Remarks
by
Ms. Areewan Haorangsi
Secretary General, Asia-Pacific Telecommunity (APT)
at
ITU-BTRC Asia-Pacific Regulators Roundtable
6-7 August 2018, Dhaka, Bangladesh

Honourable Minister Mustafa Jabbar, Minister of Posts, Telecommunications & Information Technology, Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh,

Mr. Shyam Sunder Sikder, Secretary of Ministry of Posts, Telecommunications and Information Technology, Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh,

Mr. Md Jahurul Haque, Chairman of Bangladesh Telecommunications Regulatory Commission (BTRC),

Mr. Ioane Koroivuki, Regional Director, ITU Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific,

Distinguished delegates,

Ladies and gentlemen,

Good morning to you all.

It is my great honour to be invited to say a few words at this ITU-BTRC Asia-Pacific Regulators' Roundtable 2018 here in Dhaka, Bangladesh.

On behalf of the Asia-Pacific Telecommunity (APT), I would like to congratulate International Telecommunication Union (ITU) and Bangladesh Telecommunications Regulatory Commission (BTRC) for organizing this year's Asia-Pacific Regulators' Roundtable.

I would like to express my sincere appreciation to BTRC, for the excellent arrangements and warm hospitality extended to all delegations.

I also would also like to extend my sincere gratitude to Honorable Minister Mustafa Jabbar, Minister of Posts, Telecommunications & Information Technology and other dignitaries for taking time from the busy schedule to grace this event.

Ladies and gentlemen,

I would like to recall a couple of astonishing news that should invite keen attentions of ICT policy makers as well as regulators.

Last Wednesday, a Texas-based company in the United States, Defense Distributors, published the plan for 3-D Plastic gun online, the downloadable blueprints and instructions on how to build an untraceable and undetectable plastic firearm using a 3D-printer. A 3D-printed gun does not require a background check, a serial number, or a gun registration. Moreover, it cannot be detected at the airport or security-concerned facilities. We have encountered to hear a series of shocking news of massacre in the USA by ammunition, but now this can be happened anywhere and anytime if the blueprints and instructions for building plastic firearm available around the globe.

June this year, the world's best-known cryptocurrency Bitcoin's price has been plunged after South Korean cryptocurrency exchange Coinrail was hacked. A news said that Coinrail confirmed the cyber-attack sent the price of bitcoin tumbling 10% and lost USD 38 Million in a day. It affected not only the South Korean market but also the other market around the globe as well as the losses of the other digital currencies.

April this year, Facebook confirmed that the number of users whose personal information was improperly shared with Cambridge Analytica was 87 million and said most people on Facebook could have had their public profile leaked. Cambridge Analytica's data-mining project advertised a personality test on an Amazon web service and US citizens with a Facebook account were eligible to take part, and their responses were then paired with information taken from their social media profile, including their gender, age, relationship status, location and 'likes', to establish their personality traits and political views.

March this year, an autonomous Uber car killed a woman in the street in Arizona, USA, police said, in what appears to be the first reported fatal crash involving a self-driving vehicle and a pedestrian. It was confirmed that the self-driving car was in autonomous mode at the time of the crash and that the vehicle hit a woman, who was walking outside of the crosswalk and later died at a hospital. There was a vehicle operator inside the car at the time of the crash.

What are all those news about? Those bring attention of policy makers and regulators on a proper ICT policies and regulations. In fact, as for the 3-D printed plastic gun, we are not certain what would be the role of ICT regulators, but one thing which is clear to me is that ICT policy makers and regulators should be aware of the possible consequences of ICT product. Almost every countries in the world including the Members in the Asia-Pacific move towards the era of Digital Economy by harnessing the benefits of cutting edge technologies brought by the 4th Industrial Revolution, such as IoT, Bigdata, Artificial Intelligence, 5G, etc. However, policy makers and regulators should be mindful to eliminate or minimize negative consequences in harnessing the benefits of these technologies.

Imagine the future when human is not allowed to drive his/her vehicle and only Artificial Intelligence takes the car wheel instead. And if the car ought to choose between an elderly person and a child in case inevitable circumstance, how AI should choose between the two and who will be punished, the AI or the owner of the car? This kind of questions warrants through studies and dialogues among the stakeholders, especially regulatory authorities in different sectors. This applies the case of digital currencies, the Bitcoin case.

Ladies and Gentleman,

The era of Digital Economy demands cross-cutting collaboration to harness the benefit of ICT services and technologies, thus I do believe ICT policy makers and regulators should be agile to accommodate these demands and International organization, like ITU and APT should be a catalyst to bridge the gap among the parties and amalgamate them to produce coordinated policies and regulations.

In this context, the ITU Global Symposium for Regulators is one of the best forums to discuss the opportunities and challenges among members. In addition, Regulators' Roundtable in Asia-Pacific also serves its role for the Members in the Asia-Pacific.

I would also like to emphasize that APT has worked in this area through the APT Policy and Regulatory Forum or PRF for almost 2 decades. For the note of the delegations attending this Regulator's Roundtable, APT will organize the 18th Policy and Regulatory Forum or PRF-18 from 8 to 10 August, from Wednesday to Friday, after concluding this RR. PRF-18 is kindly hosted by BTRC.

The APT Policy and Regulatory Forum provides a platform where high-level policy makers and regulators meet to discuss telecommunications and ICT policy and regulatory issues that are of common interest to the Asia-Pacific region. It is also a platform for the industry to bring issues of their concern to the attention of the policy makers and regulators. All of you are welcome to the PRF-18.

Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

To conclude, I would like to once again express my congratulation to ITU and BTRC for organizing this ITU-BTRC Asia-Pacific Regulators Roundtable 2018. I wish you all successful deliberations.

Thank you very much.