Ad-Hoc Working Group
meetings to review in a transparent manner the outcome of the independent feasibility study on the role, structure and financing of the proposed digital solutions centre for sustainable development to be established in Kazakhstan and recommend a roadmap for strengthening the sharing of practical digital solutions in the Asia-Pacific region

6 April 2026

1. The Ad Hoc Working Group to review in a transparent manner the outcome of the independent feasibility study and recommend a roadmap for strengthening the sharing of practical digital solutions in the Asia-Pacific Region (hereinafter referred to as the "AWG"), which was established by the Astana Ministerial Declaration on Digital Inclusion and Transformation in Asia and the Pacific in September 2024, held meetings in the following chronology:

   i. 10 March 2025 (Organizational meeting): briefing on the preliminary findings of the draft independent feasibility study for the proposed digital solution centre for sustainable development (hereinafter referred to as the "DSC SD").
   ii. 2 April 2025: statements by AWG members; briefing by the consultant on the ongoing work of the independent feasibility study; presentation by Kazakhstan, including its intention to submit a draft resolution to the 81st Session of the Commission.
   iii. 27 June 2025: briefing by the consultant on the independent feasibility study; discussions by AWG members.
   iv. 9 October 2025: exchange of comments by AWG members on the independent feasibility study; discussing the way forward on digital solutions for the Asia-Pacific region, including a presentation by Kazakhstan on digital platforms.
   v. 12 January 2026: addressing concerns related to the issue of duplications between the DSC SD and existing institutions; presentation by Kazakhstan on technologies, solutions and science; financial matters including the financial structures of UN ESCAP regional institutions.
   vi. 3 March 2026 (held in Astana in hybrid mode): presentation by Kazakhstan including the introduction of the Second Draft of the Outcome and Roadmap paper; question and answer between AWG members and Secretariat; discussions on the possible conclusions of the AWG.
   vii. 30 March 2026 (held in Bangkok in hybrid mode): discussion of the outcome document of the Ad Hoc Working Group.

Section A: Outcome

1. The AWG took note of the key findings and recommendations of the independent feasibility study (produced on April 16, 2025, and presented to working group members in June 2025) and provided comments by 2 September and during the Ad Hoc Working Group Meetings, summaries of which can be found at Annex I. The study highlighted the potential benefits and challenges of the DSC SD such as the potential to contribute to a further core ESCAP goal of enhancing regional integration (pg. 14); enhance the agency and autonomy of countries in the process of digital transformation (pg.31). Challenges in establishing the DSC SD include gaining early commitment of more than a single major donor country (pg. 30); gaining sustained level of cooperation and collaboration with existing entities (pg. 31); develop a

strategy to secure additional funding (in addition to the amount committed by Kazakhstan) (pg. 32).

2. The Government of Kazakhstan proposed an Explanatory Note on UN ESCAP Asian and Pacific Digital Solutions Centre for Sustainable Development and took the lead in presenting the concept of the DSC SD, pledging the initial resources of US$ 15 million in five years, hosting the Astana hybrid meeting on 3 March 2026 and initiated the preparation of this Draft Outcome and Roadmap paper.
3. During the AWG discussions, AWG members welcomed the initiatives expressed and explained by Kazakhstan, including its pledge for financial and in-kind contributions for the establishment of the DSC SD. The Government of Kazakhstan relayed to the AWG that several members indicated their intent to the government of Kazakhstan to benefit from the Centre as recipients of best practice technologies. AWG members also raised questions on the sustainability of financing the DSC SD, potential duplicative functions within the UN system at a time of significant UN budgetary challenges, and the harmonization of the DSC SD with UN rules and regulations including data security and legal obligations.

4. The Ad Hoc Working Group took note on the following Concept of the proposed DSC SD proposed by the Government of Kazakhstan:

a) Concept:

Background and Rationale

The need for digitalization of public and government services was noted both in the work of the Asia Pacific Information Superhighway initiative, established under the auspices of UN ESCAP and in global UN frameworks.

Scope
The DSC SD is designed to become a platform under the UN umbrella, which facilitates best-practice digital solutions from Asia-Pacific countries in public and government services, and matches them to the needs of other UN ESCAP members and associate members to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), enable implementation in a timely, transparent, secure, cost-effective and sustainable manner.

Vision
Creating a platform for practically implementing the best practice in digitalization and innovation among UN ESCAP members and associate members. UN ESCAP members and associate members are encouraged to exchange ideas as well as integrative digital solutions to ensure the attainment of SDGs.

Mission
Timely and cost-effective selection and support for the implementation of best practice and critical digital technologies to ensure significant progress towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals of the 2030 Agenda.

Tasks and functions

- Identification of critical digital technologies that can drive significant progress towards achieving the SDGs.

- Development of safe and transparent software versions that can be adapted and implemented across different countries.
- Providing access to such technologies on a voluntary basis, especially for the least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States.
- Sharing knowledge among specialists from participating countries on effective IT methodologies and best practices.
- Foster is an inclusive, open, safe, and secure digital space that respects, protects and promotes human rights, and promotes effective personal data protection and privacy norms.

Principles

- Facilitating interoperability and cross-sectoral integration in the receiving country in the processes of digital transformation, while ensuring that data collection, access, sharing, transfer, storage and processing practices are safe, secure and proportionate for necessary, explicit and legitimate purposes, in compliance with international law, and respecting privacy and data protection.
- Application of an integrated approach, selection of best practices.
- Support in the implementation of technical solutions at scale for implementing SDGs; Promoting resilient, inclusive safe, secure digital ecosystems in receiving countries, which may be based on common standards and access protocols to foster interoperability across Asia-Pacific countries, while ensuring full data sovereignty, consistent data protection and privacy standards across jurisdictions, in line with UN standards

Institutional and scientific background

- The Center's work will be organized based on the increasing need to consider the process of emergence and further rapid development of digital technologies and bridge the digital divide.
- The Center's work will ensure access to UN ESCAP members and associate members with best practice technologies on a voluntary basis, especially for the least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing states.
- The Center's work will also unlock the potential of digital innovations for poverty reduction and foster harmonious relations between governments and societies.
- The Centre will ensure recipients are able to then share relevant learnings with other UN ESCAP members and associate members as part of their own development offering.
- The project will strengthen the important role of the United Nations in ensuring that the consequences of the emergence of such breakthrough technologies are considered and assessed, as well as in creating neutral platforms for digital cooperation and technologies transfer, on mutually agreed terms.

Collaboration model and principles of operation

- The Centre will act as repository of digital solutions and foster a community of practices of engineers, legists and policymakers. Countries expressing interest will be provided with access to open-source, interoperable IT products, as well as assistance in their adoption and deployment, if requested, with the recipient country not having to bear the expenses.
- The Centre will operate with the following principles:

a. All digital solutions will be provided in open source, with the recipient country having full permission to adapt, revise, update, extend, and repurpose them for other public service

solutions.

b. Solutions will be designed and configured to maximize interoperability among digital systems and integration, and promote compatible data governance approaches, while ensuring full data sovereignty and consistent data protection standards across jurisdictions.

b) A complementary model in cooperation with existing UN ESCAP regional institutions

AWG also noted that only one country has committed financial resources for the proposed centre so far. The AWG studied the potential duplications and collaboration models between the DSC SD and the following existing entities:

- UN ESCAP Asian and Pacific Centre for Transfer of Technology (APCTT) (*New Delhi, India. Established in Bangalore, 1977*) and Asia Pacific Technology Transfer Platform, which is being developed under its auspices, the area of the digital technology transfer. Scientific cooperation.

  Development and implementation of institutional norms, legal frameworks, and standards enabling the free exchange and adoption of digital solutions among countries.

  The extensive experience of the APCTT is of great importance, as the main activities of the Digital Solutions Centre will focus on the transfer of digital solutions.

  Currently, significant and often insurmountable barriers, coupled with the lack of a comprehensive regulatory framework governing the transfer of digital technologies create significant obstacles for countries. Many of these barriers are related to the willingness or unwillingness of states to engage in bilateral cooperation.

  It is therefore crucial to establish national institutional norms and standards that would enable countries to freely adopt digital solutions - particularly through neutral platforms facilitated by UN institutions.

- UN ESCAP Asian and Pacific Training Centre for Information and Communication Technology for Development (APCICT) (*Incheon, Republic of Korea. Established in 2006*) in the field of training of representatives of the countries where the projects will be implemented. Scientific cooperation.

  Organization of capacity-building activities, including training sessions, professional development programmes, and advanced courses for specialists facilitating the exchange of experience, technologies, and knowledge in the digital sphere among countries.

  Experience has demonstrated that the successful transfer of technology from one country to another requires adequate training and capacity-building support for specialists. It is estimated that thousands of new professionals across the region will require training to effectively support this process.

- UN ESCAP Asian and Pacific Centre for Development of Disaster Information Management (APDIM) (*Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran. Established in 2018*) in the field

of digital solutions for disaster management. Scientific cooperation.

Collaborative work on identifying and adapting new digital solutions for disaster risk reduction.

The consequences of global climate change know no territorial boundaries, and devastating natural disasters often affect entire regions.

The timely sharing of new and effective digital solutions developed by any country can play a critical role in saving lives and safeguarding the well-being of millions of people.

- UN ESCAP Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific (SIAP) (*Chiba, Japan. Established in 1970)* in the field of work with socio-economic indicators, big data. Scientific cooperation.

  Collaborative work on identifying and adapting new solutions and mechanisms for data consolidation.

- UN ESCAP Centre for Sustainable Agricultural Mechanization (CSAM) (*Beijing, China. Established in 1977)* in the field of implementation of advanced digital practices in agricultural mechanization. Scientific cooperation.

  Collaborative work on identifying and adapting new digital solutions in the field of sustainable agricultural mechanization

Cooperation with other institutions:

ADB:	Asia Development Bank
CDPI:	Centre for Digital Public Infrastructure
DPGA:	Digital Public Goods Alliance
DIA:	Digital Impact Alliance
EAEU:	Eurasian Economic Union
FAO:	Food and Agriculture Organisation
ITU:	International Telecommunications Union
MAIDD:	Ministry of Artificial Intelligence and Digital Development (Kazakhstan)
NITEC:	National Information Technologies Joint Stock Company
KazAid:	Kazakhstan Agency for International Development
KISDI:	Korea Information Society Development Institute
SPECA:	United Nations Special Programme for the Economies of Central Asia
UNDP:	United Nations Development Programme
UNECE:	United Nations Economic Commission for Europe
UNTBLDC:	United Nations Technology Bank for Least Developed Countries

c) Contribution from Kazakhstan:

The AWG noted that its members expected that the Government of Kazakhstan will provide

premises and financial support. Expectations were also expressed that Kazakhstan will host the Centre and cover its institutional, programmatic, and operational costs for a period of five years, up to a total amount of 15 million US dollars.

Add-ons:

- Kazakhstan has already formulated its proposal for 23 digital solutions, which it is ready to provide for the Asian and Pacific countries as in-kind contributions;
- These 23 solutions include public services, cloud document management, taxation, customs procedures among others;
- All these solutions have a proven track record of successful implementation over several years and are ready for replication in other countries;
- The technologies offered by Kazakhstan could play an important role in strengthening digital capacities within the UN system globally. Kazakhstan envisions contributing to the modernization of the Organisation's management tools through advanced digital technologies.
- The AWG noted the explanation by the Secretariat that by seconding 130 personnel the DSC SD may need to add additional general service staff.

Section B: Road map for strengthening the sharing of practical digital solutions for the Asia Pacific region through the establishment of the DSC

1. Establish the Asian and Pacific Digital Solutions Centre for Sustainable Development as a regional institution of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP).
2. Establish a core team of five staff members. The operation of the Centre must be administered by a Director of the Centre (D1) and four leading professional experts (P5, P4, and P3). The need for additional staff on top of these posts should be clarified.
3. Ensure that the established core team of the Centre carries out targeted efforts to attract, on a secondment basis, two IT engineers and/or policymakers from every UN ESCAP members and associate members.
4. Ensure the following organizational process:
    - Identify and secure agreement of donor countries;
    - Identify potential beneficiary countries, and explore potential;
    - Facilitate a beneficiary/donor country contract agreement;
    - Oversee and support capacity building and implementation;
    - Assist in securing additional financing;
    - Follow up on the sustainability of the DSC SD;
    - Facilitating or enabling the transfer of specific digital solutions;
    - Ensuring that recipient countries can autonomously implement and further develop these solutions.
5. Ensure the implementation of the following Principles of Operation:
    - Give countries agency;
    - Target priority SDGs;
    - Tailor solutions to each eco-system and user;
    - Seek out Partnerships and Collaboration;
    - Use open standards;
    - Ensure Security and privacy of citizens ;

- Support internal, regional and global interoperability by assisting in harmonizing technical, legal and policy standards;
- Promote and encourage respect of human rights in line with the UN Charter and international law.

Section C: Conclusions

1. Took note that the Ad-Hoc Working Group has fulfilled its mandate to review in a transparent manner the outcome of the independent feasibility study on the role, structure and financing of the proposed digital solutions centre for sustainable development to be established in Kazakhstan and recommends a roadmap for strengthening the sharing of practical digital solutions in the Asia-Pacific region.

2. Call upon member States to continue their active participation in the work of the Technical Committee, plan to be established to navigate the tasks and functions of the DSC SD until the establishment of the Governing Council.

Annex I : Resume of discussions of past AWG meetings

Distr.: For members only

Date: 10 March 2025

Original: English

Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

Organisational meeting of the Ad-Hoc Working Group to review in a transparent manner the outcome of the independent feasibility study and recommend a roadmap for strengthening the sharing of practical digital solutions in the Asia-Pacific region.

Résumé of discussions

Meeting: Organizational meeting

Date: 10 March 2025

Chair: Mr. Francisco Tilman Cepeda, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary and Permanent Representative of Timor-Leste to ESCAP

Present:[1] Armenia, Azerbaijan, China, India, Islamic Republic of Iran, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Maldives, Mongolia, Pakistan, Philippines, Russian Federation, Singapore, Tajikistan, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Türkiye, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Uzbekistan, Viet Nam.

Agenda item 1: Opening session

1. Mr. Zhaslan Maduyev, Minister of Digital Development, Innovation, and Aerospace Industry of Kazakhstan delivered his opening statement by pointing out that Kazakhstan presented its proposal to establish a United Nations digital solutions centre for sustainable development, aimed at providing ready-made, proven digital solutions to ESCAP member States to help bridge the growing digital divide in the Asia-Pacific region. The proposed digital solutions centre for sustainable development, to be hosted and be financially supported by Kazakhstan, will serve as a neutral, UN-affiliated platform where countries can access, adapt, and share digital technologies – thus avoiding high development costs and duplication of efforts. Kazakhstan also committed 23 digital solutions covering areas such as e-government, taxation, and cloud-based services, as in-kind contributions. The proposed digital solutions centre for sustainable development aligns with Kazakhstan's broader leadership in sustainable development, further underscored by the recent UN General Assembly resolution establishing a UN Sustainable Development Goal Regional Centre in Almaty.

Agenda item 1a: Presentation by the secretariat on the activities for the establishment of the Ad-Hoc Working Group

2. Ms. Tiziana Bonapace, Director, ICT and Disaster Risk Reduction Division (ESCAP) highlighted to the Ad-Hoc Working Group members that this organizational meeting of the Ad-Hoc Working Group on the proposed digital solutions centre for sustainable development was convened to review the preliminary findings of the independent feasibility study commissioned by ESCAP, as mandated by the Astana Ministerial Declaration on Digital Inclusion and Transformation in Asia and the Pacific. She warmly welcomed participants and expressed appreciation to the Government of Kazakhstan –

[1] See annex 1 for list of participants.

particularly Minister Zhaslan Madiyev and Ambassador Arman Issetov – for their leadership and strong commitment to digital solutions for SDG implementation.

3. Ms. Bonapace explained that the organisational meeting was aimed at gathering early feedback and guidance from member States on the potential role, structure, and financing of the proposed digital solutions centre for sustainable development, and at ensuring broad-based consultations as the independent feasibility study progresses further.
4. Ms. Bonapace further recalled that, to follow through on the Astana Ministerial Declaration mandate, the ESCAP secretariat circulated to members and associate members of the Commission a note verbale on 31 January 2025 with the terms of reference for the Ad-Hoc Working Group and inviting nominations to participate in the same.
5. Ms. Bonapace highlighted that Mr. Sean 'O Siochru, the ESCAP consultant conducting the independent feasibility study, would be presenting the preliminary findings of the independent feasibility study during the present meeting. She concluded by emphasizing the importance of continued engagement and expert insights from members in advancing the collective goal of sustainable development through practical digital cooperation.

Agenda item 2: Election of officers

6. The participants in the Ad-Hoc Working Group elected the following officers as the bureau:

   Chair: Mr. Francisco Tilman Cepeda, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary and Permanent Representative to ESCAP (Timor-Leste)

   Vice Chair: Ms. Huda Ali Shareef, Deputy Ambassador (Maldives)

   Vice Chair: Mr. Emil Ahmadov, First Secretary and Deputy Permanent Representative to ESCAP (Azerbaijan)

Agenda item 3: Conduct of business

7. The representative of the Russian Federation proposed amendments to the provisional agenda, and the agenda[2] was adopted.

Agenda item 4: Briefing by the consultant on the ongoing work on the independent feasibility study

8. Mr. Seán Ó Siochrú, ESCAP consultant, delivered a briefing on the preliminary findings of the draft independent feasibility study for the proposed digital solution centre for sustainable development.[3]
9. The Ad-Hoc Working Group took note of the briefing from Mr. Siochrú.

Agenda item 5: Other matters

[2] See annex 2 for Agenda.
[3] See annex 3 for details.

10. The representative of the Russian Federation raised concerns regarding the manner in which the meeting was convened, noting that the announcement was made too late and did not allow sufficient time for member States to prepare. In addition, he expressed his delegation's reservation on discussing the preliminary findings of the independent feasibility study, and a preference for waiting to review directly the final findings once the study is finalized and completed.

Agenda item 6: Closing

11. Ms. Tiziana Bonapace, Director, ICT and Disaster Risk Reduction Division (ESCAP) thanked all delegations for their participation and open discussions, and extended special thanks to, Mr. Ó Siochrú, ESCAP consultant for his support and expert insights. She reassured members of the Ad-Hoc Working Group that the secretariat stands ready to support the work of the Ad-Hoc Working Group going forward.
12. The Chair extended his sincere thanks to the members of the working group for their active engagement. The meeting was adjourned.

Annex

Annex 1 – List of Participants

Armenia

Ms. Viktorya Hovakimyan, Chief Specialist of the European Union (EU) and International Organizations Cooperation Division of the International Cooperation Department, Ministry of High-Tech Industry of the Republic of Armenia

Ms. Heghine Margaryan, Expert of the Digitalization Department, Ministry of High-Tech Industry of the Republic of Armenia

Azerbaijan

Mr. Emil Ahmadov, First Secretary and Deputy Permanent Representative to ESCAP, Embassy of the Republic of Azerbaijan, Bangkok

China

Mr. Yang Jun, Assistant Permanent Representative to ESCAP

Mr. Yuxiao Qin, Assistant Dean, Professor, School of Electronics and Information, Northwestern Polytechnical University, Xi'an, Shaanxi

Mr. Ziwei Li, Deputy Director, Office of International Cooperation, Northwestern Polytechnical University, Deputy Dean, International College, Northwestern

Polytechnical University, Vice President, Kazakhstan Branch Campus, Northwestern Polytechnical University

India

Mr. Shri RS Mani, Distinguished Scientist, CSIR Hqs

Mr. Vipin C Shukla, Scientist-G, DSIR

Islamic Republic of Iran

Embassy of Island Republic of Iran in Bangkok

Kazakhstan

Mr. Aibol Bizhanov, Deputy Chairman, (National Information Technologies) JSC, Ministry of Digital Development, Innovations and Aerospace Industry of the Republic of Kazakhstan

Mr. Amanbek Kaiyrbayev, Head of the international treaties division, Ministry of Digital Development, Innovations and Aerospace Industry of the Republic of Kazakhstan

Mr. Vitaliy Alexandrov, First Secretary and Deputy Permanent Representative to ESCAP, Embassy of the Republic of Kazakhstan in Bangkok

Ms. Zura Kamzinova, Head of Projects, National Information Technology

Kyrgyzstan

Ms. Tatyana Alexandrovna Syabro, Chief Specialist of the Digital Policy Development Department, Digital Solutions Management of the Ministry of Digital Development of the Kyrgyz Republic

Mongolia

Ms. Guamaral Altangerel, Deputy Permanent Representative to the UNESCAP, Embassy of Mongolia

Pakistan

Mr. Sayed Waqas, Director of Digital Governance, Ministry of Information Technology

Philippines

Embassy of Philippines in Bangkok

Russian Federation

Mr. Oleg Shamanov, Minister-Counsellor and Deputy Permanent Representative to ESCAP

Mr. Taras Pronin, Head of the Section in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation

Mr. Rostislav Lenchuk, Second Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation

Mr. Zorikto Gomboin, Deputy Laboratory Head, National Research Centre for Telecommunication, International Development, Standardization and Application of ICTs, Radio Research and Development Institute

Mr. Artem Golubev, Specialist, Radio Research and Development Institute, Moscow

Singapore

Ms. Adelene Lum, Senior Assistant Director, Ministry of Trade and Industry, Singapore

Tajikistan

Mr. Najmuddin Bekov, Deputy Permanent Representative of the Republic to ESCAP

Thailand

Ms. Natthaleeya Narash, Foreign Relations Officer, Senior Professional Level

Ms. Yanisa Intaraphun, Foreign Relations Officer, Practitioner Level

Mr. Jartuwat, Senior Team Leader, Digital Economy Promotion Agency (DEPA)

Timor-Leste

H.E. Mr. Francisco Tilman Cepeda, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary and Permanent Representative to ESCAP, The Embassy of the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste, Bangkok

Mr. Justo Fernandes, Director of the Information and Application Development Systems as the representative of the TIC Timor Agency

Türkiye

Mr. Nuri Gökçek, Expert, Presidency of Strategy and Budget

Mr. Bariş Görkem Talay, Industry and Technology Expert, Ministry of Industry and Technology

Ms. Ayşe Mehlika Yıldız Ersen, Second Secretary and Deputy Permanent Representative to ESCAP

United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

Ms. Sophia Nayak-Luke, Deputy Permanent Representative to ESCAP

Uzbekistan

Mr. Nuriddin Mamatkulov, Consul and Deputy Permanent Representative to ESCAP

Viet Nam

Ms. Nguyen Thu Thuy, Third Secretary and Deputy Permanent Representative to ESCAP

ESCAP Secretariat

Ms. Tiziana Bonapace, Director, ICT and Disaster Risk Reduction Division

Mr. Tae Hyung Kim, Chief, ICT and Development Section, ICT and Disaster Risk Reduction Division

Mr. Siope Vakataki Ofa, Economic Affairs Officer, ICT and Development Section, ICT and Disaster Risk Reduction Division

Ms. Sowi Kim, NRL Expert on ICT and Development, ICT and Development Section, ICT and Disaster Risk Reduction Division

Mr. Byung Jin Lee, NRL Expert on ICT and Development, ICT and Development Section, ICT and Disaster Risk Reduction Division

Ms. Aida Karazhanova, Economic Affairs Officer, ICT and Development Section, ICT and Disaster Risk Reduction Division

Ms. Chaoyi Hu, Associate Economic Affairs Officer, ICT and Development Section, ICT and Disaster Risk Reduction Division

Mr. Gaston Maria Melo Felgueres, Associate Expert, ICT and Development Section, ICT and Disaster Risk Reduction Division

Ms. Avilia Zavarella, Fellowship Officer, ICT and Development Section, ICT and Disaster Risk Reduction Division

Mr. Seán Ó Siochrú, Consultant, ICT and Development Section, ICT and Disaster Risk Reduction Division

Annex 2 – Agenda

Time	Sessions
10:00 – 10:30	**Agenda item 1: Opening Session** • Opening statement ✓ H.E. Mr. Zhaslan Madiyev, Minister of Digital Development, Innovation and Aerospace Industry, Kazakhstan
10:30-11.00	**Agenda item 1a: Presentation by the secretariat on the activities for the establishment of the Ad-Hoc WG** • Statement ✓ Ms. Tiziana Bonapace, Director, ICT and Disaster Risk Reduction Division, ESCAP
11.00 – 11.30	**Agenda item 2: Election of officers**
11.30 – 11:50	**Agenda item 3: Conduct of Business**
11.50-13.15	**Agenda Item 4**: **Briefing by the consultant on the ongoing work on the independent feasibility study** • Briefing ✓ Mr. Sean 'O Siochru, ESCAP consultant • Discussions • Statements by members of the Ad Hoc Working Group
13.15-13.40	**Agenda Item 5: Other Matters**
13.40 - 13.45	**Agenda Item 6: Closing** • Closing remarks ✓ Ms. Tiziana Bonapace, Director, ICT and Disaster Risk Reduction Division (IDD), ESCAP

Annex 3 - Mr. Seán Ó Siochrú, ESCAP consultant briefing

Distr.: For members only

Date: 2 April 2025

Original: English

Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

Ad Hoc Working Group to review in a transparent manner the outcome of the independent feasibility study and recommend a roadmap for strengthening the sharing of practical digital solutions in the Asia-Pacific region.

Résumé of discussions

Meeting: Preparatory meeting

Date: 2 April 2025

Chair: Mr. Francisco Tilman Cepeda, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary and Permanent Representative of Timor-Leste to ESCAP

Present: [4] Azerbaijan, China, India, Kazakhstan, Maldives, Mongolia, Pakistan, Russian Federation, Tajikistan, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Türkiye, United Kingdom, Vanuatu.

Agenda item 1: Opening of the meeting

(a) Opening remarks by the Chair

1. The Chair welcomed participants to the first meeting of the Ad Hoc Working Group to review in a transparent manner the outcome of the draft preliminary independent feasibility study and recommend a roadmap for strengthening the sharing of practical digital solutions in the Asia-Pacific region, emphasizing the significance of the Group's work and calling for constructive engagement from all member States.

(b) Welcome remarks by Ms. Tiziana Bonapace, Director, ICT and Disaster Risk Reduction Division, ESCAP

2. Ms. Bonapace highlighted the importance of the meeting, acknowledged Kazakhstan's leadership on the initiative and reiterated ESCAP's mandate to facilitate regional cooperation in digital innovation. She highlighted the meeting's objective of reviewing the outcomes of the draft preliminary independent feasibility study.

(c) Adoption of the agenda

3. The representative of the Russian Federation and the representative of Kazakhstan proposed amendments to the tentative agenda, and the agenda[5] of the meeting was adopted. To note, the representative of the Russian Federation requested to add agenda item 7(1) on "Adoption of the minutes of the organizational meeting of the AWG", but highlighted that this item may be deferred for adoption in the next meeting of the Ad Hoc Working Group.

[4] See annex 1 for the names of the representatives attending the meeting.

[5] See annex 2.

Agenda item 2: Country statements

4. The representative of Kazakhstan reiterated its support and commitment for the establishment of the proposed digital solution centre for sustainable development and noted that the concept had evolved throughout the years of consultation, technical studies completed, and regional consultation events. The representative of Kazakhstan emphasized that the findings of the draft feasibility study was closely aligned with Kazakhstan's vision and called for an in-depth technical discussion among the Ad Hoc Working Group members, including a roadmap.
5. The representative of the Russian Federation emphasized the importance of adhering to ESCAP's intergovernmental rules and processes when conducting meetings and that discussions by member States on the road map should only be held after the completion of the feasibility study.
6. The representative of India raised concerns about the feasibility study timeline, noting that India required more time for reviewing the draft feasibility study and requested the secretariat to facilitate a meeting with the consultant to provide their input.
7. The representative of Türkiye raised concerns that the terms of reference of the feasibility study was finalized without adequate written feedback from all member States, expressed remorse that the Secretariat hired the consultant based on the said terms of reference and did not inform the member states that the feasibility study was already underway until it was specifically asked by Türkiye in the previous ACPR meeting. .
8. The representative of India further emphasized that the current review process of the independent feasibility study should not be construed as delaying the initiative but rather as ensuring thoroughness and transparency. Additionally, the delegation drew attention to potential duplication with the work of other United Nations entities and regional centers.
9. The representative of the United Kingdom expressed reservations about discussing the outcome of the draft feasibility study and technical elements before the ad hoc working group is given the opportunity to review the final independent feasibility study.
10. The representative of China acknowledged the value of the draft independent feasibility study and Kazakhstan's proactive engagement. The representative of China reiterated his support for regional cooperation in digital innovation, highlighting the importance of mutual benefit and openness.
11. The representative of Vanuatu expressed support for Kazakhstan's initiative and stated that he looked forward to continued engagement in the discussions.

Agenda item 3: Presentation by the secretariat on the activities for the establishment of the Ad Hoc Working Group

12. Ms. Bonapace presented the progress on the activities implemented by the secretariat for the establishment of the Ad Hoc Working Group[6].
13. The representative of the Russian Federation requested detailed information from the secretariat on the voluntary contributions received by the secretariat for commissioning an independent feasibility study as per paragraph 19(d) of the Astana Ministerial Declaration on Digital Inclusion and Transformation in Asia and the Pacific. In response, Ms. Bonapace confirmed that the feasibility study was funded through a voluntary contribution from the Government of Kazakhstan, with details to be provided later.

[6] See annex 3 for details.

14. The representative of the Russian Federation raised concerns about the sequencing of steps on work for implementing the Astana Ministerial Declaration on Digital Inclusion and Transformation in Asia and the Pacific, highlighting the short timeline and the suboptimal timing of the meetings, and reiterated his reservation on discussing the key preliminary findings of the independent feasibility study until the independent feasibility study is completed.

15. The representative of Kazakhstan stated his preference to focus on substantive discussions on the key findings of the draft independent feasibility study rather than spending too much time on bureaucratic processes. The representative of Kazakhstan further emphasized the need to report on progress of the Ad Hoc Working Group during the 81st session of the Commission in April 2025, which was the very reason Kazakhstan had requested that the secretariat fast-track the commissioning of an independent feasibility study and the establishment and convening of the Ad Hoc Working Group to review its findings.

Agenda item 4: Briefing by the consultant on the ongoing work on the independent feasibility study

16. Mr. Seán Ó Siochrú, ESCAP consultant, delivered a briefing on the draft independent feasibility study for the proposed digital solution centre for sustainable development[7].

17. The representative of Türkiye highlighted the role of the Ad Hoc Working Group to review the outcome of the independent feasibility study and recommend a roadmap for strengthening the sharing of practical digital solutions for the Asia-Pacific region, while recognizing the need to avoid duplication of efforts vis-à-vis other regional institutions of the Commission and specialized organizations, and emphasized the need for the proposed digital solutions centre for sustainable development to have clear goals and objectives.

18. The representative of Kazakhstan proposed a draft outcome and roadmap and requested the secretariat to circulate the proposal of Kazakhstan and explanatory notes document to member States. The representative of Kazakhstan stated that it looks forward to discussing the details of the roadmap in the next meeting.

19. The ESCAP consultant, Sean Ó Siochrú, responded that he would be happy to interview any other member States and will speak with India and Türkiye after the meeting. Mr. Ó Siochrú confirmed that he would finalize the study after receiving further input, if any.

Agenda item 5: Presentation by Kazakhstan

20. Mr. Aibol Bizhanov from the National Information Technologies of Kazakhstan shared the experiences of Kazakhstan on development of e-government services, highlighting that Kazakhstan's digital solutions can be adapted by other ESCAP member States for their own use.[8]

21. The representative of Pakistan requested additional information from Mr. Aibol Bizhanov on any measures on disaster recovery or potential backup plans for hosting e-government services. Mr. Aibol Bizhanov responded that backups for data storage are in place to protect data.

Agenda item 6: Other matters

22. Delegations raised additional concerns regarding the process, transparency, and the timeline for future meetings. The representatives of Türkiye and India noted the need for more time to conduct domestic consultations. The representative of the Russian Federation reiterated his position that future meetings must be convened only after the independent feasibility study is finalized. The

[7] See annex 4 for draft independent feasibility study

[8] For details of digital solutions, refer to https://www.nitec.kz/en

representative of the United Kingdom echoed similar concern that discussions on recommendations of a roadmap cannot be done before the independent feasibility study is completed.

23. The representative of Kazakhstan expressed his position that the work of the Ad Hoc Working Group is linked to the two draft resolutions proposed by Kazakhstan in the Informal Working Group on Draft Resolutions for the 81st session of the Commission in April 2025, and therefore proposed that the next meeting of the Ad Hoc Working Group should discuss in details the two documents (Proposal by Kazakhstan and Explanatory notes) of Kazakhstan.

24. The representative of the Russian Federation responded that the process of the Informal Working Group on Draft Resolutions for the 81st session of the Commission is separate from the work of the Ad Hoc Working Group, and suggested that the discussions in the Ad Hoc Working Group should not be construed as supporting the two draft resolutions proposed by Kazakhstan in the Informal Working Group on Draft Resolutions for the 81st session of the Commission.

25. The representative of Kazakhstan expressed his support for the next meeting of the Ad Hoc Working Group to be held either on 4, 8, or 10 April 2025, and requested the secretariat to circulate the two documents proposed by Kazakhstan (Proposal by Kazakhstan and Explanatory notes) to member States following the meeting. He also proposed that the next meeting of the Ad Hoc Working Group focus on discussing the two documents.

26. The representative of Tajikistan informed that while awaiting further guidance from the capital, he is in principle supportive of a meeting on the dates proposed by Kazakhstan.

27. The representative of the Russian Federation proposed, and the Ad Hoc Working Group agreed, that the next meeting be convened as soon as possible after the independent feasibility study is completed. The Chair, in consultation with member States, decide the date of the next meeting.

28. The secretariat was requested to prepare the draft minutes of the Organizational meeting of the Ad Hoc Working Group held on 10 March 2025 as well as of the first meeting of the Ad Hoc Working Group held on 2 April 2025, for the review of and adoption by the Ad Hoc Working Group at its second meeting.

Agenda item 7: Closing of the meeting

29. The Chair thanked all participants for their engagement and emphasized the importance of consensus and continued multilateral dialogue in advancing the discussions on the proposed digital solutions centre for sustainable development. The meeting was adjourned.

Annex

Annex 1: List of participants

Azerbaijan

Mr. Emil Ahmadov, First Secretary and Deputy Permanent Representative to ESCAP, Embassy of the Republic of Azerbaijan, Bangkok (online)

China

Mr. Yuxiao Qin, Assistant Dean, Professor, School of Electronics and Information, Northwestern Polytechnical University, Xi'an, Shaanxi

India

Mr. Vipin C Shukla, Scientist-G, DSIR and Head APCTT

Kazakhstan

Mr. Aibol Bizhanov, Deputy Chairman, National Information Technologies JSC, Ministry of Digital Development, Innovations and Aerospace Industry (online)
Email: aibol.Bizhanov@nitec.kz

Mr. Amanbek Kaiyrbayev, Head, International Treaties Division, Ministry of Digital Development, Innovations and Aerospace Industry (online)

Mr. Vitaliy Alexandrov, First Secretary and Deputy Permanent Representative to ESCAP, Embassy of the Republic of Kazakhstan in Bangkok (on-site)

Ms. Ayazhan Mukanova, Director, Department of International Cooperation, Ministry of Digital Development, Innovations and Aerospace Industry (online)

Maldives

Ms. Huda Ali Shareef, Deputy Ambassador, Embassy of the Republic of Maldives, Bangkok (online)

Mongolia

Ms. Guamaral Altangerel, Deputy Permanent Representative to UNESCAP, Embassy of Mongolia (on-site)

Pakistan

Mr. Sayed Waqas, Director of Digital Governance, Ministry of Information Technology

Russian Federation

Mr. Oleg Shamanov, Minister-Counsellor and Deputy Permanent Representative to ESCAP (on-site)

Tajikistan

Mr. Najmuddin Bekov, Deputy Permanent Representative of the Republic to ESCAP

Thailand

Ms. Natthaleeya Narash, Foreign Relations Officer, Senior Professional Level (online)

Ms. Yanisa Intaraphun, Foreign Relations Officer, Practitioner Level (online)

Anonymous, Delegation of Thailand (on-site)

Timor-Leste

H.E. Mr. Francisco Tilman Cepeda, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary and Permanent Representative to ESCAP (on-site)

Embassy of the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste, 1550 Thanapoom Tower, 7th Floor, New Petchburi Road, Makassan, Ratchathewi, Bangkok 10400 (online)

Türkiye

Ms. Ayşe Mehlika Yıldız Ersen, Second Secretary and Deputy Permanent Representative to ESCAP

United Kingdom

Ms. Sophia Nayak-Luke, Deputy Permanent Representative to ESCAP

Vanuatu

Mr. Mathieu Hervillard Le Peillet, Permanent Representative to ESCAP, Bangkok, Thailand (on-site)

ESCAP Secretariat

Ms. Tiziana Bonapace, Director (online)

Mr. Tae Hyung Kim, Chief, ICT and Development Section (on-site)

Mr. Siope Vakataki Ofa, Economic Affairs Officer (on-site)

Ms. Sowi Kim, NRL Expert on ICT and Development (on-site)

Ms. Aida Karazhanova, Economic Affairs Officer (on-site)

Ms. Chaoyi Hu, Associate Economic Affairs Officer (on-site)

Mr. Gaston Maria Melo Felgueres, Associate Expert (on-site)

Ms. Avilia Zavarella, Fellowship Officer (on-site)

Mr. Seán Ó Siochrú, Consultant (online)

Annex 2: Agenda

Time	Sessions
13:00 – 13:05	**Agenda Item 1 Opening of the meeting** a) Opening remarks by the Chair b) Welcome remarks Ms. Tiziana Bonapace, Director, ICT and Disaster Risk Reduction Division (IDD), ESCAP c) Adoption of the Agenda
	Agenda Item 2: Country Statements
13:05 – 13:30	**Agenda Item 3: Presentation by the secretariat on the activities for the establishment of the Ad-Hoc Working Group** • Ms. Tiziana Bonapace, Director, ICT and Disaster Risk Reduction Division (IDD), ESCAP • Questions and Answers
13.30 – 15.00	**Agenda Item 4: Briefing by the consultant on the ongoing work on the independent feasibility study** • Briefing by Mr. Sean 'O Siochru, ESCAP consultant • Statements and questions and answers
15.00 – 15.55	**Agenda Item 5: Presentation by Kazakhstan**

15:55 – 16:00	**Agenda Item 6: Other Matters** **Agenda Item 7: Closing of the meeting** a) Adoption of the minutes of the organizational meeting of the AWG b) Closing remarks by the Chair

Annex 3: Presentation by the secretariat on the activities for the establishment of the Ad-Hoc Working Group

Annex 4: Draft independent feasibility study

Distr.: For members only

Date: 27 June 2025

Original: English

Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

Ad Hoc Working Group to review in a transparent manner the outcome of the independent feasibility study and recommend a roadmap for strengthening the sharing of practical digital solutions in the Asia-Pacific region.

Résumé of discussions

Meeting: First meeting

Date: 27 June 2025

Chair: H.E. Ms. Huda Ali Shareef, Ambassador-at-Large, Deputy Head of Mission and Permanent Representative to ESCAP, Embassy of the Republic of Maldives in Bangkok

Present: [9] Australia, Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Cambodia, China, Georgia, India, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Maldives, Philippines, Russian Federation, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Türkiye, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

Agenda Item 1: Opening of the meeting

(a) Opening remarks by the Chair

1. The Chair opened the second Ad Hoc Working Group meeting and thanked delegates for their continued engagement in the discussions. The Chair informed members that the meeting would focus on discussions based on the consultant's final feasibility study and next steps.

(b) Adoption of the agenda

2. The representative of Kazakhstan proposed the inclusion of a new item titled "Country Statements" under Agenda Item 1. It was adopted without objection.
3. The representatives of the Russian Federation and Japan proposed "comments" section under Agenda Item 3. It was adopted.
4. Japan shared the view that the formal mandate of the group begins after the circulation of the finalized feasibility study and expressed readiness to contribute constructively.

(c) Adoption of the draft resumes of discussions of previous meetings

5. The representative of Türkiye highlighted that all member's comments on the draft resume of discussions of the previous meetings should be circulated by the Secretariat prior to each meeting. and the Russian Federation highlighted that all members' comments be incorporated into the draft resumes for adoption. The representative noted that Armenia had submitted written comments, which had not been widely taken.
6. The secretariat confirmed the recirculation of all revised resumes of all previous meetings, including all written inputs, ahead of the next meeting for review and correction by members.

[9] See annex 1 for the names of the representatives attending the meeting.

(d) Country Statements

7. The representative of Kazakhstan expressed strong support for the feasibility study and highlighted its contribution to institutional and legal clarity, noting that it builds upon UN mandates and offers an integrated platform tailored to the region's needs. Kazakhstan informed members that digital solutions have already been embedded in its official development assistance programming. Kazakhstan also reaffirmed its financial commitment. The representatives of Kazakhstan expressed concern about delaying the process of the DSC initiative amidst ongoing digital inequality.

Agenda item 2: Presentation by the secretariat on the progress of work of the ad hoc working group

8. Ms. Tiziana Bonapace, Director of the ICT and Disaster Risk Reduction Division, briefed the progress of work, including the circulation of the finalized feasibility study on 9 May 2025 and the nomination of national focal points from 17 countries. She proposed that the next AWG meeting be scheduled for either 12 or 16 September 2025.

9. The representative of Japan asked why the meeting was referred to as the first meeting of the AWG if the feasibility study had not yet been finalized. The secretariat clarified that the April session, as the first meeting, reviewed a near-final version of the study in a transparent and inclusive spirit.

10. The representative of the United Kingdom expressed concerns about inconsistencies and unclear terminology, particularly the labeling of the study as "final", while some parts remained editorially incomplete. The secretariat clarified that the report circulated on 9 May 2025 is the final independent feasibility study paper submitted by the consultant, and the secretariat has minimized its intervention. The secretariat will conduct professional editing after incorporating comments and corrections, prior to official publication.

Agenda item 3: Briefing by the consultant on the independent feasibility study

11. Mr. Seán Ó Siochrú, the consultant, presented the structure, key findings and recommendations of the independent feasibility study. He underscored that the proposed DSC would serve as a neutral, UN-affiliated platform for the end-to-end transfer of digital solutions. He emphasized the importance of government commitment, regional coordination, multi-stakeholder engagement, and sustainable funding.[10]

12. The consultant introduced a seven-step modality roadmap for the DSC, covering governance, funding, partnerships, demand articulation, risk mitigation, and implementation strategy. He identified three risk categories: strategic, operational, and reputational, and provided mitigation measures. Kazakhstan's commitment of USD 15 million over five years, with 6.5 million for staffing, was noted.

13. The representative of Kazakhstan requested clarification on whether other member States or organizations also engage in bilateral transfers of digital solutions. The consultant responded that, while regional institutions exist, few cases were facilitated between countries within the UN framework.

[10] For further details, refer to Annex 3, for copy of PowerPoint presentation delivered.

14. The representative of the United Kingdom raised concerns over the legal framework, cybersecurity and the precedent of direct UN involvement in technology transfers. The consultant explained that the DSC would not own or license technology but would instead serve as a matchmaking and facilitation platform, including other UN entities such as ITU.

15. The representative of Kazakhstan emphasized the role of the private sector in supporting digital infrastructure, citing Kazakhstan's early adoption of IBM's Lotus platform to digitize government workflows. He further informed that a Digital Solutions Centre could have helped share such expertise and should facilitate not just technology transfer, but also expertise sharing, standardized agreements, and public-private collaboration.

16. Kazakhstan highlighted the importance of ensuring complementarity with existing ESCAP institutions and proposed the extension of invitation to regional institutes such as such as APCICT, APCTT and ITU to avoid duplication and build on established institutional capacities in the development of the Digital Solutions Centre.

17. The representative of Japan questioned the selection of interviewees in the feasibility study, particularly why the UNDP was not included given its prominent role in digital development. The consultant clarified that, although he had worked with UNDP in the past, he found no current initiatives directly relevant to the study. He noted that he consulted the Resident Coordinator in Kazakhstan instead and emphasized the importance of involving RCs in coordinating resources and implementation at the country level.

18. The representative of Türkiye asked about overlaps with existing ESCAP institutions such as APCICT and APCTT as well as other UN agencies such as the UNTB and about the steps taken or planned to be taken by Kazakhstan to overcome possible duplication with existing entities. The consultant clarified that the DSC's value lies in integrating and complementing existing initiatives rather than overlapping. Türkiye questioned the financial sustainability of the proposed Centre beyond the initial five years, noting the current financial environment within the UN and the fact that Kazakhstan remained the sole confirmed donor. Türkiye also pointed out the lack of detailed information in the feasibility study on the 23 digital solutions that Kazakhstan proposed to share, and their alignment with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Türkiye called for coordination with existing mechanisms and requested continued consultation moving forward.

Agenda item 4: Discussion on the next steps

19. The representative of the Russian Federation proposed that written comments on the feasibility study be submitted by all member States and circulated well in advance prior to the next meeting. He also emphasized the need for sequential procedural review: first through the Committee on ICTSTI and then to the ESCAP Commission for endorsement. The representative of the United Kingdom supported the procedural clarification and emphasized that any outcomes must reflect consensus among all participating member States.

20. The representative of Kazakhstan reiterated that the AWG's process had followed the agreed mandate as the proposed study had already been positively confirmed by the Committee on ICTSTI-4 in 2024. Kazakhstan advocated for timely progress to serve developing countries and proposed the creation of a roadmap to guide the process. He also proposed that the next AWG meeting involve participation of ITU to enhance collaboration.

21. The representative of Japan emphasized the need to clarify the specific digital solutions to be supported through the DSC, noting that the consultant had not provided detailed examples. They also stressed the importance of engagement with existing initiatives to prevent duplication. The representative of Türkiye highlighted that the DSC must align with the UN mandate, including

the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the UN80 Initiative She expressed concerns about potential overlaps with existing entities and called for further clarification on how the DSC would differentiate itself.

22. The representative of Japan reiterated concerns over insufficient engagement with existing regional institutions and called for better coordination to minimize duplication. She emphasized the importance of including geographic contexts to enhance relevance and called for a more detailed and transparent presentation of the risk assessment component of the feasibility study.

23. The representative of Kazakhstan responded by reaffirming the inclusive nature of the feasibility study process and welcomed further input from member States. He reiterated their country's commitment to the initiative and openness to collaboration.

24. The representative of the Russian Federation encouraged all members and associate members to submit written comments on the feasibility study, emphasizing the need for sufficient time to ensure a thorough review and circulation prior to the next meeting. He reiterated that the outcome of the AWG should be presented to the Committee on ICTSTI before submission to the Commission for endorsement.

25. The representative of Japan expressed concern that the roadmap in the study paper lacks sufficient detail and stressed the need to assess governance and funding arrangements more concretely. The representative of the United Kingdom echoed Japan's concerns, emphasizing the importance of developing a consensus-based outcome that incorporates the diverse positions of all member States. It was also emphasized that the value of inclusive multilateral processes outweighs that of single-country-driven initiatives.

26. The secretariat proposed a deadline of mid-August for members to submit written feedback on the feasibility study. This would allow sufficient time for consolidation, circulation, and discussion of inputs prior to the next meeting.

27. The secretariat confirmed that the next AWG meeting is tentatively scheduled in mid September 2025, with a final date to be communicated in due course.

Agenda item 5: Other matters

28. The representative of Türkiye reiterated the importance of receiving revised meeting resumes in advance and requested that these be shared before the next session. The secretariat confirmed the recirculation of all minutes for review and correction.

Agenda item 6: Closing of the meeting

29. The Chair thanked all representatives for their active and constructive engagement. She emphasized the importance of continued collaboration in developing a regionally relevant, inclusive, and pragmatic Digital Solutions Centre.

30. The secretariat noted that the list of participants and consolidated written submissions would be circulated soon.

Annex

Annex 1: List of participants

Australia

Ms. Jacqueline Gu, Deputy Permanent Representative to ESCAP

Azerbaijan

Mr. Emil Ahmadov, First Secretary and Deputy Permanent Representative to ESCAP, Embassy of the Republic of Azerbaijan, Bangkok

Bangladesh

H.E. Mr. Faiyaz Murshid Kazi, Ambassador of the People's Republic of Bangladesh to the Kingdom of Thailand

Cambodia

H.E. Mr. Ribaun Korm, Secretary-General, National Committee for ESCAP, Royal Government of Cambodia

Mr. Cheang Vuth, Deputy Secretary General of the Digital Government Committee (DGC)

Mr. Sothi Keo, Secretary of State

Mr. Rithy Chan, Legal Officer, Ministry of Post and Telecommunications, Street 396 House 49, Sangkhat BKK3, TTP, Phnom Penh

China

Mr. Yang Jun, Assistant Permanent Representative to ESCAP (Additional participants need to be confirmed by China)

Georgia

Mr. Nikoloz Tabatadze, Specialist, Zaza Danaskertelli

India

Dr. Anoop Singh, Scientist E, Department of Scientific and Industrial Research (DSIR), Ministry of Science and Technology

Japan

Ms. Yoshiko Motoyama, Deputy Permanent Representative to ESCAP and Chief of International Organization, Embassy of Japan in Bangkok

Kazakhstan

Mr. Amanbek Kaiyrbayev, Head of the international treaties division, Ministry of Digital Development, Innovations and Aerospace Industry of the Republic of Kazakhstan

Mr. Yerkin Abdukarimov, Senior Data Science Engineer, National Information Technologies (NITEC) JSC, Ministry of Digital Development, Innovations and Aerospace Industry of the Republic of Kazakhstan

Mr. Vitaliy Alexandrov, First Secretary and Deputy Permanent Representative to ESCAP, Embassy of the Republic of Kazakhstan in Bangkok

Kyrgyzstan

Aichurok Borukchuyevna Beksultanova, Chief Specialist of the Digital Projects Support Department, Digital Solutions Management of the Ministry of Digital Development of the Kyrgyz Republic.

Tatyana Alexandrovna Syabro, Chief Specialist of the Digital Policy Development Department, Digital Solutions Management of the Ministry of Digital Development of the Kyrgyz Republic.

Maldives

H.E. Ms. Huda Ali Shareef, Ambassador-at-Large, Deputy Head of Mission and Permanent Representative to ESCAP, Embassy of the Republic of Maldives in Bangkok

Philippines

Ms. Beatriz Ines L. Herrera-Davila, Second Secretary, Consul and Alternate Permanent Representative to ESCAP.

Russian Federation

Mr. Oleg Shamanov, Minister-Counsellor and Deputy Permanent Representative to ESCAP,

Mr. Kirill KABLUKOV, Advisor, Mass Communications and International Cooperation Department, Ministry of Digital Development of the Russian Federation

Mr. Artem GOLUBEV, Federal State Unitary Enterprise "Radio Research and Development Institute"

Ms. Viktoriia Timofeeva, Attaché and Assistant Permanent Representative to ESCAP

Mr. Timofey Shtakhov, Attaché and Assistant Permanent Representative to ESCAP

Thailand

Ms. Natasha Isarabhakdi, Third Secretary and Assistant Permanent Representative to ESCAP, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Thailand

Timor-Leste

Mr. Justo Femandes, Director of Application and Information System development ICT Agency - TIC TIMOR I.P.

Turkiye

Ms. Ayşe Mehlika Yıldız Ersen, Second Secretary and Deputy Permanent Representative to ESCAP

Mr. Barış Görkem TALAY, Industry and Technology Expert, Ministry of Industry and Technology

United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

Ms. Sophia Nayak-Luke, Deputy Permanent Representative to ESCAP

ESCAP Secretariat

Ms. Tiziana Bonapace, Director

Mr. Tae Hyung Kim, Chief, ICT and Development Section

Mr. Siope Vakataki Ofa, Economic Affairs Officer

Ms. Aida Karazhanova, Economic Affairs Officer

Mr. Byung Jin Lee, NRL Expert on ICT and Development

Ms. Chaoyi Hu, Associate Economic Affairs Officer

Mr. Gaston Maria Melo Felgueres, Associate Expert

Mr. Seán Ó Siochrú, Consultant

Ms. Praddtana Limkrailassiri, Administrative Assistant

Ms. Yukhontorn Suewaja, Senior Programme Management Assistant

Annex 2: Agenda

Time	Agenda
13:00 – 13:30	**Agenda Item 1 Opening of the meeting** a) Opening remarks by the Chair b) Adoption of the agenda c) Adoption of the draft resumes of discussions of previous meetings d) Country statements
13.30 – 14.00	**Agenda Item 2: Presentation by the secretariat on the progress of work of the ad hoc working group** • Ms. Tiziana Bonapace, Director, ICT and Disaster Risk Reduction Division (IDD), ESCAP Questions and answers
14.00-15.30	**Agenda Item 3: Briefing by the consultant on the independent feasibility study** • Briefing by Mr. Sean 'O Siochru, ESCAP consultant Questions, answers and comments
15:30 – 15:45	**Agenda Item 4: Discussion on the next steps**
15:45 – 15:55	**Agenda Item 5: Other matters**
15:55 – 16:00	**Agenda Item 6: Closing of the meeting** • Closing remarks by the Chair

Annex 3: Presentation Material of Consultant

DIGITAL SOLUTIONS CENTRE INDEPENDENT FEASIBILITY STUDY: RESULTS REVIEW

Seán Ó Siochrú. Nexus Research Co-op

27th June 2025.

UN ESCAP Ad-Hoc Working Group meeting

STUDY OBJECTIVES & PURPOSE

- Objective: For the proposed Digital Services Centre
  - Assess its role and potential contribution to digital innovation for SD
  - Define its structure, and operational modalities
  - Assess potential for duplication
  - Analyse financing options, and estimate resources required
- Purpose: To inform the creation of a roadmap by :
  - strengthening sharing of digital solutions in the Asia-Pacific
  - Deliberating on establishing the DSC
- Methodology:
  - Documentary Analysis; Consultation & KIIs; ESCAP, Kazakh Field Visit

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

- Documentation + Online Data Analysis.
- Field Visit Astana, Almaty: 7 KIIs
- UN-ESCAP Management Visit: 10 KIIs
- Key Informant Interviews:
  - ESCAP Regional institutions: 5 KIIs
  - ESCAP member representatives: 10 KIIs
  - UN/ multilateral: 6 KIIs + email communications 7

STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATIONS

Consultations, further KIIs & research

- ESCAP HQ (10);
- ESCAP RIs (online):
  - APC-ICT (3)
  - APC TT (1)
  - APDIM (1)
  - CSAM (2)
  - SIAP (1)
- ESCAP Member States
  - Japan (1)
  - Turkiye (1)
  - UK (2)
  - Philippines (1)
  - Iran (1)
  - India (3)
  - Russian Federation (1)
  - Kazakhstan(1)
  - China (1)
  - USA (written)
- Active in Digital Field
  - ITU Bangkok (1)
  - GovStack (2)
  - UN Technology Bank for LDCs (2)
  - Digital Public Goods Alliance
  - Co-Develop
  - Centre for Digital Public Infrastructure
  - Digital Impact Alliance
  - ADB Institute
  - APIS (Briefing Participation)
  - ITforChange (2)
  - KISDI (1)
  - UN DESA e-gov survey (1)

COMPARING DCS & OTHER CENTRES

(DS = Digital Solutions)	DSC	Gov-stack	DPGA	Co-Dev.	Centre DPI	Dig. Impact Alliance	UNTB for LDCs
National Needs Assessments	X	X			X		X
Digital Framework for DS		X			X		
Standards for DS		X	X				
DS Registry /database	X	X	X			X	
Access to ready-made DS	X						X
Funding new DS				X			
Supporting DS installation	X				X		
Capacity building for expansion	X				X		

RESEARCH VALIDATION

- 10/03/2025 Preliminary results presented: Ad Hoc WG
- Further interviews + verification of report section
- 20/03/2025: Draft Report Delivered
- 02/04/2025: Draft Report Presented Ad Hoc WG: comments
- Follow-up research: India Ministry of S&T
- 16/04/2025: Final Report Delivered

KEY FINDINGS: A ROLE FOR DSC?

1. Does it fill an identifiable gap, not supplied by others?

Many other centres, offer individual components.

2. Would the DSC **expand** supply, **efficiently** and **effectively**? OR
3. Better to expand existing entities, build new partnerships?

Not a definitive answer but…
DSC uniquely offers a *neutral platform* for *integrated support for all stages* for *direct transfer and embedding* of *existing digital solutions*.

LESSONS FROM KIIs

- Success needs Member States' active support & engagement (for DSC, both solution-donor and recipient countries)
- Launch phase likely to take longer than anticipated
- Core funding should be secure and guaranteed
- Individual solutions need a coherent interoperable framework
- Security breaches & system integrity must be factored in
- Digital solutions *per se* may not promote SDGs and inclusion: they must be targeted
- Securing additional finance becoming more difficult to secure

DSC VISION

"That Asia Pacific countries are implementing digital solutions in government applications and services to citizens that:

- maximise impact on their ***priority SDGs***
- enhance ***regional interoperability***
- through sharing ***best practice solutions*** regionally &
- ensuring all countries have the ***agency, expertise and institutions*** to drive this process into the future."

PRINCIPLES OF OPERATION

1. The goal is to give countries *agency*
2. Offer an *informed choice* of solutions from different countries
3. Target *priority SDGs* for each country
4. Tailor to each *digital eco-system* and to users
5. Seek out partnership and collaboration; centres, FOSS etc.
6. Use *Open Standards* referencing DPI and DPGs
7. *Authenticate* for security and privacy
8. Enable national, regional and global *interoperability*
9. Support & strengthen international *human rights* standards

PROPOSED MODALITIES: STEP BY STEP

1. Identify & secure donor countries' agreement for DSC library
2. Identify potential host countries, explore priority solutions
3. Develop multi-stakeholder digital solution Action Plans
4. Develop Host-donor-DSC country *model contract* agreement
5. Oversee and support capacity building & implementation
6. Assist in securing additional financing
7. Follow-up and sustainability

RISK ASSESSMENT

Risk	Mitigation	Level
1. Initial USD 15m funding not forthcoming	Kazakhstan is long-term committed to digital & to multilateralism	Low
2. Few potential donor countries with digital solutions	Secure commitments of 2 + countries at the earliest stage	Medium – high
3. Difficult for recipient MS to engage transfer modalities	Develop methodologies to assess readiness , suitability of solutions	Low
4. Recipients unable to build capacity & instit. commitments	Multi-stakeholder Action Plan ; multi-disciplinary support & capacity	Low-medium
5. Extra resources needed to implement solutions	Engage collaborators, donors, lenders at the earliest stage; Use UN CC	Medium

FINANCE, HUMAN RESOURCES & GOVERNANCE

- Kazakhstan commitment of USD15 million for 5 years: USD 6.5 million = 5 UN staff,
- Divided between programmatic, institutional, and operational needs
- Central Office, Almaty in UN premises and UN core staff
- Governance structures following ESCAP guidelines, tailored to needs
- Additional funds from ODA, Regional Banks etc.

KEY PROVISIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS

Feasibility of the DSC will depend on:

1. A clear vision, objectives and core modalities
2. Alignment with Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI) approach.
3. A firm commitment from donor/recipient member states in terms of digital solutions
4. An in-depth understanding of demand and needs
5. Close consultation with, and learning from, existing entities

Distr.: For members only

Date: 9 October 2025 and 12 January 2026

Original: English

Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

Second meeting of the Ad-Hoc Working Group to review in a transparent manner the outcome of the independent feasibility study and recommend a roadmap for strengthening the sharing of practical digital solutions in the Asia-Pacific region.

Résumé of discussions

Meeting: Second meeting

Date: 9 October 2025

Chair: Mr. Francisco Tilman Cepeda, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary and Permanent Representative to ESCAP (Timor-Leste)

Present: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, China, India, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Maldives, Pakistan, Philippines, Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, Tajikistan, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Türkiye, and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

Agenda Item 1: Organizational Issues

(a) Opening remarks by the Chair

1. The Chair opened the meeting and welcomed the participation of members of the Ad Hoc Working Group. The Chair recalled the mandate of the Group and emphasized the importance of continued engagement in advancing discussions on the proposed Digital Solutions Centre for Sustainable Development (DSCSD).

(b) Adoption of the agenda

2. The Chair invited members to consider the provisional agenda.

- The representative of Japan raised concerns regarding the placement of items related to duplication of mandates in the context of the TOR discussion and UN80, and requested clarification on supporting documentation related to potential duplication especially with existing ESCAP institutions.
- The representative of Kazakhstan proposed adjustments in the provisional agenda to reflect the inclusion of country statements and documents previously circulated.
- The representative of the Russian Federation supported the consolidation of certain substantive agenda items and underlined the need to remove items for which no official documentation had been provided.
- The representative of the United Kingdom emphasized the importance of having access to presentations in advance to ensure informed discussion.

3. Following the interventions, the Chair requested the secretariat to incorporate the proposed procedural modifications. The agenda, as amended, was adopted without objection.

Agenda Item 2: Approval of the draft resumes of past discussions

4. The Chair invited members to consider the draft resumes of past discussions prepared by the secretariat.
5. On the draft résumé of the AWG meeting of 27 June, the representative of the Russian Federation acknowledged the work of the secretariat, however requested that the résumé reflect its earlier requests for an additional comparative analysis of the financial and administrative costs of the proposed Centre by the secretariat, as well as its request for the formal review and conclusions of the Governing Councils of APCICT and APCTT on the proposed DSC, with particular attention to avoiding duplication between the existing ESCAP regional institutions and the proposed DSCSD.
6. The representative of the United Kingdom noted that paragraph 25 of the draft résumé did not fully reflect its position, emphasizing that discussions should address broader regional issues on digital solutions and that the roadmap should demonstrate alignment with wider regional plans.
7. While highlighting the importance of avoiding duplication, the representative of Japan reiterated the requested on a detailed mapping of services provided by other organizations, suggested inviting relevant regional institutions, ITU, UNDP, APT and UN Technology Bank for LDCs and other relevant organizations in this space to present their work. The representative asked that the finalized terms of reference and membership of the Working Group be uploaded to the ACPR website. The Chair requested the secretariat to revise and recirculate the draft résumé.
8. On the draft résumé of the AWG meeting on 2 April 2025, it was agreed to revise the meeting designation from "first meeting" to "preparatory meeting". The Chair requested that the secretariat revise the draft résumé; it was amended and adopted without objection.
9. On the draft résumé of the AWG meeting on 10 March 2025, no comments were received and the résumé was adopted without objection.

Agenda item 3: Member statements

10. The representative of Kazakhstan reiterated strong support for the establishment of the DSCSD and reaffirmed its financial commitment.
11. The representative of the Russian Federation emphasized the alignment with existing ESCAP mechanisms and encouraged continued consultations on legal and organizational aspects.
12. The representative of Japan welcomed the independent feasibility study. However the representative reiterated concerns regarding duplication, requested a detailed mapping of existing services provided by the ESCAP regional institutions and other relevant international organizations, and renewed the request to publish the finalized terms of reference and membership list.
13. The representative of Türkiye welcomed the independent feasibility study. The representative emphasized the need to ensure complementarity with existing ESCAP regional institutions, raised concerns regarding financial sustainability of the proposed DSCSD beyond the initial five-year period, and requested further clarification on the distinct features of the proposed DSC vis-à-vis existing institutions, coordination arrangements with relevant UN entities, and considerations related to cybersecurity, liability and financial sustainability.

14. Several delegations reiterated the need for coordination with existing ESCAP regional institutions, including APCICT, APCTT, as well as UNDP and ITU, to ensure complementarity and avoid duplication.

Agenda Item 4: Comments of the AWG members on the Independent Feasibility Study (IFS) on the proposed DSCSD

15. The secretariat presented a summary of inputs received from AWG members on the independent feasibility study. Members raised several recurring themes, including concerns about potential duplication with existing mechanisms; the need to further clarify the mandate and ensure institutional coherence; the importance of clear governance and sustainable funding arrangements; how legal, data

protection and cybersecurity considerations would be addressed; how the proposed DSCSD would engage with existing ESCAP regional institutions; and the scope of digital solutions to be shared, including criteria for their selection, through the proposed DSCSD.

16. AWG members' interventions on the IFS:
    - The representative of Japan reiterated concerns regarding duplication between the proposed DSCSD and existing ESCAP regional institutions, requested mapping of existing services of ESCAP regional institutions and presentations by relevant organizations, and emphasized closer coordination with ongoing initiatives.
    - The representative of the Russian Federation stressed the need for input from ESCAP regional institutions and for procedural clarity, including on legal and cybersecurity aspects, before advancing substantive decisions.
    - The representative of the United Kingdom urged situating the proposal within a broader regional digital cooperation roadmap and noted the need for legal advice from the UN Office of Legal Affairs.
    - The representative of Kazakhstan reaffirmed support for the proposed DSCSD, highlighted its continued technical and financial contributions to the process, and underscored the value of a neutral platform such as the UN for sharing digital solutions, including through standardized agreements and public-private collaboration.
17. The members of the AWG took note of Kazakhstan's proposal to share practical digital solutions and experiences already deployed at the national and bilateral levels, as well as its expressed readiness to contribute to regional capacity-building through the proposed DSCSD.
18. The members of the AWG noted the explanatory note submitted by Kazakhstan outlining the concept of the DSCSD. Members proposed to consider the explanatory note alongside the key findings of the IFS and, in subsequent sessions, to invite relevant institutions (APCICT, APCTT, ITU, & UNTBLDC) to brief the members of the AWG on their digital related activities to ensure complementarity and avoid duplication.
19. The Chair took note of interventions and requested the secretariat to facilitate the attendance of APCICT, APCTT, ITU, & UNTBLDC in the next meeting of the AWG.

Agenda Item 5: Digital solutions for the Asia-Pacific Region – Way Forward

(a) Addressing concerns related to the issue of duplication

20. Several delegations underscored the importance of avoiding duplication with existing regional and international mechanisms. AWG members emphasized that any future initiative must align with ongoing mandates and respect institutional coherence within the United Nations system.

(b) Technologies, solutions and science – presentation by the representative of Kazakhstan

21. The representative of Kazakhstan presented national experiences in developing and transferring digital platforms, highlighting the potential contribution of practical digital solutions to regional cooperation. Kazakhstan reaffirmed readiness to provide technical inputs and share digital tools through a neutral platform.

(c) Financial matters – presentation on the financial structure of ESCAP's Regional Institutions by the secretariat

22. The secretariat provided an overview of financial structures applied within ESCAP regional institutions, outlining principles related to governance, resource allocation and sustainability. AWG members were invited to consider the long-term financial implications of the proposed DSCSD.

(d) Possible ways for strengthening the sharing of practical digital solutions

23. AWG members took note of Kazakhstan's proposal to enhance regional cooperation in digital solutions, including mechanisms for knowledge exchange, technical collaboration, and engagement with relevant United Nations entities. Delegations emphasized the importance of inclusiveness, sustainability and

institutional complementarity in determining the way forward, noting with concern that the session's discussion did not follow the revised agenda and ended up following the original one.

24. Due to limited time, the Chair proposed to AWG members to resume the second meeting of the AWG at a later date, and to begin with Agenda 5 again.

Resumption of the second meeting of the Ad Hoc Working Group to review in a transparent manner the outcome of the independent feasibility study and recommend a roadmap for strengthening the sharing of practical digital solutions in the Asia- Pacific region

Date: 12 January 2026

Chair: H.E. Ms. Huda Ali Shareef, Ambassador-at-Large, Deputy Head of Mission and Permanent Representative to ESCAP, Embassy of the Republic of Maldives in Bangkok, (Maldives)

Present: Azerbaijan, Cambodia, China, Georgia, India, Japan, Kazakhstan, Maldives, Mongolia, Pakistan, Philippines, Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, Sri Lanka, Tajikistan, Thailand, Türkiye, United Kingdom, Viet Nam

Agenda Item 5: Digital solutions for the Asia-Pacific region: way forward

(a) Addressing concerns related to the issue of duplication

25. The Chair welcomed delegations and recalled that the previous meeting held on 9 October 2025 was unable to complete its agenda, noting that the current meeting resumed deliberations from Agenda Item 5.
26. The representative of Kazakhstan reported continued consultations with relevant United Nations entities and ESCAP regional institutions, confirming that the proposed DSCSD would adopt a complementary approach to existing ESCAP institutions. Cooperation with ITU on GovStack-aligned solutions and with the United Nations Technology Bank for LDCs was highlighted, noting that the DSCSD would focus on practical engineering and implementation support. Appreciation was expressed to the Government of Vanuatu for its support of the proposed DSCSD. Kazakhstan confirmed its commitment to covering all related expenses and proposed holding the next meeting in Kazakhstan, tentatively from 16 to 19 February 2026, including a site visit to the potential DSCSD office location in Almaty.
27. The representative of Pakistan expressed support for the establishment of the DSCSD and indicated Pakistan's intention to co-sponsor the proposal.
28. The representative of Tajikistan underscored the importance of digital transformation for sustainable development and referred to General Assembly resolution 79/322, recalling Tajikistan's proposal to establish a Regional Artificial Intelligence Centre in Dushanbe. The representative of Tajikistan expressed support for the DSCSD, noting its potential complementarity with the proposed Regional AI Centre.
29. The representative of the Republic of Korea expressed concerns regarding potential overlap with existing ESCAP entities, the pace of moving the proposal forward, and the need for further in-depth review of the independent feasibility study, including mandate, funding and operational arrangements. The representative of Kazakhstan responded by referring to the independent feasibility study and a comparative analysis of mandates, emphasizing that the DSC would focus on engineering-oriented activities and would not duplicate the mandates of existing ESCAP regional centres.
30. The secretariat presented the mandates and main roles of ESCAP's regional institutions in a table matrix, including potential roles of the proposed DSCSD. The table highlighted the need to avoid duplication

through a clear division of labour, with capacity-building functions remaining with existing institutions, joint knowledge-sharing arrangements, and the DSCSD focusing on the technical stewardship of digital solutions. The secretariat also presented consolidated 2024 financial reports of the five ESCAP regional institutions (APCICT, APCTT, APDIM, SIAP and CSAM), highlighting that the data in the reports were provided as reference only and should not be used as the basis for planning a new centre.

31. The representative of the United Kingdom asked how ESCAP regional institutions address financial shortfalls, noting that a few institutions appeared to have expenditures exceeding contributions. The secretariat explained that financial shortfalls are often addressed through reserves accumulated from previous years. It was further clarified that annual budget planning takes into account available resources as well as contractual obligations.
32. The representative of Azerbaijan asked whether the reported funding figures included extrabudgetary contributions. The secretary explained that extra budgetary contributions were included in the reported figures.
33. The representative of Kazakhstan reiterated the principle of "leaving no one behind" and clarified that the proposed USD15million over five years constitutes start-up funding, covering technical support, staffing, facilities and major technical infrastructure, with emphasis on engineering assets. The representative also highlighted in-kind contributions, including the proposed 23 digital solutions from Kazakhstan, and encouraged AWG members to consider providing financial and/or in-kind support.
34. The representative of the United Kingdom asked whether sunset or review clauses could be introduced for the proposed Centre and sought clarification on whether the proposed funding would be sufficient over the initial five-year period or require additional resources. The secretariat confirmed that existing ESCAP regional institutions do not include sunset or retirement clauses, citing CAPSA as an example which followed ESCAP members' decisions.
35. The representative of the United Kingdom reiterated the question of whether the proposed donation of USD15 million by Kazakhstan would cover the full operational costs of the Digital Solutions Centre over five years. In response, the secretariat indicated that insufficient information was currently available to estimate total future programme costs and noted that collaboration with other regional institutions could entail additional funding sources.
36. The representative of Kazakhstan expressed its confidence that the proposed budget, which would be significantly higher than those of existing ESCAP regional institutions, would be sufficient, particularly during the initial investment phase.
37. The representative of Türkiye welcomed the briefings made earlier and stated that its assessment of the proposed DSCSD could be framed around considerations related to timing, scope and decision-making, highlighting the need to avoid duplication under UN80 initiatives, to prevent overlap with the UN Technology Bank for LDCs, and to ensure that decisions are taken by consensus among ESCAP members.
38. The representative of Kazakhstan reaffirmed alignment of the proposed DSCSD with the UN80 initiatives, clarified its complementarity with the United Nations Technology Bank, and emphasized that the DSCSD would serve all ESCAP members except the 11 countries under the mandate of the UN Technology Bank for LDCs.
39. The representative of Azerbaijan expressed support for Kazakhstan's initiative on DSCSD, noting its alignment with the national digital priorities of Azerbaijan and being open to further consultations.
40. The representative of Japan requested that all relevant materials presented in the meeting be shared with AWG members and expressed that his member State would maintain its position until the materials will be scrutinized in a proper manner.
41. The representative of the Republic of Korea sought clarification on how the proposed DSCSD would differ from bilateral assistance and whether digital solutions would be shared with developing member States. The representative of Kazakhstan clarified that the DSCSD would be a common centre open to all UN member States, and not limited to Kazakh digital solutions, but any UN member State could both contribute and benefit.
42. The representative of the United Kingdom reiterated concerns regarding the establishment of a new centre during ongoing UN80 initiatives and questioned whether the circulated draft resolution for the proposed establishment of the DSCSD could be considered outputs of the Ad Hoc Working Group.

43. The representative of the Republic of Korea raised concerns regarding the long-term maintenance and sustainability of the proposed digital solutions.
44. The representative of Kazakhstan recalled earlier discussions in April, clarified that the circulated draft outcome and roadmap were intended to facilitate early review, and noted that decisions would be taken through intergovernmental consultations. Openness to further review, consultations and additional time for member States was expressed, and it was noted that initial digital solutions would be presented under the next agenda item.

(b): Technologies, Solutions and Science

45. The Chair invited the delegation of Kazakhstan to deliver a presentation under agenda item 5(b). The delegation of Kazakhstan delivered a presentation under agenda item 5(b) on technologies, solutions and science (presentation available as Annex 1).
46. The Chair thanked the delegation of Kazakhstan and noted that no requests for the floor were made.

(c): Financial matters – financial structure of ESCAP Regional Institutions

47. The representative of the Russian Federation reiterated its earlier request for an additional financial assessment on the proposed DSCSD by the secretariat, noting that Kazakhstan had not opposed the request. The secretariat inquired what specific additional financial information is requested. The secretariat confirmed that 2024 financial information had been provided and indicated willingness to recompile the data in a different format, subject to further guidance from AWG members.
48. The representative of the United Kingdom sought further clarity from the secretariat regarding earlier AWG members' comments on the independent feasibility study under agenda item 4, and expressed concern that outcomes appeared to be pre-empted without sufficient discussion.
49. The representative of the Russian Federation clarified that the request to the secretariat is to conduct an alternative calculation of the required budget estimate for the proposed Digital Solutions Centre, similar to the budgeting done in the independent feasibility study. The representative also echoed the United Kingdom's request regarding AWG members' comments on the independent feasibility study in the previous meetings.
50. The representative of Kazakhstan shared additional information on the budget breakdown in the independent feasibility study, noted that UN staffing standards had been applied, and supported the request for the secretariat to conduct an alternative calculation of the budget.
51. The representative of the United Kingdom clarified that its reference concerned the table with consolidated comments of members under Agenda Item 4, rather than the same budget table referenced by the Russian Federation. The secretariat reiterated the explanation that agenda item 4 was not under consideration at the current meeting and stated its readiness to provide further information upon clear guidance from members, noting that several financial elements were currently in circulation.
52. The representative of the United Kingdom requested clarification on the status of the independent feasibility study, the process for incorporating members' feedback and next steps, stressing that outcomes should not imply the agreement where none exists.
53. The representative of Kazakhstan emphasized that the Ad Hoc Working Group is a consultative forum, reiterated the rationale for the proposed Centre as a neutral UN platform, and stated that decisions would be taken through intergovernmental processes, while offering opportunities for further consultations.
54. The representative of the Russian Federation clarified that the requested information relates specifically to annex 2 of the independent feasibility study, concerning the estimated five-year budget of the Digital Solutions Centre. The representative reiterated the request for additional calculations of the summary budget cost estimate on establishing a DSCSD, to be conducted by the secretariat. The representative of Kazakhstan expressed support for the request made by the Russian Federation.
55. The secretariat stated that it does not have full information on confirmed elements of the DSCSD for making a detailed cost estimate and requested clearer guidance from members. The secretariat informed members that it will consult internally before commenting.

56. The representative of the United Kingdom requested that the secretariat at the next AWG meeting should provide responses to members' comments on the independent feasibility study. The representative asked for clarity on next steps, emphasizing that the outcomes and minutes of the AWG meeting should accurately reflect discussions and not imply agreement.
57. The representative of Kazakhstan stated that conclusions of the AWG meeting would be more appropriately addressed under agenda item 7, proposed carrying forward sub-item 5(d) to the next meeting, and referred to the Preparatory Meeting of the AWG on 2 April 2025, of which the draft roadmap was shared for further discussion. The draft roadmap proposed by Kazakhstan highlighted key elements, including the rationale, mission, collaboration model, a financial pledge of USD15million, and the provision of 23 digital solutions by Kazakhstan.
58. The secretariat confirmed that the relevant documents requested by members had been shared and posted online. The secretariat requested that Kazakhstan submit the updated roadmap and explanatory note for circulation to AWG members, together with Kazakhstan's presentations in the meeting.

(d): Possible ways for strengthening the sharing of practical digital solutions for the Asia-Pacific region

59. Due to time constraints, the Ad Hoc Working Group did not proceed with substantive discussion under Agenda Item 5(d).
60. The representative of Kazakhstan proposed suspending consideration of Agenda Item 5(d) and resuming deliberations at the next meeting. The representative thanked participating members, including Pakistan, Tajikistan and Azerbaijan, for their support, and sought the Chair’s guidance on closing the meeting at that item.
61. The Chair invited views on closing the meeting at Agenda Item 5(d) and resuming consideration at the next meeting.
62. The representative of the United Kingdom supported taking up Agenda Item 5(d) at the third meeting. The representative emphasized that the discussion should be taken up at a third meeting rather than resuming the second meeting, and suggested that the schedule of meetings and next steps be addressed prior to closing.

Agenda Item 6: Other matters

63. The Chair moved to Agenda Item 6, entitled “Other matters”, and opened the floor for interventions.
64. The representative of the Russian Federation proposed taking up Agenda Item 5(d) at the beginning of the next meeting and proposed that the Chair formally close the second meeting, to be followed by a third meeting.
65. The representative of the Republic of Korea requested clarification on whether the planned field visit from 17 to 19 February would constitute a separate meeting or form part of the third Ad Hoc Working Group session. The representative of Kazakhstan supported the proposal to take up Agenda Item 5(d) at the third AWG meeting and clarified that the field visit would be conducted as part of the third Ad Hoc Working Group, including visits to Almaty and Astana, with related expenses covered by the Government of Kazakhstan.
66. The representative of the Russian Federation reiterated the preference to close the second meeting and begin the next meeting with Agenda Item 5(d) of the third AWG meeting.
67. The representative of the Republic of Korea expressed support for the proposal.

Agenda Item 7: Closing of the meeting

68. The Chair noted that there were no further requests for the floor and invited the secretariat to outline next steps.

69. The secretariat thanked delegations, confirmed the conclusion of all the items discussed under the agenda of the second AWG meeting, and indicated that draft minutes and a provisional agenda for the third AWG meeting would be prepared and circulated in advance. It was noted that Kazakhstan had proposed to host the third AWG meeting together with a field visit to Almaty and Astana, tentatively from 17 to 19 February 2026, subject to administrative and financial arrangements. The schedule of the informal working group on draft resolutions would be determined by the Secretary of the Commission.
70. The representative of the Republic of Korea sought clarification on the implications of the proposed timeline for other ESCAP bodies and on whether the draft resolution on the Digital Solutions Centre would be considered directly by the Commission or by a subsidiary committee.
71. The representative of Kazakhstan recalled that the matter had been considered by the Committee on ICT and Science, Information and Technology (CICTSTI) in 2022 and indicated that further consideration by CICTSTI was not necessary.
72. The representative of the United Kingdom requested clarification on whether past proposals for the establishment of ESCAP regional institutions had been considered by subsidiary intergovernmental committees prior to Commission adoption. The secretariat stated that it would consult internally on past procedures and revert to members with further information.
73. The representative of the Russian Federation thanked delegations and the secretariat, and wish AWG members for continued collaboration to reach a positive outcome of the Ad Hoc Working Group's work.
74. The Chair thanked delegations for their participation, encouraged continued engagement and declared the meeting closed.

Annex

Annex 1 – List of Participants

Armenia

Mr. Heghine Margaryer, Expert, Digitalization Department, Ministry of High-Tech Industry of the Republic of Armenia

Azerbaijan

Mr. Emil Ahmadov, First Secretary and Deputy Permanent Representative to ESCAP, Embassy of the Republic of Azerbaijan, Bangkok

Bangladesh

Embassy of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, Bangkok, Thailand

Cambodia

Mr. Meas Kim Heng, Secretary of State, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Cambodia

China

Mr. Yuxiao Qin, Assistant Dean, School of Electronics and Information, Northwestern Polytechnical University

Mr. Ziwei Li, Vice President, Kazakhstan Branch Campus, Northwestern Polytechnical University

Mr. Yang Jun, Third Secretary, Permanent Mission of China to ESCAP

Georgia

Mr. Giorgi Dapkviashvili, Head of Electronic Communications and Information Technologies Development Division, Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development, Georgia

Ms. Irina Japaridez,

India

Dr. Vipin Chandra Shukla, Scientist-G and Head, APCTT Matters Division, DSIR, Government of India, New Delhi, India

Dr. Anoop Singh, Scientist-E, Department of Scientific and Industrial Research (DSIR), Ministry of Science and Technology, India

Mr. P.R. Hariharan, Junior Analyst (Technical), DSIR, New Delhi, India

Dr. R.S. Mani, Distinguished Scientist, CSIR HQS, India

Japan

Ms. Yoshiko Motoyama, Deputy Permanent Representative to ESCAP and Chief of International Organization, Embassy of Japan in Bangkok

Mr. Jun Yamada, Counsellor and Deputy Permanent Representative to ESCAP, Embassy of Japan in Bangkok

Kazakhstan

Mr. Vitaliy Alexandrov, First Secretary and Deputy Permanent Representative to ESCAP, Embassy of the Republic of Kazakhstan in Bangkok

Mr. Daniyar Meirbekov, Director, Department of International Cooperation and Investments, Ministry of Artificial Intelligence and Digital Development of the Republic of Kazakhstan

Mr. Amanbek Kaiyrbayev, Head, International Treaties Division, Ministry of Digital Development, Innovations and Aerospace Industry of the Republic of Kazakhstan

Mr. Aibol Bizhanov, Deputy Chairman, JSC “National Information Technologies”
Mr. Adilet Aisauytov, Big Data Project Manager, SDU Big Data Department, NITEC, Kazakhstan

Maldives

H.E. Ms. Huda Ali Shareef, Ambassador-at-Large, Deputy Head of Mission and Permanent Representative to ESCAP, Embassy of the Republic of Maldives in Bangkok

Mongolia

Ms. Guamaral Altangerel, Deputy Permanent Representative to ESCAP, Embassy of Mongolia in Bangkok

Pakistan

Ms. Yuman Azhar, Third Secretary, Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan in Bangkok

Philippines

Ms. Nathalie Angeles, Attaché and Assistant Permanent Representative, Embassy of the Republic of the Philippines in Bangkok

Mr. Jonathan Andrew Chua, Department of Foreign Affairs of the Philippines
Embassy of the Republic of the Philippines in Bangkok

Republic of Korea

Mr. Nam Sangyil, Korea Information Society Development Institute (KISDI), Republic of Korea

Ms. Nayeon Kim, Korea Information Society Development Institute (KISDI), Republic of Korea

Ms. Eun Ju Park，Deputy Permanent Representative to ESCAP, Embassy of the Republic of Korea in Bangkok

Mr. Sung Hoo Bae, Assistant Permanent Representative to ESCAP, Embassy of the Republic of Korea in Bangkok

Russian Federation

Mr. Oleg Shamanov, Minister-Counsellor and Deputy Permanent Representative to ESCAP

Mr. Timofey Shtakhov, Attaché and Assistant Permanent Representative to ESCAP

Ms. Viktoriia Timofeeva, Attaché and Assistant Permanent Representative to ESCAP

Mr. Artem Golubev, Federal State Unitary Enterprise “Radio Research and Development Institute”

Mr. Zorikto Gomboin, Deputy Head, Federal State Unitary Enterprise “Radio Research and Development Institute”

Sri Lanka

Ms. Thilini Bhagya Ihalage, Minister Counsellor and Deputy Permanent Representative to ESCAP, Embassy of Sri Lanka in Bangkok

Mr. Nachol Nakcharoen, Receptionist and Assistant to Permanent Representative to ESCAP, Embassy of Sri Lanka in Bangkok

Tajikistan

Embassy of the Republic of Tajikistan in Malaysia

Thailand

Ms. Yanisa Intaraphun, Foreign Relations Officer, Ministry of Digital Economy and Society, Thailand

Ms. Natthaleeya Narash, Foreign Relations Officer, Senior Professional Level, Ministry of Digital Economy and Society, Thailand

Ms. Atipha Vadhanaphong, Counsellor, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Thailand

Ms. Natasha Isarabhakdi, Third Secretary and Assistant Permanent Representative to ESCAP, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Thailand

Timor-Leste

H.E. Mr. Francisco Tilman Cepeda, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary and Permanent Representative to ESCAP, Embassy of the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste in Bangkok

Mr. Justo Fernandes, Director, Information and Application Development Systems, TIC Timor Agency

Türkiye

Mr. Atilla Aydin, Unit Manager, Department of Digital Transformation Coordination, Digital Transformation Office under the Presidency

Mr. Bariş Görkem Talay, Industry and Technology Expert, Ministry of Industry and Technology

Ms. Şeyma Özcan, Presidency of the Republic of Türkiye

Mr. Nuri Gökcek, Expert, Presidency of Strategy and Budget

Ms. Neslinur Tek Özcan, Third Secretary and Deputy Permanent Representative to ESCAP, Embassy of Türkiye in Bangkok

United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

Ms. Nabila Suria, Permanent Representative to ESCAP, British Embassy in Bangkok

Viet Nam

Ms. Nguyen Thu Thuy, Second Secretary and Deputy Permanent Representative to ESCAP and international organizations based in Thailand

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ITU (Moscow)

Mr Nabhonil Roy, Digital Government Expert

Ms Irina Divakova, ITU Consultant

APCICT

Mr. Kiyoung Ko, Head of Office for the Asian and Pacific Training Centre for ICT for Development

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ESCAP secretariat

Ms. Preeti Soni, Head, Asian and Pacific Centre for Transfer of Technology (APCTT)

Ms. Isabela Heng, Chief, Programme Planning and Budget Section, Strategy and Programme Management Division (SPMD)

Ms. Ingrid Dispert, Programme Officer, Strategy and Programme Management Division (SPMD)

Mr. Ka-Fa Wong, Programme Management Officer, Programme Management Section, Strategy and Programme Management Division (SPMD)

Ms. Tiziana Bonapace, Director, ICT and Disaster Risk Reduction Division

Mr. Tae Hyung Kim, Chief, ICT and Development Section, ICT and Disaster Risk Reduction Division

Mr. Siope Vakataki ‘Ofa, Economic Affairs Officer, ICT and Development Section, ICT and Disaster Risk Reduction Division

Mr. Byung Jin Lee, NRL Expert on ICT and Development, ICT and Development Section, ICT and Disaster Risk Reduction Division

Ms. Aida Karazhanova, Economic Affairs Officer, ICT and Development Section, ICT and Disaster Risk Reduction Division

Ms. Chaoyi Hu, Associate Economic Affairs Officer, ICT and Development Section, ICT and Disaster Risk Reduction Division

Mr. Gaston Maria Melo Felgueres, Associate Expert, ICT and Development Section, ICT and Disaster Risk Reduction Division

Annex 2 – Agenda

Time	Agenda
12:00 – 12:15	**Agenda Item 1: Organizational issues** a) Opening remarks by the Chair b) Adoption of the agenda
12.15 – 12.45	**Agenda Item 2: Approval of the draft resumes of past discussions**
12:45 – 13:00	**Agenda item 3: Member statements**
13:00 – 14.00	**Agenda Item 4: Comments of AWG members on the independent feasibility study (IFS) on the proposed DSCSD** a) Presentation by the Secretariat: Summary of Comments on the Independent Feasibility Study b) Members' comments on the IFS c) Discussion on the explanatory note sponsored by Kazakhstan and co-sponsored by Vanuatu: "UNESCAP Asian and Pacific Digital Solution Center for Sustainable Development" d) Open discussions
14.00-15.30	**Agenda Item 5: Digital solutions for the Asia-Pacific region: way forward** a) Addressing concerns related to the issue of duplication b) Technologies, Solutions and Science: presentation by the representative of the Government of Kazakhstan c) Financial matters: presentation on the financial structure of ESCAP's Regional Institutions by the secretariat d) Possible ways for strengthening the sharing of practical digital solutions for the Asia-Pacific region
15:30 – 15:45	**Agenda Item 6: Other matters**
15:45 – 16:00	**Agenda Item 7: Closing of the meeting** a) Presentation on the possible conclusions of the AWG by the Chair b) Presentation by the secretariat on the schedule of upcoming meetings c) Closing remarks by the Chair

Annex 3: PPT by Kazakhstan

Distr.: For members only

Date: 3 March 2026

Original: English

Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

Third meeting of the Ad-Hoc Working Group to review in a transparent manner the outcome of the independent feasibility study and recommend a roadmap for strengthening the sharing of practical digital solutions in the Asia-Pacific region.

Résumé of discussions

Meeting: Third meeting

Date: 3 March 2026

Chair: H.E. Mr. Francisco Tilman Cepeda, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary and Permanent Representative to ESCAP (Timor-Leste)

Present: China, Georgia, India, Islamic Republic of Iran, Japan, Kazakhstan, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Maldives, Mongolia, Nepal, Philippines, Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Türkiye

Agenda Item 1: Organizational Issues

(a) Opening remarks by the Chair

1. The Chair opened the meeting, welcomed members of the Ad Hoc Working Group, expressed appreciation to the Government of Kazakhstan for hosting the 3rd Ad Hoc Working Group meeting along with a field visit to a potential premise of DSC, and commended delegations for their constructive engagement. The Chair reaffirmed commitment to facilitating focused and pragmatic deliberations of members towards a draft roadmap for the proposed digital solutions center for sustainable development (DSCSD).
2. H.E. Mr. Rostislav Konyashkin, First Vice Minister of AI and Digital Development of Kazakhstan welcomed members and thanked the ESCAP secretariat and member States for their active engagement. He highlighted Kazakhstan's digital transformation, as well as AI as a strategic national priority. He expressed support for establishing a Digital Solutions Center under ESCAP as a trusted and neutral platform with voluntary, open and equitable access. He also stated Kazakhstan's readiness as the host country to provide premises and organizational support together with up to USD15million over five years, share eGov technology, data lake and AI-related components as international public goods, and invited member States to support and co-sponsor the forthcoming resolution on the proposed digital solutions center.

(b) Welcome remarks

3. The UN Resident Coordinator (UNRC) in the Republic of Kazakhstan, Ms. Sarangoo Radnaaragchaa, welcomed participants on behalf of the UN Country Team, thanked the ESCAP secretariat, and expressed appreciation to the Government of Kazakhstan for proposing to host a digital solutions center for sustainable development (DSCSD). The UNRC highlighted Kazakhstan's digital governance and

innovation ecosystem, stressed digitalization as a cross-cutting priority under the UN Cooperation Framework, emphasized inclusive and rights-based digital transformation to accelerate SDG implementation, cited the Digital Family Card initiative, and stated the UN Country Team's readiness to support the process so that the Center, if established, would contribute to accelerating regional SDG implementation.

(c) Review and adoption of the provisional agenda

4. The representative of the Russian Federation thanked the host country for organizing the meeting and field visit, expressed appreciation to the UN Country Team in Kazakhstan for its support, and welcomed members attending in person. Before the agenda was adopted, the representative requested an update from the secretariat on the additional financial analysis of the proposed Center, which had been requested to the secretariat at the previous meeting.
5. The secretariat responded that the work for the cost estimate was not yet finalized and available at the time of the meeting and would update all members of the Ad Hoc Working Group once completed.
6. The representative of Kazakhstan, responding to the Russian Federation, shared the view that detailed financial arrangements would be undertaken by a Governing Council after the center was established. The representative outlined an indicative funding envelope of USD 15 million over five years, including allocations for facilities, cybersecurity and secure systems, administrative costs and staffing, and programme activities such as workshops and regional outreach, noting that the funding estimate was preliminary and that further analysis would be undertaken by the secretariat.
7. The secretariat referred to recent practice in establishing APCICT and APDIM. Once the relevant resolution was adopted, ESCAP and the host country discussed and concluded a host country agreement including the host country's financial contribution, the amount and duration. The secretariat further noted that a Governing Council was typically established around one year later to review and endorse the work plan with financial arrangements, which will be arranged in line with the endorsed work plan.
8. Following the interventions, the Chair announced that the agenda was adopted without objection.

Agenda Item 2: Approval of the draft resumes of past discussions

9. The Chair stated that the secretariat had circulated the draft resumes of past meetings, including the second meeting (9 October 2025 and 12 June 2026), the first meeting (27 June 2025), the preparatory meeting (2 April 2025) and the organizational meeting (10 March 2025). The Chair further informed the meeting that the secretariat had received written comments from members and had reflected them in the circulated drafts. As no further comments were made, the Chair announced that the draft resumes of past meetings were adopted, as amended.

Agenda Item 3: Possible ways for strengthening the sharing of practical digital solutions for the Asia-Pacific region

(a) Presentation by Kazakhstan

10. The representative of Kazakhstan delivered a statement (see Annex 3 for the country statement)

(b) Country Statements

11. The representative of Mongolia expressed its support for the initiative to establish the DSCSD as a co-sponsor, which will be beneficial for the least developed countries, landlocked developing countries, and small island developing States, while strengthening inclusive, sustainable, digital transformation in the Asia-Pacific region.
12. The representative of Japan sought clarification from the ESCAP secretariat on several issues: identification of digital technologies, establishment of national digitalized frameworks, development of

clean software, access to technologies, and knowledge sharing. The representative questioned how potential functional overlaps with existing ESCAP regional institutions would be addressed, how the proposed Center would operate as a multi-donor and multilateral platform, and how solution-providing countries would be identified, as well as on the financial arrangements, including whether staffing costs would fall within the proposed funding envelope.

13. The representative of Kazakhstan responded to the questions raised by the representative of Japan that the proposed center was intended to complement existing ESCAP institutions, including through collaboration with APCICT and APCTT, and that detailed modalities would be developed in due course. The representative emphasized that the Center would operate as a multilateral platform open to voluntary contributions and participation by all member States and clarified that Kazakhstan's proposed package of 23 solutions was an initial in-kind contribution.
14. The representative of Türkiye informed the meeting of an additional operative paragraph submitted by Türkiye to the secretariat on the draft resolution sponsored by Kazakhstan on the proposed establishment of the DSCSD, which intended to ensure coherence and avoid duplication with existing United Nations entities, including the scope of work of the United Nations Technology Bank for Least Developed Countries.
15. The representative of Malaysia indicated that the decision to engage on the proposed DSCSD may be considered after a structural examination on alignment with existing regional and international cooperation frameworks, national digital priorities, financial mechanisms, and the assessment.
16. The representative of Japan clarified that its questions regarding financial arrangements and coordination costs was directed to the secretariat and requested further clarification from the secretariat.
17. The representative of Lao People's Democratic Republic requested further clarification regarding financial sustainability, clarification on the types of voluntary contributions expected of other ESCAP member States, and the possible role of the private sector in supporting the DSCSD.
18. The representative of Kazakhstan provided clarifications on cooperation with existing United Nations entities, particularly the United Nations Technology Bank for the Least Developed Countries and supported retaining the additional operative paragraph reflected in the revised draft resolution on the proposed establishment of the DSCSD. The representative further clarified that digital solutions would be made available in an open, universal, adaptable form, safe and secure. The representative reiterated that contributions would be voluntary at the initial stage, outlined indicative funding areas, and noted that private sector engagement and support from financial institutions could be explored.
19. The representative of Thailand expressed appreciation to Kazakhstan for the initiative to establish the DSCSD, expressing support on its guiding principles aimed at advancing "digital inclusion". The representative also underscored the importance of inclusivity and equitable participation, encouraging member States to engage not only as recipients but also as active contributors and digital solution providers, and posed a question on how the Center plans to promote such inclusivity and equitable participation.
20. The secretariat responded to questions raised by Japan, by outlining that potential duplication would be mitigated through coordination with existing ESCAP regional institutions, including by having capacity-building undertaken by those existing regional institutions and by conducting knowledge-sharing jointly through existing platforms, and that potential overlaps with entities outside ESCAP, including the United Nations Technology Bank for the Least Developed Countries and ITU GovStack, would be addressed through United Nations system-wide coordination mechanisms. The secretariat further emphasized that the proposed centre is not intended to function as a single-country donor platform, noting the necessity of maintaining an adaptable framework to keep pace with rapid technological change. Consequently, detailed financial arrangements will be finalized once a work plan is approved by the Governing Council. These arrangements will include indicative budgeting benchmarked against existing ESCAP regional centers and may be supplemented, as necessary, by voluntary contributions.
21. The representative of Nepal welcomed Kazakhstan's initiative and called for clearer language on post-five-year cost arrangements, suggesting that the draft resolution on establishing the DSCSD should

specify Kazakhstan's responsibility for establishment and operationalization costs of the center, with member States making no mandatory bindings and providing voluntary support as feasible.

22. The representative of Kazakhstan responded that many inclusive digital platforms remained broadly applicable over time and indicated that, in addition to the USD15million commitment over five years, the resolution could also reflect the host country's ongoing coverage of institutional and administrative costs, subject to further internal consultations, emphasizing the intention for the DSCSD to be established on a long-term basis.
23. The representative of China expressed appreciation to Kazakhstan for hosting the meeting and the field visit, recognized the value of the proposed DSCSD, and indicated China's interest in supporting the initiative through practical collaboration, including with academic and university partners, and by contributing relevant digital solutions and approaches, such as those involving artificial intelligence.

Agenda Item 4: Presentation on the possible conclusions of the AWG

(a) Presentation by Kazakhstan

24. The representative of Kazakhstan introduced a proposed draft outcome document (refer to Annex 4 for the proposed draft outcome document as submitted by Kazakhstan).

(b) Discussions

25. The representative of the Republic of Korea sought clarification on paragraph three of Section A, which stated that the Ad Hoc Working Group had "agreed" on the concept of the proposed Center, pointing out that full consensus on the concept had not yet been reached, as several substantive concerns remained unresolved. The representative suggested replacing the word "agreed" with alternative phrasing such as "took note of" or "noted."
26. The representative of Japan confirmed that Japan's delegation did not have the mandate to adopt any outcome document at the meeting. The representative requested that delegations be given sufficient time to take the draft outcome document for consultation with their capital for careful consideration before any further action is taken.
27. The representative of Malaysia requested clarification on whether the draft outcome document included provisions for governance and oversight mechanisms, a long-term sustainability plan, and a framework for assessing implementation.
28. The representative of India reiterated concerns previously raised on potential duplication of mandates with existing ESCAP regional institutions and the sustainability of the proposed funding mechanism. The representative noted that India's delegation was not in a position to accept the draft outcome document as presented and required more time for deliberation and consultation with other member States. The representative requested that this view be reflected in the résumé of the meeting.
29. The representative of Kazakhstan responded to the points raised. The representative acknowledged the suggestion from the Republic of Korea and agreed that the term "agreed" could be replaced with "took note of" to better reflect the status of discussions. Regarding the concerns raised by India, the representative noted that the document was intended as a tool to help member States understand the technical and political aspects of the proposal, including potential risks and issues such as duplication. The representative clarified that the draft outcome document was shared with member States in April 2025 and again in January 2026, and that no official written comments had been received during that period. The representative also noted that a draft resolution to establish the DSCSD had been submitted to the secretariat and that discussions would begin at the first meeting of the Informal Working Group on Draft Resolutions on 5 March 2026. The representative stressed the need to advance the work within the available timeline.
30. The representative of the Russian Federation proposed that the AWG members begin a paragraph-by-

paragraph review of the draft outcome document during the third AWG meeting, to collect initial suggestions from member States.

31. The representative of Japan reiterated that Japan's delegation did not have the mandate to engage in a paragraph-by-paragraph review at that time and requested that the draft outcome document be circulated to allow for comprehensive consideration by capitals.
32. The representative of Nepal suggested the formation of a small group of five to seven delegations to work on the document intensively over two to three days and report back to the broader AWG members.
33. The Chair proposed that the secretariat facilitated a paragraph-by-paragraph review of the draft outcome document to the extent possible within the remaining time, with the understanding that no agreement would be reached at this stage and that delegations could submit further written comments afterward.
34. The secretariat facilitated the review of the draft outcome document. During the review, the following specific comments and suggestions were made by delegations:
    (i) The representative of the Russian Federation proposed deleting the reference to "the upcoming Digital Global Compact" in the section on mission, as the Compact was not a consensus-based document. The representative of India sought clarification on the terms "national digitalization framework" and "clean software versions" in the section on tasks and functions. The representative of Kazakhstan explained that the framework referred to common standards for identifying useful digital solutions, while "clean" meant software provided without national data, as open-source code. The representative of Lao PDR suggested using the term "transparent and safe software version" instead of "clean software version."
    (ii) The representative of Japan asked whether access to technologies would be cost-neutral for recipient countries. The representative of Kazakhstan confirmed that there would be no hidden costs and that access would be provided free of charge, while noting that practical arrangements for adaptation, customization and related support would need to be addressed.
    (iii) The representative of Nepal suggested reframing the description of the DSCSD's work to indicate that it would "facilitate" the implementation of technologies at the national level, rather than directly implement them. The representative of the Russian Federation proposed adding a reference to the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) in the list of institutions for potential collaboration.
    (iv) The representative of Thailand sought confirmation on the commitment to provide "free access to all IT products." In response, the representative of Kazakhstan reaffirmed the commitment, while acknowledging that practical issues related to customization costs would need to be addressed.
    (v) The representative of Japan raised the question regarding who the custodian of the digital resources would be provided to the DSCSD. In response, the representative of Kazakhstan clarified that the DSCSD, as an intergovernmental body managed by the UN, would serve as the custodian.
    (vi) The representative of the Republic of Korea suggested replacing the word "donation" with "contribution" in the title of the section describing Kazakhstan's offer.
    (vii) The representative of the Russian Federation sought clarification on the proposed number of staff in the draft outcome document. In response, the representative of Kazakhstan noted that the numbers were indicative and that final staffing would be determined by the Governing Council based on the work plan and budget.
35. At the conclusion of the paragraph-by-paragraph review of the draft outcome document, the representative of the Republic of Korea thanked the secretariat and the delegation of Kazakhstan for their work and requested that another meeting of the Ad Hoc Working Group, whether in a small group or in a larger format, be organized in Bangkok to allow for further consultation with capitals on the revised draft outcome document.
36. The representative of Türkiye also requested clarification on the next steps and asked whether a revised version of the draft outcome document, incorporating the comments made during the meeting, would be shared with member States.
37. The representative of Kazakhstan supported the requests for a further AWG meeting and for the circulation of a revised draft outcome document. The representative suggested that such a meeting be

organized as soon as possible, ideally the following week, to finalize the work before the next session of the Commission.

Agenda Item 5: Other matters

38. The representative of Kazakhstan informed the meeting that his delegation would synchronize its two proposed documents (i.e. explanatory note and draft outcome document) and submit updated drafts to the secretariat and requested the secretariat to circulate to member States for review and comments. The secretariat further indicated that it would consult internally with the Chair on the timing and format of any further meeting, and would revert to delegations in due course.
39. Under other matters, the representative of Nepal suggested revising the wording of the vision statement to use more positive language, proposing that it encourage members to exchange ideas and integrate digital solutions to support the attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals. In response, the delegation of Kazakhstan agreed to the amendment and requested that the proposed wording be provided for incorporation by the secretariat in the revised text.

Agenda Item 6: Closing of the meeting

40. The representative of Kazakhstan thanked delegations for their active participation and constructive engagement, expressed its appreciation for Mongolia's decision to co-sponsor the draft resolution.
41. In closing, the Chair thanked delegations for the productive session, expressed appreciation to the Government of Kazakhstan for hosting the third meeting of the Ad Hoc Working Group and the field visit, and thanked members for their dedication and continued collaboration. The Chair declared the meeting closed.

Annex

Annex 1 – List of Participants

China

Mr. Ziwei Li, Vice-Director, Office of International Cooperation, Northwestern Polytechnical University

Mr. Yuxiao Qin, Professor, Northwestern Polytechnical University

Georgia

Mr. Giorgi Dapkviashvili, Head of Electronic Communications and Information Technologies Development Division, Communications, Information and Modern Technologies Department, Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development of Georgia

India

Ms. Paulomi Tripathi, Deputy Chief of Mission and Deputy Permanent Representative to ESCAP, Embassy of India, Bangkok (Online)

Mr. Manoj Semwal, Chief Scientist & Head IT, Council Of Scientific And Industrial Research (CSIR), Anusandhan Bhawan, 2 Rafi Marg, New Delhi-110001

Iran (Islamic Republic of)

Representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran (Online)

Ms. Hamideh Sedighi, Expert

Japan

Mr. Jun Yamada, Counsellor and Deputy Permanent Representative to ESCAP, Embassy of Japan, Bangkok

Kazakhstan

H.E. Mr. Konyashkin Rostislav Anatolyevich, First Vice-Minister of Artificial Intelligence and Digital Development, Ministry of AI and Digital Development

H.E. Mr. Margulan Baimukhan, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary and Permanent Representative to ESCAP, Embassy of the Republic of Kazakhstan, Bangkok

Mr. Vitaliy Alexandrov, First Secretary and Deputy Permanent Representative to ESCAP, Embassy of the Republic of Kazakhstan, Bangkok

Mr. Amanbek Kaiyrbayev, Head of International Agreements and GovTech Promotion Division, Department of International Cooperation and Investments, Ministry of AI and Digital Development

Lao PDR

Mr. Amphonesak Thepphoumy, Deputy Director General, Digital Government Center, Ministry of Technology and Communications

Malaysia

Ms. Puan Siti Noorasmah binti Hashim, Deputy Director (F14), Jabatan Digital Negara (JDN) / GovTech Malaysia

Maldives

H.E. Ms. Huda Ali Shareef, Ambassador-at-Large, Deputy Head of Mission and Permanent Representative to ESCAP, Embassy of the Republic of Maldives in Bangkok

Mongolia

Ms. Guamaral Altangerel, Counsellor and Deputy Permanent Representative to UNESCAP, Embassy of Mongolia, Bangkok

Nepal

Mr. Moti Bahadur Shrees, Minister Counsellor, Deputy Chief of Mission and Deputy Permanent Representative to ESCAP, Bangkok

Philippines

Representative of the Philippines (Online)

Ms. Geraldine T. Bucog, Director III, Office of the Undersecretary for E-Government

Republic of Korea

Ms. Eun Ju Park, Deputy Permanent Representative to ESCAP, Embassy of the Republic of Korea in Bangkok

Mr. Sung Hoo Bae, Assistant Permanent Representative to ESCAP, Embassy of the Republic of Korea in Bangkok

Russian Federation

Mr. Timofey Shtakhov, Third Secretary, Assistant Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to ESCAP, Bangkok

Thailand

Ms. Kasititorn Pooparadai, Special Expert, Digital Economy Promotion Agency

Ms. Kingkade Niyomsen, Senior Team Leader, Digital Intelligence, Strategy and Policy Department (Online)

Timor-Leste

H.E. Mr. Francisco Tilman Cepeda, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary and Permanent Representative to ESCAP, Embassy of the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste, Bangkok

Ms. Gabriela Gusmao, Third Secretary and Assistant Permanent Representative to ESCAP, Embassy of the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste, Bangkok

Türkiye

Ms. Betül Demirel, Uzman, Expert, Directorate of Multilateral Relations, DirectorateGeneral for EU and Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Industry and Technology

Ms. Neslinur Tek Özcan, Third Secretary and Deputy Permanent Representative to ESCAP, Bangkok (Online)

UN Resident Coordinator

Ms. Sarangoo Radnaaragchaa, Resident Coordinator in the Republic of Kazakhstan

Specialized Agencies

ITU

Ms. Irina Divakova, Project Officer, Digital Government Cooperation Project, Regional Office for CIS, International Telecommunication Union

ESCAP secretariat

Mr. Kiyoung Ko, Director (Officer-in-Charge, a.i.), Information and Communication Technology and Disaster Risk Reduction Division

Mr. Siope Vakataki Ofa, Economic Affairs Officer, ICT and Development Section, Information and Communication Technology and Disaster Risk Reduction Division

Ms. Chaoyi Hu, Associate Economic Affairs Officer, ICT and Development Section, Information and Communication Technology and Disaster Risk Reduction Division

Annex 2 – Agenda

Time	Agenda
09:00 – 09:20	**Agenda Item 1: Organizational issues** c) Welcoming remarks by H.E. Mr. Konyashkin Rostislav Anatolyevich, First Vice-Minister of Artificial Intelligence and Digital Development, Ministry of AI and Digital Development, Kazakhstan d) Opening remarks by Ms. Sarangoo Radnaaragchaa, United Nations Resident Coordinator, Kazakhstan e) Adoption of the agenda
09:20 – 09.50	**Agenda Item 2: Approval of the draft resumes of past discussions**
09:50 – 11.30	**Agenda item 3: Possible ways for strengthening the sharing of practical digital solutions for the Asia-Pacific region** a) Presentation by Kazakhstan b) Country Statements
11.30 – 12.25	**Agenda Item 4:** Presentation on the possible conclusions of the AWG. a) Presentation by Kazakhstan b) Discussions
12:25 – 12:30	**Agenda Item 5: Other matters**
12:30 – 12:40	**Agenda Item 6: Closing of the meeting:** • Closing remarks by the Chair
13:00 - 14:00	Lunch
14:00 - 18:00	Field visit to national digital solutions centers and Departure from Astana

Annex 3 – Statement of Kazakhstan (Agenda 3 (a))

Annex 4 – Proposed Outcome Document by Kazakhstan (Agenda 4 (a))

Annex 5 – Explanatory Note by Kazakhstan

Annex 6 – Statement by H.E. Mr. Konyashkin Rostislav Anatolyevich, First Vice-Minister of Artificial Intelligence and Digital Development, Ministry of AI and Digital Development, Kazakhstan (Agenda 1 (a))