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AMIC 9th ANNUAL CONFERENCE
June 29-July 1, 2000, Singapore
Summary Report

Some 200 local and foreign delegates from 20 countries in Asia, Europe, USA, and Australia participated in the AMIC 9th annual conference on "The Digital Millennium: Opportunities for Asian Media" held at the Grand Copthorne Hotel, Singapore from June 29 to July 1, 2000. They were a mix of media practitioners, policymakers, communication specialists, academics and communication students who had the opportunity for three days to meet, interact and discuss trends and issues on media and communication in the region. Singapore, the Philippines, Malaysia and India had the biggest number of participants. The Fredriech-Ebert Stiftung of Germany supported the event.

A total of 43 speakers from Asia, Europe, USA and Australia, including five paper contributors, spoke on the three streams of issues that were taken up during the conference, namely, new technology, rules and regulations governing new technology, impact on industry and society.

Mr. Um Swee Say, Singapore Minister of State for Communication & Information Technology & Trade and Industry, was the inaugural speaker. In his extemporaneous speech, Mr. Lim called on Asian media to act fast and be creative in exploiting the innovation explosion that will hit the Internet in the next two to three years. This explosion, he pointed out, will involve the creation of new business models and content development.

Mr. Lim said that bright prospects abound which the Asian media can exploit to realize the full potential of the Internet. They include the globalization of Internet and its swift adoption in the region, the trends towards broadband technology, wireless Internet and Internet appliance that will enable people to live and operate "anywhere." The rapid emergence of the information society that will provide a platform for a knowledge-based economy and the localization of Internet content are other opportunities for Asian media.

Mr. Lim pointed out that the ASEAN is moving towards taking advantage of the Internet revolution. It is now working towards building the regional infrastructure network to achieve the E-ASEAN. He pointed out that Singapore is developing the citizens' capability and their sense of entreprenuership to create new businesses. The
government is also making sure those new businesses and innovations are deployed widespread in order to promote its economy and its society.

Mr. Robert Iau, AMIC chairman, delivered the welcome remarks and wished the delegates a productive three-day conference. Foreign ambassadors, officials from various government agencies in Singapore, and AMIC board members and country representatives also attended the conference. Mr. Iau announced that the AMIC 10th annual conference would be held in June 2001 in Manila, Philippines.

About 40% of the participants filled up the survey questionnaires distributed at the end of the conference. Their feedback on the conference was generally satisfactory. Participants rated highly most presentation by the speakers, although they suggested that some speakers improve their visual presentation and their presentation skills. Time allocation for presenters was just right. They also said that the meeting was highly relevant to their work and career as they indicated a high rating for the quality of the programme and the overall value of the meeting.

The participants were impressed with the meeting facilities, the quality of the food, and efficiency of the organization.

They also recommended the following:

- provide participants more time to ask questions
- Invite other speakers from Asia, such as China
- improve technical facilities

Among the most insightful and productive sessions, according to the delegates were the Children and the Internet, Internet Governance: Role of State and Society, Media Convergence and Competition, Privacy, Jurisdiction and Free expression in the Digital Age, Narrowing the Information Divide in Asia and Protecting Content in an On-Line Environment.

AMIC members held its annual general assembly and took up the following agenda:

- Approval of the AMIC annual Report
- AMIC plans for 2001 and beyond
- Election of Mr. Mikio Suzuki to replace Dr. Hidetoshi Kato who recently retired as a board member.