

Committee on Information and Communications Technology, Science, Technology and Innovation, Fourth Session

30 August – 1 September 2022

Agenda 2: Asia-Pacific Digital Transformation Landscape

U.S.A. - Country statement

Thank you Chair. Ministers, distinguished guests, and colleagues, it is a pleasure to join other members of the UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) Committee on Information and Communications Technology and Science, Technology and Innovation (CICTSTI) for today's discussion on enhancing digital connectivity in Asia and the Pacific.

Closing the digital divide and expanding connectivity for all is our shared goal. The United States is committed to full implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. As target 9.c notes, increased access to information and communications technology is essential for achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.

The United States is deeply committed to a vision of global development that is inclusive, driven by innovation, and focused on those most in need. We are a longstanding leader in promoting sustainable, equitable, and transformational development.

Universal connectivity is crucial to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals and improving the lives and futures of us all.

The United States is making ambitious, concrete pledges to support digital connectivity and to bridge digital divides. We recently highlighted these commitments at the ITU World Development Conference in Kigali Rwanda, including in connection with the ITU-D Partner2Connect Initiative.

Under Doreen Bogdan-Martin's leadership, the ITU's Development Bureau has championed new initiatives to close connectivity gaps around the world.

We look forward to maintaining productive collaboration with multilateral institutions like the ITU under the P2C initiative, as well as with ESCAP under the AP-IS.

Among these commitments are several efforts that support goals laid out in the AP-IS: For example, through the Digital Connectivity and Cybersecurity Partnership (DCCP), the United States will provide technical assistance and capacity-building to help developing country governments establish ICT policy and regulatory frameworks that enable a vibrant and inclusive digital economy.

To date, the USG has invested over \$47 million to these efforts, and, through the Digital Invest program under DCCP, the United States is mobilizing private capital for digital connectivity infrastructure and digital financial services that strengthen global, free, open, interoperable,

reliable, and secure digital ecosystems in emerging markets. These programs support the objectives of AP-IS Pillars 1, 2, and 3 to enhance connectivity, digital technologies and applications, and digital data bridge the digital divide.

This is just one example of the work that the U.S. government is pursuing to support the vital goal of bridging digital divides, promoting sustainable, equitable, and transformational development through the growth of open, interoperable, reliable, inclusive, and secure digital ecosystems around the world.

Given the importance of these issues, we look forward to the Digital Ministerial Conference in November 2022.