THE COLOMBO COMMUNIQUÉ ON PUBLIC-PRIVATE-PARTNERSHIPS AND SOUTH-SOUTH & TRIANGULAR COOPERATION

Colombo, Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka
1 October 2011

PREAMBLE:

1. The 2011 Forums on "Public-Private-Partnerships" and "South-South & Triangular Cooperation" were held in Colombo, Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka 1 October 2011. They were organized by the Information and Communication Technology Agency (ICTA) of Sri Lanka. The United Nations Project Office on Governance (UNPOG) participated as a strategic partner at the forums, which brought together, senior government officials at the national level, Chief Information Officers (CIOs), experts, academics and international organizations to exchange good practices, innovations, and strategies to improve e-Governance and public administration towards accelerating the achievement of the millennium development goals.

During the forums, illustrious speakers presented from their expertise and knowledge, on: 1) Public-Private-Partnerships; and 2) South-South & Triangular Cooperation. Their mutual engagement facilitated the formulation of a set of concrete recommendations on how to facilitate Public-Private-Partnerships and South-South & Triangular Cooperation.

2. The participants of the forums conveyed their gratitude to the Information and Communication Technology Agency (ICTA) of Sri Lanka, for the successful preparation of this event. Furthermore, forum participants appreciated the opportunity of involvement in the rewarding interchange of their perceptions and experiences.

3. *Cognizant* of the need to share knowledge and experience with other countries in the Asia and Pacific region to promote South-South Cooperation and international cooperation for development, there is a need for an online knowledge sharing portal to enable collective pursuit of e-Government development.

4. *Noting* that while partnerships between governments, on the basis of South-South & Triangular Cooperation and between governments and the private sector on the basis of Public-Private-Partnerships are necessary, the process must focus attention on the needs of citizens as stakeholders to maximize desired citizen-centric outputs and results.

5. *Recognizing* that it is imperative that both the government and private sector are clearly aware of and adequately prepared to speedily respond, guided by sound principles of governance, to the administrative, political, natural, and socio-economic needs of the peoples, the government and the private sector should work towards a shared vision.

6. *Recognizing* the importance of e-leadership and institutional capacity building for e-Government development and the need for an active dialogue amongst the e-leaders and Chief Information Officers within the Asia Pacific region to successfully implement e-Government agendas there should be closer cooperation between regional partners.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

7. We therefore, recommend as follows:

   a) ICTA is encouraged to continue to focus on the formulation and implementation of policies to foster closer collaboration with the private sector on the basis of Public-Private-Partnerships.

   b) Being mindful of the continuing need to promote transparency and accountability, ICTA should continue to support development of required legal and regulatory frameworks to support a streamlined government procurement process and implementation of advanced e-Procurement systems.

   c) Realizing the need to improve South-South and Triangular Cooperation, ICTA should seek to implement ICT platforms that offer one-stop services for e-Trade.

   d) ICTA affirms its use of the UNPACS portal to share documents on national policies, strategies, legal and regulatory frameworks and best practices in e-Government that could be placed on the public domain.

   e) Realizing the role of UNPOG as a regional hub for good governance in the region, UNPOG is encouraged to play a major role in convening meetings of e-Leaders and high-level decision makers at regional conferences such as the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) to promote regional cooperation on e-Government and produce concrete outputs.

ACTION ITEMS:

8. We therefore have agreed to the following Action Items:

   a) ICTA takes note of the need for advanced e-Procurement systems and would like to seek advisory support from UNPOG and countries that have implemented successful e-Procurement systems such as KONEPS (Republic of Korea).

   b) ICTA recognizes the need to improve South-South and Triangular Cooperation and would like to seek advisory support from UNPOG and from countries that have implemented successful systems offering one-stop services for e-Trade such as TradeNet (Singapore).

   c) Recognizing the critical need to share knowledge and strengthen e-Government capacity world-wide, the Division for Public Administration and Development Management (DPADM) in the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA) has developed a number of products to support the UN Member States to implement their respective e-Government strategies and policies, most importantly the UN e-Government Survey and the United Nations Public Administration Country Studies (UNPACS) portal. UNPOG and DPADM will fully utilize these products for the benefit of knowledge sharing and e-Government development to support countries in the Asia and Pacific region, including Sri Lanka, to promote sharing of strategies, policies and best practices in e-Government.

   d) ICTA affirms its use of the UNPACS portal to share documents on national policies, strategies, legal and regulatory frameworks and best practices in e-Government that could be placed on the public domain.

e) To realize the objectives of 'Mahinda Chintana' (Vision for Sri Lanka) and promote Sri Lanka as a regional knowledge hub, ICTA would like to foster South-South Cooperation, through knowledge-sharing of best practices on the UNPACS portal.

f) UNPOG expresses its willingness to convene meetings and forums for e-Leaders, Chief Information Officers and key decision-makers to foster close cooperation for e-Government Development in the Asia and Pacific region. UNPOG will seek to avail opportunities to organize high-level forums for e-Leaders, Chief Information Officers and key decision makers at key regional conferences and events.

g) UNPOG affirms its continuing support to ICTA in providing advisory services for successful e-Government Development in Sri Lanka.