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UNITED NATIONS ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE (UNECE)

UNITED NATIONS ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMISSION FOR ASIA AND THE
PACIFIC (UNESCAP)

MINISTRY OF TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATIONS, KYRGYZSTAN

Regional Seminar on Capacity Building for ICT Policymaking in Central Asia

11-14 July 2006, Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan

REPORT

This report has been issued without formal editing.

Organization of the Seminar

1. The Regional Seminar on Capacity Building for ICT Policymaking in the Central Asia was held from 11 to 14 July 2006 at Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan. The Seminar was organized jointly by the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP) and the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) in cooperation with the Ministry of Transport and Communications, Kyrgyzstan, the Administrative Department of the President of the Kyrgyzstan, the Public Fund “Interactive Dialogue”, Kyrgyzstan, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Kyrgyzstan and the Soros Foundation, Kyrgyzstan.
2. The Seminar was aimed at assisting the decision-makers in Central Asian and neighbouring countries in building their indigenous capacity for ICT policy and strategy development, in particular, for the integration of ICT in national development programmes, as well as for participation in international agenda-setting and policy-making bodies relevant to ICT for development.
3. The Seminar was attended by representatives from the following seven countries: Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russian Federation, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. The Seminar was also attended by the representatives of UNECE, UNESCAP, UNDP, Asian Development Bank (ADB), European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), CIS Regional Commonwealth in the field of Communications (RCC), World Bank as well as from non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and the private sector. Altogether 46 participants participated in the Seminar. The list of the participants is attaches in Annex 1. The Seminar was called to order by H.E. Mr. Janat Beishenov, First Deputy Minister, Ministry of Transport and Communications, Kyrgyzstan. He extended a warm welcome to the representatives of the seven participating countries as well as those of international/regional organizations, NGOs and the private sector. H.E. Mr. Janat Beishenov further delivered his inaugural address. Following this, Mr. Guennadi Fedorov, Chief, ICT Policy Section, Information, Communication and Space Technology Division, UNESCAP, also addressed the Seminar. Ms. Michiko Enomoto, Economic Affairs Officer, Economic Cooperation and Integration Division, UNECE delivered inaugural message from Mr. Marek Belka, Executive Secretary, UNECE. Messages were also delivered by Mr. Arturo Hein, UN Resident Coordinator and UNDP Resident Representative in Kyrgyzstan and Ms. Louisa M. Rizmanova, Head, ICT Department of Executive Committee, RCC.
4. The Seminar unanimously adopted the agenda and programme. The agenda of the Seminar is attached in Annex 2. Following this, the Seminar unanimously elected H.E. Mr. Janat Beishenov, First Deputy Minister, Ministry of Transport and Communications, Kyrgyzstan as

Chairperson, and H.E. Ms. Anorjon I. Zokirova, Deputy Minister, Ministry of Communications, Tajikistan; Mr. Ilyas Naibov-Aylisli, Director, National E-Governance Network Initiative Project, Ministry of Communications and Information Technologies, Azerbaijan; and Mr. Sungat Omarov, Head, International Technologies Development Division, the Agency for Informatization and Communications, Kazakhstan as vice-chairpersons.

Country Presentations

5. The country presentations were made by the representatives of the following countries: Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russian Federation, Tajikistan. The summaries of some of the presentations are attached in Annex 3.

Integration of ICT Policies into Overall Development Planning Process.

6. Mr. Shailendra Kumar Hajela, Consultant, UNESCAP made presentations focusing on the following four issues: ICT policy and regulations; role of ICT for sustainable socio-economic development and in achieving Millennium Development Goals (MDGs); Integration of ICT at the national level: experience of India, and interconnectivity around different networks.

Internet Governance issues with Focus on Asia and the Pacific

7. The presentation made by Mr. Ram Tiwaree, Economic Affairs Officer, UNESCAP focused on the regional contribution to the global discussions on Internet governance and decision making process of the World Summit on the Information Society as well as UNESCAP activities held in cooperation with other regional organizations, especially, Asia-Pacific Information Programme of UNDP (UNDP-APDIP) in this area.

VoIP Regulation in Japan

8. Ms. Michiko Fukahori, UNESCAP Consultant made a presentation describing the experience of Japan in policy making related to VoIP and contribution of the policy environment to the development of the communications sector in Japan. Possible lessons of Japanese experiences for other countries, such as the Central Asian countries were also discussed.

ICT Policymaking for Innovation and Competitiveness of Enterprises

9. Ms. Michiko Enomoto, Economic Affairs Officer, UNECE made a presentation on ICT policymaking for innovation and competitiveness of enterprises using case studies of offshore business process outsourcing (BPO) which are rapidly developing in many developing

countries. Potential impact and benefits for ICT enabled BPO for SPECA member countries, as well as issues on enabling policy development were discussed.

Presentations by International/Regional Organizations

10. The Seminar noted with appreciation the work of UNDP in Kyrgyzstan and RCC. The summary presentations made by Ms. Zamira Djuvupova, ICTD Coordinator, UNDP Democratic Governance Programme, and Ms. Louisa M. Rizmanova, Head of Information Technologies Department of RCC are attached in Annex 4.

Outcome of Inaugural Session of the SPECA PWG on ICT and Networking of ICT Policymakers in the SPECA region

11. Ms. Michiko Enomoto, Economic Affairs Officer, UNECE informed the Seminar on the outcome of the inauguration session of the SPECA PWG on ICT held in Baku, Azerbaijan in December 2005, and the terms of reference of PWG. Particularly, she highlighted the decision of PWG that a network of ICT policymakers in SPECA region should be established. She requested the participants in consultation with relevant authorities to send their suggestions to UNECE and UNESCAP on the immediate objective of the networking of ICT policymakers and on the modality of operation appointment of national focal point and mode of communication in each SPECA member country, at the earliest possible date.

Legal Aspects of ICT Policymaking

12. Mr. Ian Walden, UNECE Consultant made presentations on the legal aspects of ICT policy development focusing on the following three issues: ICT policy, law and regulation – telecommunication sector; facilitating electronic transactions; ICT and security.

Conclusions and Recommendations

13. The Seminar expressed its appreciation to the Government of Kyrgyzstan and in particular, the Ministry of Transport and Communications of Kyrgyzstan for hosting the Seminar. The Seminar further expressed appreciation to the UNECE and the UNESCAP for jointly organizing the event as well as to the Administrative Department, President of Kyrgyzstan; the Public Fund “Interactive Dialogue”; the UNDP, Kyrgyzstan and the Soros Foundation, Kyrgyzstan for their valuable contributions to the Seminar. While congratulating the organizers for the excellent documentation prepared for the Seminar, the Seminar requested UNECE and UNESCAP to consider possibility of translating and

publishing all or selected parts of the documents into Russian in order to facilitate the use of documents in countries of the Central Asia.

14. The Seminar noted that as ICT played a vital role in sustainable socio-economic development and in achieving MDGs, especially, for the development of knowledge-based economy (KBE). It acknowledged the importance of creating an enabling policy and regulatory environment by putting in place well coordinated national policies, regulatory and legal framework. While participating countries had been creating such necessary framework, UNECE and UNESCAP were requested, subject to the availability of resources, to provide further assistance to the countries through provision of advisory services, training and familiarizing with other countries' experiences, especially in e-Government, free and open source software (FOSS), business process outsourcing (BPO), establishment of ICT access points, public policies of Internet governance, among others.
15. The Seminar noted that the SPECA PWG on ICT inaugurated in Baku, Azerbaijan in December 2005 decided to establish a network of ICT policymakers in SPECA region. In this regard, the Seminar requested the participants to provide UNECE and UNESCAP with suggestions on PWG focal point, mode of communication, scope and modalities of its work.

Adoption of the Draft Report and Conclusion of the Seminar

16. The Seminar, with appreciation, noted the expression of interest made by Kazakhstan and Tajikistan to organize national capacity-building seminar on ICT Policymaking, as follow-up to the regional Seminar.
 17. The Seminar adopted the draft report and concluded its work at 17.00 hours, 14 July 2006 at Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan.
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