



## **Pacific ICT Ministerial Dialogue**

**28<sup>th</sup> August, 2023, Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea**

**“Smart Pacific, One Voice” - Creating a Digital Future Together for the Pacific”**

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**COMMUNIQUE ON THE PACIFIC ICT MINISTERIAL DIALOGUE ON DIGITAL  
TRANSFORMATION OF THE PACIFIC**

1. The Pacific Information and Communications Technology (ICT) Ministerial Dialogue (Dialogue) was held on 28 August 2023 in APEC Haus in Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea. It was hosted by the Government of Papua New Guinea through the Ministry of Information and Communications Technology and supported by the Asia-Pacific Telecommunity (APT).
2. The Dialogue was attended by thirteen (13) Pacific Island Countries and Territories (Australia, Cook Islands, Fiji, Kiribati, New Caledonia, New Zealand, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, and Vanuatu) along with the United Nations (UN) specialised agency, the International Telecommunications Union (ITU), APT, Pacific Islands Forum (PIF) Secretariat, and other regional organisations and development partners, under the theme of “Smart Pacific, One Voice – Creating a Digital Future Together for the Pacific”.
3. The Dialogue was attended by the Hon. Manoa Seru Nakausabaria Kamikamica MP, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Trade, Cooperatives, Small and Medium Enterprises, and Communications.
4. The Dialogue was chaired by the Hon. Timothy Masiu MP, Papua New Guinea Minister for Information and Communications Technology, and assisted by vice-chairs; Hon. Vaimu’a Muliava MP, New Caledonia Minister for Digital Transformation, Technological Innovation, Relations with French territories in the Pacific, the Public Service, and the Modernisation of Public Action Government; and Hon. Toelupe Poumulinuku Onesemo MP, Samoa Minister for Communication and Information Technology.
5. The key objectives of this Dialogue were to set the course for the Pacific digital transformation journey, strengthen regional cooperation and representation, identify and implement digital solutions to address our unique challenges, and build an integrated, secure, and inclusive digital Pacific.

### ***Ministers adopt the Lagatoi Declaration***

6. The Ministers sought to chart a unified digital future by putting digital transformation at the centre of their development agenda to drive social and economic development and prosperity, and adopted the Ministerial Declaration on Digital Transformation of the Pacific – to be known as the Lagatoi Declaration.
7. The Ministers acknowledged the diverse stages of ICT and digital transformation development across the Pacific, and the need to harmonise policies to support and advance digitalisation in the region.
8. The Ministers recognised the existing connectivity gaps, the vulnerability of the Pacific to cyber threats, climate and environmental threats, and the need to fortify critical information infrastructure;
9. The Ministers emphasised the need to enhance Pacific peoples’ ICT capacity and capabilities.
10. The Ministers commended the initiatives led by individual Pacific Island Countries and Territories, including through regional cooperation and support of development partners, to bridge the digital divide in the Pacific.

11. The Ministers recalled the *2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent* and PIF Leaders' commitment to a well-connected region that ensures inclusive, accessible, secure and affordable ICT infrastructure and services.
12. The Ministers emphasised the critical role and opportunities presented by the use of ICT and digital transformation to Pacific Island Countries and Territories as primary enablers of socio-economic development, inclusive governance, and sustainable livelihood in a fast-changing world.
13. The Ministers called for increased regional solidarity, commitment to address regional challenges and threats, and to leverage contributions through a multi-stakeholder approach to digital transformation.

#### ***Ministers agree on priority areas for a digital future together***

14. The Ministers focused on six priority areas: Digital Transformation, Digital Innovation and Entrepreneurship, Digital Infrastructure, Digital Security and Trust, Digital Capacity Building and Skills Development, and Regional Cooperation and Representation.
15. The Ministers affirmed the opportunities presented by digital transformation and the value of collaboration between Pacific Island Countries and Territories, and our development partners in accelerating digital transformation.
16. The Ministers called on the international community, particularly the ITU and other United Nations agencies, as well as regional organisations to strengthen their understanding, engagement and presence in the Pacific region, and called for strengthening ITU's regional presence in the Pacific.

#### ***Way forward***

17. The Ministers re-affirmed their joint commitment for a well-connected Pacific region through digital infrastructure and services, called for increased regional solidarity, representation and commitment to address regional challenges and threats, and to advance our common goals, while promoting inclusivity, equality, and security in a digitally connected era.
18. The Ministers encouraged strengthening communication and coordination among existing regional mechanisms, including the Council of Regional Organisations of the Pacific (CROP) and ICT Working Groups.
19. The Ministers tasked Senior Officials to develop an ICT and Digital Transformation Action Plan and agreed to meet again at the next Pacific ICT Ministerial Dialogue in New Caledonia in 2025 to monitor progress and implementation.
20. The Ministers thanked the Government of Papua New Guinea for hosting the Pacific ICT Ministerial Dialogue 2023.