

## Economic and Trade Matters

### 2c. *Improving participation in the digital economy and enhancing connectivity throughout the region*

(Draft resolution sponsored by Australia)

The 28<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of the Asia-Pacific Parliamentary Forum:

**Recalling** that the Hanoi Declaration issued at the 26<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of the APPF in 2018 highlighted that the region can leverage the opportunities presented by the digital age;

**Reaffirming our commitment** to resolutions adopted by the APPF which have sought to enhance the Asia-Pacific's connectivity and participation in the digital economy, including the APPF27/RES/10 adopted in 2019 in Siem-Reap, Cambodia on *Enhancing Connectivity in the Asia-Pacific through e-commerce*, APPF25/RES/08 adopted in 2017 Natadola, Fiji on *Promoting sustainable economic growth in the Asia-Pacific region through the digital economy* and APPF24/RES/10 adopted in 2016 in Vancouver, Canada on *Fostering innovation and connectivity*;

**Noting** that digital technology is now inextricably linked to the competitiveness of economies, in supporting productivity, innovation, facilitate access to new markets and enable other trade opportunities;

**Recognising** the fundamental role of connectivity to supporting greater participation in and growth of the digital economy in the region;

**Conscious** that digital literacy, including through STEM-based education, helps to facilitate the adoption of digital technologies;

**Acknowledging** that digital technology also delivers positive social outcomes by improving access to education, medical and other services, and can help achieve the UN's 2030 agenda for sustainable development;

**Aware** that by its borderless nature, effective action to support the digital economy requires an international approach, including to share the economic and social benefits;

**We welcome** the regional initiatives that foster growth of the digital economy and support connectivity including the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Connectivity Blueprint 2015-2025 and Internet and Digital Economy Roadmap and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Master Plan on Connectivity 2025;

**Recognising** the importance of a safe online environment as outlined in APPF24/RES/07 adopted in 2015 in Quito, Ecuador on *Cyber Security and Right to Privacy* and recent initiatives including the Osaka G20 Leaders' statement on *Preventing exploitation of the internet for terrorism and violent extremism conducive to terrorism* and the *Christchurch Call* to eliminate terrorist and violent extremist content online;



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**Emphasising** that the Asia-Pacific represents a dynamic region that can drive and shape digital innovation globally;

**Taking into account** that the regulatory environment shapes the level of digital innovation and access to digital services; and

**Affirm** that the APPF is a valuable platform and realise the role of our parliaments to creating an enabling environment for the digital economy in the Asia-Pacific region.

**RESOLVE TO:**

1. **Affirm** a shared vision of a trusted online environment where businesses, innovation and creativity can thrive;
2. **Call** on APPF Member Countries to embrace policies that support an enabling environment for the digital economy in the region;
3. **Cooperate** to identify and address barriers to participating in the digital economy particularly for MSMEs and disadvantaged groups;
4. **Encourage** APPF Member Countries to strengthen their digital capabilities, including by investing in the necessary communications infrastructure to support connectivity and by improving the digital literacy of their citizens, recognising ICT skills provide a foundation to greater participation across populations and sectors;
5. **Leverage** the efforts and experience of other key international and regional fora including APEC, ASEAN and G20 as APPF Member Countries work to develop their digital capabilities;
6. **Strengthen cooperation** between APPF Member Countries in aligning and harmonising regulatory frameworks that relate to digital economy issues and communications infrastructure;
7. **Promote** information sharing between APPF Member Countries on digital economy policies and regulations, to help communicate best practice and inform capacity building efforts;
8. **Support collaboration** among key stakeholders including governments, industry, academia and civil society, particularly in the development of new digital policies; and
9. **Recommend** APPF Member Countries establish and maintain whole-of-government digital economy strategies, recognising the integral nature of digital technology and its far-reaching applications and impact across government.