

APEC 2025 Digital and AI Ministerial Statement

“Digital and AI Transformation toward Prosperity and Sustainable Growth for All”

Incheon, Republic of Korea, 4-6 August 2025

Introduction

1. We, the APEC Ministers responsible for telecommunications/ information and communications technology (ICT) and digital policy, met in Incheon, Republic of Korea, under the chairmanship of H.E. BAE Kyunghoon, Minister of the Ministry of Science and ICT of the Republic of Korea.

2. Under the APEC 2025 theme of “Building a Sustainable Tomorrow: Connect, Innovate, Prosper,” we reiterate our strong commitment to achieve the APEC Putrajaya Vision 2040 for an open, dynamic, resilient and peaceful Asia-Pacific community by 2040, for the prosperity of all our people and future generations, including through the implementation of the Aotearoa Plan of Action and the APEC Internet and Digital Economy Roadmap (AIDER).

3. Today, we are witnessing an unprecedented integration of digital technologies into our daily lives and society. Technology such as artificial intelligence (AI), and digital infrastructures and intelligent networks enabled through accessible broadband connectivity will be the key drivers of the digital transformation, with profound impact on how businesses operate and people interact and function within the economy.

4. We believe that such digital technologies offer enormous potential to empower our people and businesses to improve efficiency, productivity and interoperability in various sectors, and revolutionize private and public services. While recognizing the potential of digital transformation, we also note that technology should be used responsibly to promote sustainable growth for all, enhance the well-being of all our people, and mitigate risks - including those related to safety, trust, reliability and accessibility- while being responsive to the specific needs of individual economies.

5. Historically, APEC has addressed the opportunities and challenges of ICT and digital technologies through policy dialogue and collaboration, with the aim of promoting growth for all and enhancing the global competitiveness of the Asia-Pacific region. We express our support for the theme of the Digital and AI Ministerial Meeting “Digital and AI Transformation toward Prosperity and Sustainable Growth for All,” where APEC member economies can explore avenues of innovation-driven, digital future through participation of all stakeholders on relevant issues.

Facilitating Digital and AI Innovation to Address Socio-economic Challenges

6. We recognize that innovative technologies are creating new opportunities to tackle the challenges confronting APEC member economies through approaches not previously possible. We therefore call for the secure adoption of a broad range of technologies in a responsible manner - including ICT and digital technologies such as AI- to boost productivity, strengthen efficiency and resilience, and foster innovative pathways to support our economies’ development.

7. We encourage member economies to harness growth opportunities by leveraging ICT and

digital technologies such as AI, mindful that adoption of these technologies requires a proactive, balanced, and human-centered approach to our workforce, education, and capacity building policies, including lifelong learning initiatives, in light of both the benefits and the challenges they present. We support cooperation and information sharing on the ICT and digital policies that accelerate regional economic cooperation and facilitate cross border trade and investment. We also encourage member economies to collaborate toward greater understanding and promotion of the benefits of the latest developments in ICT and digital technologies in each of our economies.

Enhancing Digital Connectivity for All

8. We recognize that as ICT and digital technologies become increasingly essential to our economies, universal and meaningful digital connectivity is more important than ever. In particular, we highlight the need to bridge digital divides within and between economies - including the digital divides that hinder individuals' full participation in the digital economy. We therefore emphasize the value of deepening cooperation and capacity-building efforts among member economies to address persistent digital divides, including by promoting policies that build digital competencies and advance innovation, so that all our people and economies can fully participate in, and benefit from, the digital economy.

9. We believe that connectivity in the APEC region will be further improved by greater provision of digital connectivity infrastructure and adoption of innovative technologies. We also recognize that the growth in the adoption and use of ICT and digital technologies such as AI, relies on deployment of high quality, affordable, and resilient communications infrastructure facilitated through collaboration among member economies and the private sector. Recognizing the increasing demand for data, we recommend member economies to take appropriate measures to upgrade their digital infrastructure to meet demand for data in an energy and resource efficient manner that benefit all.

Creating a Safe, Secure and Reliable Digital and AI Ecosystem

10. We recognize that as digital transformation advances, ensuring safety, security, accessibility, trustworthiness and reliability are key to realizing the benefits of digitalization for all. We emphasize the importance of developing robust policy and risk management strategies to protect business, individuals and workers from a range of digital threats and to strengthen trust and confidence in digital and AI ecosystems so that the opportunities offered by the latest ICT and digital technologies are fully leveraged. In line with these objectives, we support continued work among member economies to enhance trust, safety, fairness and confidence in the use of ICT and digital technologies such as AI, as well as the dissemination of knowledge and information. We will also continue our cooperation on facilitating the flow of data and strengthening consumer and business trust in digital transactions.

Conclusion

11. We appreciate the significant progress made by the Telecommunications and Information Working Group (TELWG) in the sharing of member economy frameworks and best practices, discussion on matters of digital transformation including digital infrastructure, security and technology, and addressing opportunities and challenges arising from their application. We expect TELWG and Digital Economy Steering Group (DESG) to continue to deliver meaningful outcomes that facilitate digital transformation for all members of the APEC region, as both the DESG and TELWG play crucial roles in advancing the APEC Internet and Digital Economy Roadmap. We encourage continued collaboration among all relevant APEC sub-fora to further consider how to take advantage of the benefits of innovative ICT and digital technologies such as AI while mitigating risks.

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100 12. To this end, previous efforts by member economies to promote economic growth,
101 connectivity and empowerment opportunities in the process of digital transformation, as in the
102 APEC Connectivity Blueprint (2015-2025), the La Serena Roadmap for Women and Inclusive
103 Growth (2019-2030), the APEC Services Competitiveness Roadmap, the Bangkok Goals on
104 Bio-Circular-Green (BCG) Economy and the Lima Roadmap to Promote the Transition to the
105 Formal and Global Economies (2025-2040) are noted. We also note the work by the APEC
106 Business Advisory Council (ABAC), in support of TEL and DESG.

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108 13. As we approach the completion of the Work Program for the Implementation of the APEC
109 Internet and Digital Economy Roadmap (AIDER) in 2025, we recognize the need to
110 systematically develop an approach for the continued advancement of AIDER's objective
111 beyond 2025, in a way that addresses emerging challenges and opportunities in the rapidly
112 evolving digital landscape. We encourage member economies to utilize applicable digital
113 governance mechanisms to promote dialogue that advance the objectives of APEC, and
114 commit to explore collaborative approaches to ensure the use of ICT and digital innovations
115 for the benefit of our people and the region. In this regard, we commend work underway to
116 develop an APEC AI initiative under the leadership of Korea by the end of the year.

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118 14. We express our gratitude to the Republic of Korea for the success of this meeting, and lo
119 ok forward to initiatives from each member economy that support this joint statement.