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Item 3 (e) of the provisional agenda*

Review of issues pertinent to the subsidiary structure**of the Commission, including the work of the regional****institutions: information and communications technology****Report of the Governing Council of the Asian and Pacific
Training Centre for Information and Communication
Technology for Development on its tenth session***Summary*

The Governing Council of the Asian and Pacific Training Centre for Information and Communication Technology for Development (APCICT) held its tenth session in Incheon, Republic of Korea, on 3 December 2015.

The Council took note of the work programme and project activities of the Centre since the last Council session and reviewed the Centre's administrative and financial status. It commended the Centre for its progress and achievements over the years and called on the Centre to strengthen its information and communications technology (ICT) capacity development work in support of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The Council endorsed the Centre's work programme for 2016 wherein its programmes and activities would be undertaken in three thematic areas, namely: effective governance, inclusive development and resilient development. It welcomed the Centre's new flagship programme called Women and ICT Frontier Initiative (WIFI) and called on the Centre to prioritize the development and delivery of the initiative in 2016.

The Council recommended strengthening the Academy of ICT Essentials for Government Leaders and Turning Today's Youth into Tomorrow's Leaders programmes and their institutionalization in the region. It also welcomed the Centre's "Smart Government" initiative wherein the Academy programme would be enhanced with in-depth training content, including on e-government.

The Council recommended further diversifying the delivery channels for the Centre's programmes. It also called for greater advocacy on ICT for sustainable development and increasing the visibility of the Centre at global, regional and subregional dialogues and meetings.

The Council called on member States to provide voluntary financial contributions to the Centre.

* E/ESCAP/72/L.1.

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I. Recommendations

1. The Council endorses the work plan of the Asian and Pacific Training Centre for Information and Communication Technology for Development (APCICT) for 2016, which aims to strengthen human and institutional capacities of member States on utilizing information and communications technology (ICT) in implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The Centre’s programmes and activities will be undertaken within the three thematic areas of effective governance, inclusive development and resilient development.

2. The Council welcomes the Centre’s new flagship programme called Women and ICT Frontier Initiative (WIFI), which aims to promote entrepreneurship and build the ICT capacities of women in Asia and the Pacific, and calls on the Centre to prioritize the development and implementation of this programme in 2016. It recommends fostering cooperation with the appropriate regional, subregional and national partners for WIFI roll-out in the region.

3. The Council recommends that WIFI should focus not only on existing women entrepreneurs, but also on women who are interested in starting their own businesses. It emphasizes the importance of engaging civil society and development organizations for WIFI advocacy and programme implementation. It supports the Centre’s plan to develop a distance learning platform as it will help in expanding programme reach.

4. The Council supports the Centre's "Smart Government" initiative (tentative title) that aims to assist member States in building effective governance for sustainable development. This initiative will entail enhancing the Academy programme with new training content – such as e-government applications and open data, inter alia – that member States can utilize and customize, depending on their needs and local context. The initiative is intended to support member States on leveraging ICT for Sustainable Development Goal implementation and data collection for evidence-based policymaking.
5. The Council recommends the Centre to continue in its role of serving as a regional platform for exchange of experiences and lessons learned as well as providing member States, including via online platforms, with valuable knowledge resources related to ICT and human capacity development.
6. Noting the Centre's ongoing efforts to improve the APCICT Virtual Academy, the Council recommends further diversifying the delivery channels of the Centre's programmes through richer content, mobile applications, social platforms and other media.
7. The Council underlines the importance of building greater awareness of the Sustainable Development Goals and the critical role of building human capacities on ICT for sustainable development. It calls on the Centre to promote this awareness through the Centre's capacity development programmes. Furthermore, it calls on the Centre to strengthen its advocacy on ICT for sustainable development. It also recommends increasing the visibility of the Centre at global, regional and subregional dialogues and meetings.
8. In reviewing the administrative and financial status of the Centre, the Council expresses its appreciation to the host country, the Republic of Korea, for its continued funding support to the Centre, as well as to other member States for their voluntary and in-kind contributions. The Council calls upon all member States to contribute financially to the Centre's programmes and operations.

II. Summary of deliberations

9. The Governing Council had before it the following documents:
 - (a) Administrative and financial status of APCICT (E/ESCAP/APCICT/GC(10)/2);
 - (b) Work programme and project activities of APCICT (E/ESCAP/APCICT/GC(10)/3);
 - (c) APCICT work programme for 2016;
 - (d) Brief on the Centre's Academy of ICT Essentials for Government Leaders (Academy) programme;
 - (e) Brief on the Centre's Turning Today's Youth into Tomorrow's Leaders programme;
 - (f) Brief on the APCICT Virtual Academy;
 - (g) APCICT online platforms: facilitating learning and knowledge sharing;
 - (h) APCICT research and knowledge sharing;
 - (i) APCICT media outreach.
10. Presentations were made by the Director of the Centre.

A. Report on the administrative and financial status of the Centre

11. The Governing Council was informed of the Centre's administration and management, including staffing capacity and organizational structure.

12. The Council was presented with the Centre's financial status, including a summary of institutional and funding support provided by the host country, the Republic of Korea, through the Incheon Metropolitan City and the Ministry of Science, ICT and Future Planning. Additional funding support was also provided through the Korea-ESCAP Cooperation Fund and Korea Internet and Security Agency.

13. Voluntary contributions have been received from Cambodia, Thailand and Macao, China. The representatives of India and Sri Lanka informed the Council that their Governments will fulfil the contributions they pledged at the seventy-first session of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP).

14. The Council was informed of the in-kind contributions provided by the Centre's partners that further support programme delivery and institutionalization of the Centre's programmes in the region. These contributions are in the form of logistical and human resources for conduct of trainings and workshops, localization of training content and APCICT Virtual Academy courses and dissemination of the Centre's knowledge products.

B. Presentation of the work undertaken by the Centre since the ninth session of the Governing Council

15. The Council was informed about the work programme and project activities undertaken by the Centre in its various pillars of work, including training, research, e-learning and online platforms, advisory services, advocacy and outreach, and as a regional platform for knowledge sharing and cooperation.

16. Since the ninth Council session, the Centre had continued to strengthen and institutionalize its two flagship programmes – the Academy of ICT Essentials for Government Leaders and Turning Today's Youth into Tomorrow's Leaders – in Asia and the Pacific. It initiated a third flagship programme called Women and ICT Frontier Initiative (WIFI), which expands the Centre's ICT capacity development work to women and rural communities.

17. The Council was informed that the Academy has been launched in 30 countries in cooperation with regional, subregional and national partners. The programme had also been launched in Western Asia in cooperation with the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA).

18. Since the ninth session of the Council, 30 new Academy-related activities had been organized by the Centre and its partners, increasing the total number from 266 in 2014 to 296 in 2015. Together with growing online course enrolments in the APCICT Virtual Academy, over 30,000 participants from 152 countries representing government officers, policymakers, trainers and other officials have benefited from the programme since 2008.

19. The Centre has been supporting its national partners in customizing and translating the Academy modules, which are now available in 16 languages. Since the ninth session, all 11 Academy modules, together with nine other knowledge products of the Centre, have been translated into Persian by the Ministry of Communication and Information Technology of the Islamic Republic of Iran. Academy modules 1 to 4 were customized into Arabic by ESCWA.

20. The Council was informed about the Centre's T-Strategy¹ on ICT capacity development. This strategy aims to increase the impact of the Centre's programmes by not only broadening their coverage (through new beneficiary groups and module expansion), but also deepening the content (through in-depth and specialized modules).

21. Using this T-Strategy for the Centre's e-government training, APCICT conducted a global-scale survey to assess the current status of e-government training needs. Over 347 e-government experts in Asia and the Pacific, Africa, Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean, and Western Asia participated in the survey. For the Western Asia region, the survey was undertaken with the support of ESCWA, which yielded 172 respondents. The survey results, which were presented at the Regional Dialogue and Annual Partners Meeting held from 1 to 4 December 2015 in Incheon, Republic of Korea, are being used by APCICT as reference to identify the coverage and depth of the advance-level Academy module on e-government to be developed in 2016.

22. The Council was informed of the new training content developed by APCICT on the use of social media for disaster risk management. The Centre produced a Guidebook on Social Media and Disaster Risk Management and also updated its Academy module 9 (ICT for Disaster Risk Management) to incorporate social media applications.

23. The Council was briefed on the various Academy-related capacity-building workshops undertaken by the Centre since the ninth session. These include training-the-trainer workshops in Bhutan, the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Myanmar, the Philippines and Sri Lanka. Numerous training workshops had also been organized by the Centre's national partners, independent of the Centre's support, demonstrating strong national ownership of the Academy programme.

24. The Council was also updated on the status of the Centre's second flagship programme called Turning Today's Youth into Tomorrow's Leaders. Under this programme, APCICT developed the "Primer Series on ICTD for Youth (Primer Series)", a comprehensive ICT for Development (ICTD) curriculum that serves as practical and valuable learning resources for colleges and universities in Asia and the Pacific.

25. The Primer Series has been rolled out in 14 countries and introduced in two subregions. Various issues of the Primer Series are now available in seven languages. Since the ninth session, APCICT and its partners organized 20 regional and national workshops and training sessions, bringing the total Primer activities from 35 in 2014 to 55 in 2015. Over 130 universities in Asia and the Pacific have been utilizing the Primer Series programme in their academic curriculum and over 24,000 students and workshop participants have been reached in the region.

26. The Council was informed that since the ninth session, APCICT had developed and finalized the latest Primer Series issue (Issue 5) on social media for development. The Centre also finalized the Monitoring and Evaluation Guidebook for the Primer Series.

¹ Horizontal line of "T" refers to the broadening of the Academy subjects and encompassing new beneficiary groups. Vertical line of "T" refers to the deepening of the highly demanded subject focusing on in-depth coverage through comprehensive content development and increasing module utilization. This is called the T-Strategy of ICT capacity development.

27. The Council was informed of the Centre's continued efforts to promote the adoption of the Primer programme in the region through national workshops and awareness-raising activities. During the reporting period, APCICT and its Primer partners organized capacity-building and sensitization activities in countries such as Azerbaijan, Myanmar and the Philippines. Numerous partner-led Primer workshops were also held since the ninth session.

28. The Council was apprised of the Centre's engaged learning initiative, a pedagogical method linking in-class learning with community development fieldwork. To advocate the engaged learning approach in universities across the region, APCICT developed two sets of publications, the "Engaged Learning Toolkit for ICTD Faculty and Community" and the "Engaged Learning Guidebook for ICTD Students" in partnership with Cornell University.

29. Student-led engaged learning projects have also been initiated in three countries: in Nepal on developing a SMS information system for rural migrant workers (with Kathmandu University); in the Philippines, on broadcasting content for educating farmers (with the University of the Philippines-Los Baños); and in Thailand, on digitizing local museums for sustainable local tourism (with Mahasarakham University).

30. The Centre also provided internship and work exposure opportunities to students through the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Internship Programme (in partnership with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Korea, Daejeon University and ASEAN University Network) and the Centre's iSEED programme (a two-month hybrid activity involving in-person sessions in APCICT and online sessions).

31. The Council was informed that APCICT had embarked on its third flagship programme, the Women and ICT Frontier Initiative. WIFI aims to build the ICT capacities of women entrepreneurs in the region. This initiative supports Sustainable Development Goal 5, to achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls, and target 5.b, to enhance the use of enabling technology, in particular information and communications technology, to promote the empowerment of women.

32. Four WIFI training modules are being developed through a participatory and inclusive approach: module 1 on ICT and women's empowerment; module 2 on ICT applications for women entrepreneurs; module 3 on project management for women entrepreneurs; and module 4 on creating an enabling environment (for policymakers). A digital entrepreneur competency assessment tool is also being developed to measure the ICT competency level of women entrepreneurs and guide them on what ICT skills need to be improved in support of their businesses.

33. The representative of Indonesia stated that the WIFI programme may be expanded to benefit not only those women who were already entrepreneurs, but also those women who may be interested in starting their own businesses. The representative of the Philippines also noted that there were many marginalized women who could be taught ICT skills and who needed assistance in starting their business activities.

34. The representative of Pakistan shared that in his country, 60 per cent of home-based workers were women who were unable to leave their homes to attend outside training/education. In this regard, a distance learning version of the WIFI programme would help reach those home-based entrepreneurs.

35. The representative of India stated that in developing the WIFI programme, it was important to consider that women entrepreneurs had varying ICT skills. In this regard, customized content depending on skill level should be developed. The WIFI programme should target not only policymakers in government, but also from other stakeholder groups including civil society and development organizations, an observation which was also supported by the representative of Thailand.

36. The representative of the Republic of Korea shared with the Council that the Ministry of Science, ICT and Future Planning had been collaborating with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Asian Pacific Women's Information Network Center (APWINC) on empowering women entrepreneurs. He suggested that APCICT collaborate with UNDP and APWINC in implementing the WIFI programme. The representative also recommended focusing the WIFI programme on a specific target group at one given time, such as those women entrepreneurs who were experiencing difficulties in their business activities, rather than addressing multiple groups simultaneously.

37. The representative of Cambodia underscored the need for engaging the right local partners in order to successfully implement and roll out the WIFI programme.

38. The Council was apprised of the efforts of the Centre in providing a platform for regional dialogue and cooperation through regional conferences and the Annual Partners' Meeting. Since the ninth session, two regional dialogues on the theme of ICTD capacity-building for sustainable development had been organized by the Centre: from 25 to 28 November 2014 (Incheon) and from 1 to 4 December 2015 (Incheon). The Centre also organized the Annual Partners' Meeting to provide a platform for knowledge-sharing among programme partners and discuss further areas of capacity development support. At the time of writing, seven Academy Partners' Meetings and four Primer Partners' Meetings had been organized annually. Since the ninth session, the Centre had organized two Academy Partners' Meetings (the 6th meeting in November 2014 and the 7th meeting in December 2015) and two Primer Partners' Meetings (the 3rd meeting in November 2014 and the 4th meeting in December 2015).

39. The Council noted the various knowledge resources produced in support of its ICT capacity development work. New publications produced since the ninth session include two knowledge-sharing series issues on enterprise architecture and competency standards, a case study series on ICT competency standards, and a brief on "ICT trends: big data".

40. In the area of e-learning and online platforms, the Council was informed that there has been an increase of 931 new enrolments in the APCICT Virtual Academy (AVA), bringing the total to more than 10,000 course enrolments since the launch of the AVA platform. The Council was also introduced to ongoing enhancements in AVA, utilizing mainstream e-learning technologies, such as screencasting, animations, white-board style drawings and flash-based interactive quizzes.

41. The eCollaborative Hub, a repository of knowledge resources on ICTD, had seen an increase in the number of documents, from 900 in 2014 to over 1,100 in 2015. The platform has received over 327,000 page views since its launch in 2008.

42. The Council was also informed that through advisory services, APCICT provided technical assistance to member States on the institutionalization of ICTD capacity-building in civil service institutions and other government organizations. It also provided assistance to relevant ministries and agencies on higher education as well as universities on the integration of ICTD in academic curricula.

C. Regional Dialogue on ICTD Capacity-building for Inclusive, Resilient and Sustainable Development

43. The Governing Council was held in conjunction with the Regional Dialogue on ICTD Capacity-building for Inclusive, Resilient and Sustainable Development, held in Incheon from 1 to 4 December 2015.

44. Council members were invited to participate in the various thematic sessions and contribute to the discussions on how to align ICT capacity development in the region with the priorities of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The meeting enabled Council members to know more about the Centre's capacity development work, interact with APCICT programme partners and learn about the increasing demand for ICTD capacity-building from member States. Through the meeting, Council members were better positioned to provide advice in the development of the Centre's programmes.

45. The meeting brought together over 100 participants from 32 countries in the region, including representatives of Government, academia, civil society, private sector, international organizations and experts in the field of ICT and capacity development.

46. Participants examined how ICT could support the achievement of the 2030 Agenda. Sessions were organized to focus the discussions on how ICT can have an effect on three key areas of the 2030 Agenda – fostering effective governance, building resilience to disasters and promoting inclusive development – on which appropriate capacity development strategies and content can be developed.

D. Presentation of the Centre's work programme for 2016

47. The Council reviewed the Centre's work programme for 2016, which had been developed in support of and in alignment with the 2030 Agenda adopted by the General Assembly in September 2015.

48. The Council was informed of the vision and principles governing the 2030 Agenda, including the 17 Sustainable Development Goals and 169 sub-targets. Its means of implementation include financing for development; science, technology and innovation, which includes ICTs; and revitalized global partnerships.

49. The Council was informed of the underlying principles that guided APCICT in developing the work programme for 2016. Those included: (a) the need to adhere to the Centre's mandate and build on its comparative advantage; (b) strengthening linkage and synergies with ESCAP as its regional institute; (c) responding to the evolving ICTD capacity development needs in the region; and (d) incorporating lessons learned from the Centre's ICT capacity development over the years, including the effectiveness of a flagship programme approach, leveraging partnerships and sustainability.

50. Three thematic areas were presented to the Council as areas for the Centre's programme of work: ICT for effective governance, ICT for inclusive development and ICT for resilient development.

51. In the area of effective governance, APCICT will strengthen the capacities of member States on leveraging ICT for Sustainable Development Goal implementation, monitoring and evaluation. In the Academy programme, a Smart Government initiative will be introduced with in-depth training content, including on e-government, in line with the Sustainable Development Goals and based on the earlier e-government needs assessment survey conducted by the Centre.

52. Through the Smart Government initiative, the Academy programme will be enhanced to achieve the following outcomes in the target audience of government leaders and civil servants: (a) increased understanding of the Sustainable Development Goals; (b) deepened understanding of the linkage between ICT and sustainable development; and (c) enhanced capacity for ICT utilization (through e-government applications) and data collection to support Goal implementation and monitoring. In-depth e-government training content will also be produced with consideration to the varying levels of e-government maturity of countries and in light of the new ICT trends in a constantly evolving ICT landscape. Furthermore, the training content will be developed based on the outcome of the e-government needs assessment survey conducted by the Centre.

53. The Centre will contribute to efforts promoting inclusive development by empowering youth and women through ICT capacity development. In 2016, the Centre will strengthen the Primer programme by introducing the Sustainable Development Goals and entrepreneurship into the Primer curricula. The Centre will also launch its third flagship programme, the Women and ICT Frontier Initiative (WIFI), for enhancing the ICT competencies and skills of women entrepreneurs in Asia and the Pacific.

54. The four WIFI training modules will be field tested in national consultation workshops to enhance their content and relevance. Regional, subregional and national training-the-trainer sessions will be organized to expand the pool of WIFI resource persons and facilitate the roll-out and institutionalization of the programme in the region. The modules will be customized and localized to fit unique national settings. The Centre will also expand partnership for WIFI implementation by engaging stakeholders from the private sector, civil society and other relevant organizations.

55. In the area of resilient development, APCICT will assist member States in utilizing ICT to build their resilience and adaptive capacity to hazards and disasters. Towards this end, the Centre will enhance and scale up the roll-out of Academy module 9 (ICT for Disaster Risk Management), Academy module 10 (ICT, Climate Change and Green Growth) and Academy module 11 (Social Media for Development). Supplementary knowledge resources in the form of case studies or a knowledge-sharing series will also be produced.

56. The Centre's implementation strategy for its various capacity development programmes was outlined to the Council.

57. In developing new training content, APCICT will continue with its participatory and inclusive approach and strengthen needs assessment and peer review of its training content by engaging expert groups, forming advisory panels and working with research institutions, universities and other centres of excellence.

58. The Centre will expand the pool of resource persons for its Academy, Primer and WIFI programmes through regional, subregional and national training-the-trainer sessions. APCICT will also assist national partners in customizing and localizing the programmes to suit national contexts. Continued partner engagement and fostering national ownership of the programmes will also be emphasized.

59. The Centre will continue to promote knowledge-sharing on ICT for development through various publications such as the case study series, knowledge-sharing series, brief on ICT trends and toolkits/guidebooks. The eCollaborative Hub will be enriched with newer materials and content in the areas of the Sustainable Development Goals and ICTs.

60. To further expand the reach of its ICT capacity development in Asia and the Pacific and beyond, the Centre will enhance the accessibility of its online learning platform, the APCICT Virtual Academy. The online platform will also be improved through richer and more interactive content and utilizing mainstream e-learning technologies.

61. As a regional hub on ICT capacity development, APCICT will strengthen its role as a platform for regional dialogue and cooperation on ICT capacity development in Asia and the Pacific through the Annual Partners' Meeting. It will facilitate South-South cooperation through exchange of knowledge, expertise and lessons learned. It will foster partnerships with other stakeholder groups, including civil society and the private sector.

62. The Council expressed its appreciation and commended APCICT for realigning its capacity development work with the new priorities of sustainable development, with greater focus in the areas of effective governance, inclusiveness and resilience.

63. The representative of India noted that the Sustainable Development Goals, which came into effect in 2016 and which will guide decision making over the next 15 years, were still at an early stage and that the agenda would continue to evolve. The representative recommended APCICT to prioritize those activities in the thematic area of inclusive development, particularly the WIFI development and implementation. The representative also supported the Centre's Smart Government initiative under the Academy and recommended examining how ICT can be utilized by Governments in various sectors such as health, education and security.

64. The representative of the Philippines suggested that APCICT support the institutional development of its national partners in becoming national centres of excellence on ICT capacity development. Exchange of best practices among partner institutions could be leveraged for this purpose.

65. The representative of Sri Lanka noted that statistical capacity was critical for Sustainable Development Goal implementation and monitoring, and recommended that the Centre consider how it could work in this area.

66. The representative of Cambodia recommended taking advantage of social media to increase the visibility of APCICT and promote greater awareness on its ICT capacity development work.

67. The representative of the Republic of Korea commended APCICT for the programmes developed and accomplishments achieved over the years. The representative noted the importance of encouraging other member States to contribute financially to the Centre. To do this, he recommended increasing the Centre's visibility to potential donors from other countries by strengthening the Centre's advocacy and media-related activities.

E. Date and venue of the eleventh session of the Governing Council

68. The Council was informed that the Committee on Information and Communications Technology would hold its fifth session in 2016 in Bangkok and that the Council, as with prior practice, would convene its session in conjunction with the Committee session.

69. The secretariat will make the necessary arrangements for the date and venue of the eleventh session of the Council once the dates of the Committee session have been confirmed.

F. Other matters

70. The Council was informed about Commission resolution 71/1, which requested each regional institution to: (a) abolish the technical committees of the regional institutions that have them; (b) ensure that the members of the governing councils are represented by the relevant line ministries or government agencies within the relevant line ministries; (c) consider that the regional institutions will be primarily funded by extrabudgetary resources; (d) ensure that regional institutions develop their capacities to assist member States in an efficient and effective manner; and (e) encourage all members and associate members of ESCAP to make the necessary regular annual contributions, on a voluntary basis, as these are essential to the operation of the regional institutions.

71. The Council called upon all member States to contribute, financially and in-kind, to the Centre's programmes and operations.

G. Adoption of the report

72. The Governing Council adopted the present report on 5 January 2016.

III. Organizational matters**A. Opening of the session**

73. The tenth session of the Governing Council of APCICT was held in Incheon, Republic of Korea, on 3 December 2015.

74. The Executive Secretary of ESCAP delivered a videotaped message and expressed appreciation to the Council for its continued guidance and support to the work of the Centre.

B. Attendance

75. The session was attended by representatives of nine member countries of the Governing Council elected during the seventy-first session of the Commission in May 2015: Bangladesh; Cambodia; India; Indonesia; Pakistan; Philippines; Republic of Korea; Sri Lanka; and Thailand.

C. Election of officers

76. The Governing Council elected Ms. Gati Gayatri (Indonesia) as Chair, and Mr. Mohammad Kabir (Bangladesh) as Vice-Chair.

D. Adoption of the agenda

77. The Governing Council adopted the following agenda:
1. Opening of the session.
 2. Election of officers.
 3. Adoption of the agenda.
 4. Report on the administrative and financial status of the Centre.
 5. Presentation of work undertaken by the Centre since the ninth session of the Governing Council.
 6. Presentation of the Centre's work programme for 2016.
 7. Confirmation of the date and venue of the eleventh session of the Governing Council.
 8. Other matters.
 9. Adoption of the report.

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