighway governance structure would continue to be funded by extrabudgetary support.

21. The representative of ITU noted the vital role of fibre-optic-based backhaul networks and expressed appreciation for the work of ESCAP in promoting the Asia-Pacific information superhighway.

2. Regional review of the implementation of the World Summit on the Information Society action lines

22. The Committee had before it the note by the secretariat on the regional review of the implementation of the World Summit on the Information Society action lines (E/ESCAP/CICTSTI(1)/4).

23. Statements were made by the representatives of the following member countries: Bhutan; China; Japan; Nepal; Republic of Korea; and Russian Federation.

24. Statements were also made by the representative of the following specialized agency: ITU.

25. The Committee expressed appreciation and support for the secretariat's regional review of the implementation of the World Summit on the Information Society action lines, and welcomed the coordination and collaboration with international and regional partners, including the action-line facilitators, in the implementation of Commission resolution 72/10.

26. In particular, the Committee noted with satisfaction the regional review meeting that the secretariat had organized in collaboration with ITU and other United Nations agencies on implementation of the action lines.

27. The Committee recognized that ICT had great potential to improve social and economic development, human development and the knowledge society. The Committee noted that the outcome of the regional review called for strong linkages in the implementation of the action lines and the Sustainable Development Goals, and that efforts towards achieving the targets of the World Summit would contribute to achieving the Goals.

28. The Committee noted the widening digital divide in the region. It recognized that the gap in broadband connectivity among ESCAP member States continued to widen and that that disparity would lead to gaps in ICT access and usage in a wide range of socioeconomic sectors. In that respect, the Committee recognized that the efforts of ESCAP to promote the Asia-Pacific information superhighway would substantially contribute to bridging the digital divide and help implement the action lines of the World Summit on the Information Society.

29. The Committee expressed support for holding the regional review as part of its session.

3. Space applications as a critical tool for enhanced e-resilience

30. The Committee had before it the note by the secretariat on space applications as a critical tool for enhanced e-resilience (E/ESCAP/CICTSTI(1)/5).

31. Statements were made by the representatives of the following member countries: Bhutan; and Japan.

32. Statements were also made by the representative of the following non-governmental organization: Centre for Emergency Situations and Disaster Risk Reduction.

33. The Committee noted with appreciation the support provided by the secretariat, member States and strategic partners through the Regional Space Applications Programme for Sustainable Development to disaster-affected countries during times of crisis and emergency. The Committee acknowledged the critical role of the secretariat in facilitating various disaster risk reduction initiatives in the Asia-Pacific region, one of the most disaster-prone regions of the world.

34. The Committee reiterated the importance of utilizing space applications and ICT as vital tools for addressing disaster risk reduction in the region. The Committee noted that many lessons had been learned, especially on e-resilience, that the secretariat could share with other countries and subregions.

35. The Committee recognized with appreciation the work undertaken through the Regional Cooperative Mechanism for Drought Monitoring and Early Warning, and the importance of addressing drought and many other disasters through regional cooperation on space applications and ICT.

36. The Committee expressed support for the work of the secretariat within the framework of the Asia-Pacific information superhighway initiative as a means of improving e-resilience, particularly in disaster risk reduction and disaster management in the Asia-Pacific region.

37. The Committee also noted the upcoming Asia-Pacific Space Leaders Forum, to be held in New Delhi on 2 November 2016 as a pre-conference event to the Asian Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (3 to 5 November 2016). The Committee acknowledged the role of the secretariat in taking forward its work and conveying it to those meetings.

4. Regional capacity-building on information and communications technology for development

38. The Committee had before it the report of the Asian and Pacific Training Centre for Information and Communication Technology for Development on its activities during the period 2014-2016 (E/ESCAP/CICTSTI(1)/6).

39. Statements were made by the representatives of the following member countries: Armenia; Azerbaijan; Bangladesh; Bhutan; Cambodia; India; Indonesia; Kazakhstan; Philippines; Republic of Korea; Sri Lanka; Tajikistan; and Turkmenistan.

40. A statement was also made by the representative of the Asia Pacific Network Information Centre.

41. The Committee was informed about the work of the Asian and Pacific Training Centre for Information and Communication Technology for Development in the area of ICT human capacity development, particularly with regard to its flagship programmes: the Academy of ICT Essentials for Government Leaders, targeted at government leaders and civil servants; the Primer Series on ICT for Development for Youth, aimed at students and institutions of higher learning; and the newly launched Women and ICT Frontier Initiative, on promoting entrepreneurship of women through ICT capacity development. The Committee was informed about the Centre's research and knowledge-sharing activities, advisory services and distance learning and online platforms, all of which complemented and reinforced the Centre's capacity development efforts.

42. The Committee benefited from a panel discussion on the theme of regional capacity-building on information and communications technology for development. The panel consisted of: Ms. Gati Gayatri, Director, Research and Development Centre for Literacy and Profession, Ministry of Communication and Information Technology, Indonesia; Ms. Chitranganie Mubarak, Chairperson, Information and Communication Technology Agency of Sri Lanka; Ms. Luzviminda A. Villanueva, Project Manager, Supporting Women's Economic Empowerment in the Philippines (GREAT Women Project), Philippine Commission on Women; and Mr. Asomudin Atoev, Project Coordinator, SecDev Foundation in Central Asia, Tajikistan.

43. During the discussion, the panellists shared their countries' new and emerging ICT capacity development needs and challenges in light of the goals and targets of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Each panellist described their national capacity-building strategies and programmes and how the strategies were evolving in response to changes in the ICT landscape and sustainable development priorities. The panellists also informed the Committee about their utilization of the Centre's programmes.

44. The Committee noted that the Academy and Primer Series were valuable programmes that continued to be integrated in civil service human-resource development frameworks as well as in university education, and were being customized and localized to fit national contexts. The representative of the delegation from Kazakhstan informed the Committee that the Academy was being promoted to members of the Regional Hub of Civil Service in Astana.

45. The Committee welcomed the launch of the Women and ICT Frontier Initiative on promoting entrepreneurship of women through ICT capacity development. The programme would contribute to achieving inclusive development in the region. Member States expressed interest in adopting and implementing the Initiative in their countries. The Committee underscored the importance of localizing and customizing the Initiative and integrating it in existing national strategies and programmes for promoting gender equality and empowerment of women.

46. The representative of the Asia Pacific Network Information Centre highlighted the importance of effective management of Internet resources and the need to build the capacities of service providers, including in the area of security.

47. The delegation from the Republic of Korea stated its appreciation for the work of the Asian and Pacific Training Centre for Information and Communication Technology for Development and its contributions to Asia and the Pacific and beyond. The delegation further recognized the programmes had been utilized by the Centre for Advanced Studies in Broadband for Development established by the Ministry of Science, ICT and Future Planning of the Republic of Korea and the Inter-American Development Bank for the Latin American region. The delegation recommended that the Asian and Pacific Training Centre for Information and Communication Technology for Development should continue to promote and share its programmes with other international organizations and development banks. The Republic of Korea would continue to support the Centre and encouraged other member States to contribute to it.

48. The Committee expressed appreciation to the Centre, and the Republic of Korea, the Centre's host country, for its continued efforts to strengthen ICT capacities for development in the region and beyond.

B. Policy issues for science, technology and innovation

1. Taking the next step: developing an action agenda for science, technology and innovation for sustainable development in Asia and the Pacific

49. The Committee had before it the document entitled "Taking the next step: developing an action agenda for science, technology and innovation for sustainable development in Asia and the Pacific" (E/ESCAP/CICTSTI(1)/7).

50. The Committee benefited from a high-level panel discussion on science, technology and innovation. The panel comprised the Executive Secretary of ESCAP; Mr. Pichet Durongkaveroj, Minister of Science and Technology, Thailand; Mr. Zakri Abdul Hamid, Science Adviser to the Prime Minister of Malaysia/Member of the Scientific Advisory Board of the Secretary-General of the United Nations; Ms. Lisa Rauter, Head of the InnovationXchange, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Australia; Ms. Sirimali Fernando, Chair, National Science Foundation, Sri Lanka; and Mr. Apiwat Ratanawaraha, Professor, Chulalongkorn University, Thailand.

51. Statements were made by representatives of the following member countries: Australia; Japan; Malaysia; Pakistan; Russian Federation; Sri Lanka; and United States of America.

52. The Committee noted that science, technology and innovation were integral to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. However, greater dialogue was still required in order to effectively harness their potential. The Committee acknowledged the fact that the main incubators of science and technological advancement were universities, academies of science and educational institutions and there was a need to discuss ways in which these incubators could be supported and facilitated.

53. The Committee called for the alignment of national science, technology and innovation priorities with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and recognized the importance of mobilizing capabilities in that area in order to address the social, economic and environmental challenges within countries and the region. In that regard, the focus on research and development must shift from solely economic concerns to social and environmental concerns in order to be effective. The Committee also noted the importance of ensuring that those most vulnerable to the effects of poverty were considered in a proactive way in science, technology and innovation plans.

54. The Committee recognized that science, technology and innovation could be a catalyst for gender equality, when it challenged entrenched prejudices and opened opportunities, through, inter alia, the enhanced access of vulnerable groups of people particularly underserved by new technologies.

55. The Committee recognized that there was no one-size-fits-all innovation and development framework, given the diversity of the region and the need to be open to cross- and subregional approaches and principles that could be adapted to different contexts.

56. The Committee noted that strong political will would be crucial in implementing a successful science, technology and innovation strategy and action plan and that there was a need to strengthen the science-policy public interface.

57. The Committee recognized that there was a need to unlock and commit funding for science, technology and innovation through, inter alia, increased financing of fundamental and applied research, incentivizing the private sector, focusing on resources across the whole innovation process and strengthening of public-private partnerships.

58. The Committee acknowledged the importance of building talent for the future, especially by emphasizing science, technology, engineering and mathematics education from an early age, prioritizing innovation skills and creating scientific literacy through open access to scientific education.

59. The Committee underscored the importance of creating an enabling environment for innovation through support for regional and global networks and an emphasis on the strengthening and preservation of intellectual property rights, entrepreneurial risk-taking and investment.

60. The Committee observed that there was a need to measure the correct science, technology and innovation outcomes, by establishing the correct types of indicators to measure the development and impact of science, technology and innovation, developing relevant standards and quality systems, and conducting impact assessments, monitoring and evaluation across all three dimensions of sustainable development.

2. Fostering regional science, technology and innovation collaboration through an Asia-Pacific innovation forum

61. The Committee had before it the document entitled “Terms of reference for the Asia-Pacific Innovation Forum” (E/ESCAP/CICTSTI(1)/8). The deliberations on the agenda item consisted of a presentation made by the secretariat on fostering regional science, technology and innovation collaboration through an Asia-Pacific innovation forum, as well as country statements.

62. Statements were made by representatives of the following member countries: China; Japan; Pakistan; Republic of Korea; Russian Federation; and United States of America.

63. A statement was made by the representative of the World Intellectual Property Organization.

64. The Committee noted its appreciation for the proposals made by the secretariat for setting up the innovation forum and recommended that the 2017 forum should be held on a trial basis and that it should serve as a proof of concept for the forum. The Committee observed that the forum could be a

space wherein ESCAP could foster collaboration in the process of collecting best practices from the region.

65. The Committee noted that the innovation forum would improve the science-to-policy and business interface and interconnection in the region. The Committee underscored that the forum could serve as a platform for addressing the specific sustainable development challenges and risks faced by countries in the region, in particular the small island developing States.

66. The Committee noted that the innovation forum could also serve as a platform for dialogue, the development of a conceptual framework and the sharing of knowledge, experiences and best practices among member States and all stakeholders. The Committee observed that in the long run, the forum could serve as a follow-up platform to strengthen and review the science, technology and innovation activities and regional plans guided by the Committee. The Committee noted a view that was expressed that the meeting of the member States' scientists or chief science advisors to Governments at the Asia-Pacific innovation forum could serve as an effective platform for facilitating and coordinating dialogues among Governments, academia and general society.

67. The Committee observed that the innovation forum should take advantage of existing expertise and could be organized in the same format as the Asia-Pacific Business Forum, as that would help to attract participation and financing from the private sector.

68. The Committee recommended that the terms of reference for the innovation forum should be further refined by the Advisory Committee of Permanent Representatives and Other Representatives Designated by Members of the Commission.

69. The Committee observed that the theme of the first innovation forum could be on fostering technology collaboration in Asia and the Pacific. The Committee emphasized that the themes for the innovation forum should be aligned with the priorities of such mechanisms as the Technology Facilitation Mechanism and the high-level political forum on sustainable development of the Economic and Social Council.

3. Facilitating knowledge-sharing between subregional science, technology and innovation cooperation mechanisms in Asia and the Pacific

70. The Committee had before it the document entitled "Report on subregional science, technology and innovation cooperation mechanisms in Asia and the Pacific" (E/ESCAP/CICTSTI(1)/9).

71. The deliberations began with an introductory presentation made by the secretariat. The Committee benefited from a panel discussion focusing on selected subregional science, technology and innovation activities. The panel comprised Mr. Manzoor Hussian Soomro, President, Economic Cooperation Organization Science Foundation; Mr. Bernard Li, Director, Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Secretariat; and Mr. Alexandr Lozin, Head of Division, Eurasian Economic Commission.

72. Statements were made by representatives of the following member countries: Fiji; Japan; Pakistan; and United States of America.

73. A statement was also made by the following intergovernmental organization: World Intellectual Property Organization.

74. The Committee requested the secretariat to continue to address the specific development challenges of the Asia-Pacific region by catalysing multi-stakeholder partnerships and supporting cross-regional learning between member States and other regional and subregional organizations. The Committee also highlighted the importance of the secretariat acting as a convener and facilitator to collect and articulate ideas to promote a higher level of awareness and knowledge of science, technology and innovation.

75. The Committee highlighted the importance of the secretariat acting as a catalyst for science, technology and innovation by promoting innovation in various ways and, at the same time, of the importance of the secretariat acting to fill any gaps in servicing the special needs of developing countries' science, technology and innovation communities.

76. The Committee noted the value of sharing experiences with regard to some of the current subregional cooperation mechanisms related to science, technology and innovation, namely, the Policy Partnership on Science, Technology and Innovation of Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation; the Economic Cooperation Organization Science Foundation; and the Eurasian Economic Commission. The Committee recognized that the region as a whole needed to be informed on subregional science, technology and innovation activities in order to support deeper cooperation on those matters. The Committee recognized that there was an opportunity to improve cooperation among various subregional cooperation mechanisms and to increase their benefits for the region as a whole.

77. The Committee recognized the need to integrate a standing agenda item on subregional science, technology and innovation cooperation mechanisms at its sessions, under which relevant subregional initiatives were welcome to voluntarily present their work and exchange lessons learned, subject to the discretion of the Bureau of the Committee. Additional reporting requirements should be avoided, in favour of existing channels and mechanisms.

78. The Committee noted the secretariat's view on actively engaging and collaborating with subregional science, technology and innovation initiatives, in order facilitate knowledge-sharing on relevant efforts within the region. The Committee noted the need to integrate relevant performance indicators into such collaboration activities of ESCAP with other subregional science, technology and innovation mechanisms in order to properly assess the value added by such activities.

79. The Committee highlighted the importance of the secretariat advising member countries to ensure that agendas and policies on science, technology and innovation were inclusive to ensure that no one was left behind.

80. The Committee noted the value of subregional science, technology and innovation cooperation activities and supported proposed efforts by the secretariat to maintain an online web presence providing links to existing website resources of the relevant divisions within ESCAP.

C. Consideration of the future focus of the subprogrammes

81. The secretariat presented an overview of the strategic framework for the biennium 2018-2019 of subprogramme 5 (information and communications technology and disaster risk reduction and management), which would serve as a basis for developing the related programme of work. The secretariat also provided an overview of the three ICT focus areas of the subprogramme:

analytical work; promotion of regional practices, norms and policies; and capacity-building.

82. The secretariat also presented an overview of the strategic framework for the biennium 2018-2019 of subprogramme 2 (trade, investment and innovation), which served as a basis for developing the related programme of work. The secretariat also provided an overview of policy priority areas in the future programme of work under science, technology and innovation as identified in the relevant discussions of the Committee.

83. The Committee noted that the focus areas of the respective subprogrammes were in line with the strategic framework which had been endorsed by the Commission.

D. Consideration of possible draft resolutions for submission to the Commission at its seventy-third session

84. The delegation of Pakistan supported the idea of having a resolution if required to move forward on decisions made by the Committee, in particular with regards to the innovation forum, at the seventy-third session of the Commission.

85. The delegation of Bangladesh expressed strong support for the Asia-Pacific information superhighway and stated its intention to present a resolution on its implementation at the seventy-third session of the Commission. In addition, the delegation expressed its intention to submit a request for amendments to the Intergovernmental Agreements on the Asian Highway and Trans-Asian Railway Networks as per Commission resolution 71/10. The delegation offered to host the next meeting of the Asia-Pacific Information Superhighway Steering Committee in Dhaka in 2017.

86. The delegation of China stated that significant progress had been made with regard to the Asia-Pacific information superhighway and expressed its support for the proposal of the delegation of Bangladesh to present a resolution on the topic at the seventy-third session of the Commission.

87. The delegation of the United States of America emphasized the Commission's role as a coordinating body which focused the attentions of member States on addressing issues common to the region, instead of creating new forums and institutions. It invited ESCAP members to consider the utility of having meetings focused on pre-selected issues. It added that member States could share the details of the selected challenges in advance with technical experts who could present case studies and outlines of technical solutions applicable to the issue under discussion and create new recommended best practices that could be submitted to the General Assembly.

E. Dates and venue of and provisional agenda for the second session of the Committee

88. The Committee noted that the venue and dates of the next session of the Committee would be determined at a later date. The secretariat would consult with the Advisory Committee of Permanent Representatives and Other Representatives Designated by Members of the Commission.

F. Other matters

89. The delegation of China recommended developing a joint programme with ESCAP to support regional experience-sharing in the area of science, technology and innovation.

G. Adoption of the report of the Committee on its first session

90. The Committee adopted the report on its first session on 7 October 2016.

III. Organization of the session**A. Opening, duration and organization**

91. The Committee held its first session in Bangkok from 5 to 7 October 2016.

92. The Executive Secretary of ESCAP delivered the opening remarks. Air Chief Marshal Prajin Juntong, Deputy Prime Minister and Acting Minister of Digital Economy and Society, Thailand, delivered the keynote speech. Mr. Rodolfo Salalima, Secretary (Minister) of the Department of Information and Communications Technology, Philippines, delivered opening remarks. Mr. Susil Premajayantha, Minister of Science, Technology and Research, Sri Lanka, delivered opening remarks. Mr. Zunaid Ahmed Palak, State Minister for Information and Communication Technology, Ministry of Posts, Telecommunications and Information Technology, Bangladesh, delivered the welcoming remarks.

B. Attendance

93. The session was attended by the following ESCAP members and associate members: Australia; Azerbaijan; Bangladesh; Bhutan; Cambodia; China; Fiji; India; Indonesia; Iran (Islamic Republic of); Japan; Kazakhstan; Lao People's Democratic Republic; Macao, China; Malaysia; Mongolia; Myanmar; Nepal; Pakistan; Philippines; Republic of Korea; Russian Federation; Sri Lanka; Thailand; Timor-Leste; Tonga; Turkey; Turkmenistan; United States of America; and Viet Nam.

94. Representatives of the following Permanent Observers to ESCAP attended: Canada; Germany; Israel; Mexico; Nigeria; Peru; Portugal; South Africa; and Switzerland.

95. Representatives of the following United Nations bodies attended: United Nations Children's Fund; United Nations Development Programme; and United Nations Population Fund.

96. Representatives of the following specialized agencies and related organizations were represented: Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations; International Finance Corporation; ITU; World Bank; and World Intellectual Property Organization.

97. The following intergovernmental organizations were represented: Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation; Asia-Pacific Telecommunity; Asian Reinsurance Corporation; and Eurasian Economic Commission.

98. Observers were present from the following organizations: Bangladesh NGOs Network for Radio and Communication; British Council; Borlaug Global Rust Initiative; Centre for Emergency Situations and Disaster Risk Reduction, Kazakhstan; DRVR; Centro Universitário Jorge Amado; China

Telecom Global Limited; Genweb2 Limited; Incheon International Airport Corporation; International IT University; Korea Institute of Science & Technology Evaluation and Planning; Korea Land & Housing Corporation; Korea Tourism Organization; Korea Workers' Compensation & Welfare Service; LIRNEasia; Malaysian Council for Rehabilitation; National Information Technology Centre, Kyrgyzstan; Network for Information and Computer Technology, India; Open Society Institute Assistance Foundation, Tajikistan; Rayznews; Thales Communications & Security; Standing Conference of Mediation Advocates; and VimpelCom.

99. Representatives of the Asia-Pacific Network Information Centre and ECO Science Foundation also attended the session.

C. Election of officers

100. The session elected the following officers:

Chair:	Mr. Meas Po (Cambodia)
Vice-Chairs:	Mr. MD Mozibur Rahman (Bangladesh) Mr. Jigme Thinlye Namgyal (Bhutan)
Rapporteurs:	Mr. Anitelu Toimoana (Tonga) Mr. Bünyamin Er (Turkey)

D. Agenda

101. The session adopted the following agenda:

1. Opening of the session:
 - (a) Opening statements;
 - (b) Election of the Bureau;
 - (c) Adoption of the agenda.
2. Policy issues for information and communications technology:
 - (a) Towards the Asia-Pacific information superhighway;
 - (b) Regional review of the implementation of the World Summit on the Information Society action lines;
 - (c) Space applications as a critical tool for enhanced e-resilience;
 - (d) Regional capacity-building on information and communications technology for development.
3. Policy issues for science, technology and innovation:
 - (a) Taking the next step: developing an action agenda for science, technology and innovation for sustainable development in Asia and the Pacific;
 - (b) Fostering regional science, technology and innovation collaboration through an Asia-Pacific innovation forum;
 - (c) Facilitating knowledge-sharing between subregional science, technology and innovation cooperation mechanisms in Asia and the Pacific.

4. Consideration of the future focus of the subprogrammes.
5. Consideration of possible draft resolutions for submission to the Commission at its seventy-third session.
6. Dates and venue of and provisional agenda for the second session of the Committee.
7. Other matters.
8. Adoption of the report of the Committee on its first session.

E. Back-to-back events

102. The following side/special events were held:

- (a) 3-4 October 2016: Expert Group Meeting on Digital Connectivity for Sustainable Development;
- (b) 3 October 2016: Gender Mainstreaming in Internet and Development in the Asia-Pacific Region;
- (c) 3-4 October 2016: Asia-Pacific Regional Internet and Development Dialogue;
- (d) 3-4 October 2016: 2nd Meeting of the Science, Technology and Innovation Advisory Board;
- (e) 3-6 October 2016: Workshop on Action Planning in Open Government Data for Sustainable Development in Asia;
- (f) 4 October 2016: Meeting on the Regional Review of the World Summit on the Information Society Action Lines Implementation;
- (g) 5-6 October 2016: Eleventh session of the Governing Council of the Asian and Pacific Training Centre for Information and Communication Technology for Development;
- (h) 5-7 October 2016: Consultative Meeting on Women and ICT Frontier Initiative National Implementation.

Annex I

List of documents

<i>Symbol</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Agenda item</i>
<i>General series</i>		
E/ESCAP/CICTSTI(1)/1	Towards the Asia-Pacific information superhighway	2 (a)
E/ESCAP/CICTSTI(1)/2	Master Plan for the Asia-Pacific Information Superhighway	2 (a)
E/ESCAP/CICTSTI(1)/3	Asia-Pacific Information Superhighway Regional Cooperation Framework Document	2 (a)
E/ESCAP/CICTSTI(1)/4	Regional review of the implementation of the World Summit on the Information Society action lines	2 (b)
E/ESCAP/CICTSTI(1)/5	Space Applications as a critical tool for enhanced e-resilience	2 (c)
E/ESCAP/CICTSTI(1)/6	Report of the Asian and Pacific Training Centre for Information and Communication Technology for Development on its activities during the period 2014-2016	2 (d)
E/ESCAP/CICTSTI(1)/7	Taking the next step: developing an action agenda for science, technology and innovation for sustainable development in Asia and the Pacific	3 (a)
E/ESCAP/CICTSTI(1)/8	Terms of reference for the Asia-Pacific Innovation Forum	3 (b)
E/ESCAP/CICTSTI(1)/9	Report on subregional science, technology and innovation cooperation mechanisms in Asia and the Pacific	3 (c)
E/ESCAP/CICTSTI(1)/10	Report of the Committee on Information and Communications Technology, Science, Technology and Innovation on its first session	8
<i>Limited series</i>		
E/ESCAP/CICTSTI(1)/L.1	Annotated provisional agenda	1 (c)
E/ESCAP/CICTSTI(1)/L.2	Draft report	8
<i>Information series</i>		
E/ESCAP/CICTSTI(1)/INF/1	Information for participants	
E/ESCAP/CICTSTI(1)/INF/2	List of participants	
E/ESCAP/CICTSTI(1)/INF/3	Tentative programme	

Annex II

Updated draft terms of reference of the Asia-Pacific innovation forum

1. Objectives

1. The Asia-Pacific Innovation Forum provides a platform for the facilitation of knowledge-sharing and collective action and for a diverse and multi-stakeholder network to address the challenges and opportunities presented by science, technology and innovation for sustainable development.
2. The Forum has the following objectives:
 - (a) Science, technology and innovation knowledge-sharing and collaboration
 - (i) Support North-South, South-South and triangular regional and international knowledge-sharing and cooperation;
 - (ii) Provide a venue for a sustained dialogue between the diverse actors in the science, technology and innovation for sustainable development ecosystem;
 - (iii) Share success stories and lessons learned in the pursuit of scientific breakthroughs, technological advancements and innovative practices;
 - (iv) Propose new initiatives and partnerships to harness science, technology and innovation for sustainable development;
 - (v) Act as a matchmaker between investors and innovators;
 - (b) Science, technology and innovation policies and strategies
 - (i) Surface and share best practices for policies and strategies on science, technology and innovation in pursuit of sustainable development from a multi-stakeholder perspective;
 - (ii) Explore innovative approaches to leveraging human and financial resources for science, technology and innovation;
 - (iii) Share approaches for measuring the implementation of science, technology and innovation for the Sustainable Development Goals;
 - (c) Science, technology and innovation foresight exercises
 - (i) Showcase emerging scientific breakthroughs and technological advances;
 - (ii) Showcase innovative policy approaches for sustainable development;
 - (iii) Engage in regional foresight exercises;
 - (d) Inform the deliberations of the Committee on Information and Communications Technology, Science, Technology and Innovation
 - (i) Encourage member States of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) to have full visibility of best practices on policies, strategies, concepts, products and services for science, technology and innovation;
 - (ii) Provide ESCAP member States with innovative proposals to advance science, technology and innovation for sustainable development.

2. Theme

3. The areas of science, technology and innovation have a fast-paced and ever-changing agenda. While some aspects of the Forum can be perennial, each session of the Forum may also focus on a specific topic highlighting the means by which science, technology and innovation can contribute to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. The secretariat of ESCAP shall propose themes for the Forum based on research and analysis of emerging opportunities and challenges in science, technology and innovation, which shall be shared with the Committee on Information and Communications Technology, Science, Technology and Innovation six months prior to each session of the Forum. The proposals shall be discussed and finalized at the relevant meeting of the Advisory Committee of Permanent Representatives and Other Representatives Designated by Members of the Commission. A theme or critical issue shall be addressed at each session of the Forum.

3. Participation

4. The Forum shall be collaborative and multi-stakeholder in nature and shall include member States of ESCAP and representatives of United Nations entities, other multinational and regional entities, civil society, non-governmental organizations, the private sector, the philanthropic sector, the scientific community, academia, youth, indigenous peoples and others.

5. The role of the stakeholders shall be to highlight how their sector can contribute to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals through science, technology and innovation.

6. The Forum shall be open to participation by all accredited delegates and representatives. An open call for registration shall be made to ensure a wide range of participants.

4. Modalities

7. The Forum shall be organized by ESCAP and shall be convened on alternate years to the Committee on Information and Communications Technology, Science, Technology and Innovation. The Forum shall take place over one to one and a half days.

8. The Forum may be convened in Bangkok or a different location.

4 bis. Financial resources

8 bis. All costs necessary for this Forum shall be on an extrabudgetary basis.

5. Key output

9. A key output of the Forum shall be a document on innovation for sustainable development which:

(a) Summarizes discussions at the Forum on the key successes and lessons learned in the pursuit of scientific breakthroughs, technological advancement and innovative practices for sustainable development;

(b) Showcases emerging science, technology and innovation products, services and concepts on the horizon;

- (c) Presents proposals from the multi-stakeholder participants for new initiatives, areas of focus and partnerships to harness science, technology and innovation for sustainable development;
 - (d) Reports on successful matchmaking for South-South or triangular cooperation;
 - (e) Includes a proposal on an action agenda for the theme of the Forum, as informed by multi-stakeholder discussions.
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