

Enabled Smart Cities: Building Intelligent and Inclusive Urban Ecosystems

Side event of The Fifth Session of the Committee on Information and Communications Technology, Science, Technology and Innovation Side Event

12:15 pm – 1:30 pm, Thursday 3 September

Meeting Room H, United Nations Conference Center (UNCC), Bangkok, Thailand

Background

Cities across Asia and the Pacific are experiencing rapid urbanization, increasing demands on infrastructure, public services, environmental sustainability, and resilience. At the same time, rapid advances in artificial intelligence, data analytics, digital twins, Internet of Things, and geospatial technologies are transforming the way cities are planned, managed, and governed. These technologies offer unprecedented opportunities to improve urban efficiency, sustainability, resilience, and quality of life.

Realizing the full potential of AI-enabled smart cities requires more than technological innovation. It calls for effective governance, trustworthy and human-centred AI, interoperable digital infrastructure, skilled human resources, and multi-stakeholder collaboration. Ensuring that AI-driven urban transformation is inclusive, ethical, and responsive to local needs is essential to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDG 11 on sustainable cities and communities.

The Asian and Pacific Training Centre for Information and Communication Technology for Development (APCICT) of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) supports member States in strengthening digital capacities and promoting inclusive digital transformation through policy dialogue, capacity development, and regional cooperation. Tsinghua University, a global leader in science, technology, engineering, and innovation, contributes cutting-edge research and practical expertise in artificial intelligence, smart cities, and digital technologies. Together, APCICT and Tsinghua University aim to promote dialogue between policymakers, researchers, and technology leaders, facilitating the exchange of knowledge and good practices to advance AI-enabled smart city development.

This side event will provide a platform to examine emerging trends, innovative applications, and governance approaches for AI-enabled smart cities. It will showcase practical experiences and explore how regional cooperation, technology transfer, and capacity development can help build intelligent, inclusive, and resilient urban ecosystems that improve the well-being of all citizens.

Objectives

The objectives of the event are:

- Explore the transformative potential of AI in building intelligent, resilient, and inclusive urban ecosystems.
- Exchange experiences and good innovative practices on AI-enabled smart city solutions from academia, industry, and government.
- Promote regional partnerships and identify opportunities for collaboration in research, technology transfer, and capacity development to accelerate AI-enabled urban innovation.

Date and venue

- Date: 3 September
- Time: 12:15 pm – 1:30 pm
- Venue: Meeting room H

Target Participants

- The side event will bring together policymakers, researchers, academia, technology providers, industry representative, international organizations, development partners, and civil society organizations working on artificial intelligence, smart cities, digital transformation, urban development, and technology innovation.

Organizers and partners

The organizers of the event are:

- APCICT/ESCAP
- Tsinghua University

Language: This event will be conducted in English.

Provision of Catering Service: Light lunch

Registration Link: <https://indico.un.org/event/1023219/>

Contact person

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3 July 2026, 12:15 pm - 1:30 pm

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3 July 2026	
	<i>Enabled Smart Cities: Building Intelligent and Inclusive Urban Ecosystems</i>
12:15-12:20 [5 min]	Welcome and Opening Moderator welcomes participants, introduces the organizers (APCICT/ESCAP and Tsinghua University), and outlines the objectives of the side event.
12:20-12:25 [5 min]	Opening Remarks Ms. Lin Yang, Deputy Executive Secretary ESCAP
12:25-12:40 [15 min]	Keynote Presentation AI-Enabled Smart Cities: Opportunities and Emerging Trends: • Prof. Wang Yu, Full Professor, IEEE Fellow, Department of Electronic Engineering, Tsinghua University
12:40-13:15 [35 min]	Panel Discussion Building Intelligent and Inclusive Urban Ecosystems Panelists from government, academia, industry, and international organizations discuss policy, innovation, governance, and practical applications of AI in smart cities. • Prof. Chao Zhang, Associate Professor, Department of Electronic Engineering, Tsinghua University • Mr. Mathew Perkins, Economic Affairs Officer, Environment and Development Division, ESCAP • Mr. Jakkanit Kananurak, Vice President, Digital Manpower Development and Promotion Department, Digital Economy Promotion Agency of Thailand
13:15-13:28 [13 min]	Interactive Discussion and Q&A
13:28-13:30 [2 min]	Wrap-up and Closing