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Telecommunications and Information Working Group Report

Submitted by: TEL



**Third Senior Officials' Meeting
Bandar Seri Begawan, Brunei Darussalam
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**APEC TELECOMMUNICATIONS WORKING GROUP (TEL)
REPORT TO SENIOR OFFICIALS MEETING III
BANDAR SERI BEGAWAN, BRUNEI**

1. An Update on TEL's Projects and Activities

The TELWG has met once in March 2000, in Hawaii since its last report. Recent developments include:

- Further work on implementing the **APEC TEL Mutual Recognition Arrangements (MRA) Agreement**. As of April 2000, nine economies (Australia, Canada, Hong Kong China, Japan, Korea, Chinese Taipei, Peru, Singapore and the United States) are participating in the implementation of the Phase 1 procedures. The Task Force is considering cooperation with other regions such as the Inter-American Telecommunications Commission (CITEL) in the implementation of the MRA.
- **The Symposium on Collaborative Strategies for Multimedia Web Skill Development** was held in April 2000 in Singapore. This project was designed to share the expertise in multimedia skills development as a first step to map out a vision and an action plan for multimedia skills development in APEC member economies.

2. Preparations for TEL22, 9 to 13 October 2000, Bali, Indonesia

Preparation for TEL22 is currently in progress.

At the 4th **Ministerial on the Telecommunications and Information Industry (TELMIN4)**, held in Mexico from 22-26 May 2000, Ministers set out a number of tasks for TEL to accomplish.

- **TEL Review**
At TELMIN4, Ministers recognised the growing impact of convergence and urged the TEL to review its functions, structure and activities in light of a converged information communications environment. TEL 22 will explore and discuss possible approaches and avenues to TEL reform.
- **The International Charging Arrangements for Internet Services (ICAIS).**
Tel has been tasked by TELMIN4 to conduct further work on the ICAIS issue. The work includes the fostering of dialogue between industry and government parties on ICAIS, which may lead to the setting up of a forum on the issue, and further study of the ICAIS issue.
 - **Asia Pacific Information Society (APIS).**
TEL has been tasked to accelerate the realisation APIS by expanding cooperative development projects undertaken by its four steering groups.
 - **Digital Divide.**
Ministers direct that TEL continue to place an emphasis on bridging the digital divide at the domestic, regional and international levels. TEL22 will discuss a possible blueprint for action on the issue in order to consolidate and coordinate TEL efforts.
 - **Information Sharing.**
Ministers urged TEL to encourage information sharing on electronic government initiatives, spectrum access issues, Internet services and critical information protection. TEL22 will look into initiatives which will advance these aims.
 - **Liberalisation of Telecommunication Markets.**
Ministers urged TEL to continue in its effort to keep up the momentum of market liberalisation, keeping in mind any initiatives that may emerge from talks at the WTO. Through the work of the Liberalisation Steering Group, TEL22 will continue in its efforts to advance the process of market liberalisation.

Alongside TEL22, the following pre-TEL events will be held which focused on several key elements of TEL's year 2000 Work Plan:

- **An Interconnection Task Group** Meeting, which will complete its work on the finalised Framework for Interconnection.
- **A Mutual Recognition Arrangements (MRA) Task Group** Meeting to continue the work begun at TEL 18 in PNG and which was continued at TEL19, 20 and 21.
- A workshop on **e-Commerce Security**, covering information security issues including, protection of information/authentication and information infrastructure.
- A **Electronic Authentication Task Group** meeting to continue the work begun at TEL 18 in PNG and which was continued at TEL19, 20 and 21.
- A seminar on **Vendor Training Project**, to facilitate business cooperation in IT education, training and certification programs.