SUMMARY REPORT

United Nations Conference on e-Government in Asia and the Pacific

(11-13 May 2011, Seoul, Republic of Korea)

INTRODUCTION

The "Conference on e-Government in Asia and the Pacific" took place in Seoul, Republic of Korea, from 11 to 13 May 2011.

The objective of the conference was to help enhance e-Government policy-making capacity in the Asia-Pacific region. The conference provided an opportunity to discuss e-Government policy issues, institutional, legal and regulatory frameworks, and strategies that are and could be used in the region, while focusing on a practitioner's standpoint. It also aimed to provide and facilitate networking and cross-learning opportunities among those, who are in a position to improve the quality of e-Government and public service delivery, thus leading to enhanced capacity building.

There was a high level participation, which highlighted the important role and interest that countries in the Asia-Pacific region give to e-Government. The total number of participants amounted to around 300; more than 80 Chief Information Officers (CIOs), e-Government officials and experts from academia, the private sector and other fields from the Asia-Pacific region participated, in varying capacities.

This is a summary report of the conference, which has been prepared by UNDESA; with contribution of ESCAP and UNPOG. Ms. Hyun Jung Kim and Mr. Deun Kim provided further assistance.

DAY 1   WEDNESDAY, 11 MAY 2011

OPENING SESSION

1.   During the opening session, Mr. Jong-Moo Cho (Head of UNPOG) said in his welcome remarks that the conference was a timely occasion for e-Government officials of countries in the Asia-Pacific region to gather together, share knowledge and experiences, explore e-Government opportunities, discuss related challenges, network and collaborate with one another.

2.   In his <u>video message</u>, Mr. Sha Zukang (Under-Secretary-General, UNDESA) highlighted e-Government as a powerful tool for development and stressed that for the potential of e-Government to be realized, the current uses and practices of e-Government strategies must be carefully assessed. He also noted that the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20) could also help promote the full power and potential of e-Government.

3.   On behalf of His Excellency, Mr. Hyung-Kyu Maeng (Minister of the Ministry of Public Administration and Security (MOPAS)), Mr. Nam-Seok Kim (Vice Minister of MOPAS) delivered <u>congratulatory remarks.</u> He welcomed the participants to Republic of Korea and expressed his hope that the conference would serve as a meaningful opportunity to help strengthen regional cooperation and partnership with Republic of Korea on e-Government. He said that with its established standing as a leader of e-Government, the country is ready and willing to provide assistance in adapting and customizing its information and communication technologies (ICT) enabled service system.

In his remarks, <u>Mr. Hyong-O Kim</u>, former Speaker of National Assembly extended his gratitude to Mr. Choi Jong-Moo, as well as Mr. Nam-Seok Kim, the keynote speakers and panelists, whose contributions were imminent to the success of the conference. He said that Republic of Korea's success in the area of e-Government was noteworthy, especially since the Government started investing effort in e-Government merely ten years ago. He added that the success of e-Government in the country was due to long-term investment and policy initiatives to develop the information technology (IT) industry. He also mentioned that he had devoted many years of his work as a legislator driven by the strong conviction that the future of the country lay in the development of the IT industry.

He spoke about the global transition into the digital era and the power of digital convergence to break down barriers between industries and academic disciplines leading the creation of new areas. He added that the smart revolution and renewed growth in IT was reshaping the architecture of public administration. Furthermore, he drew attention to the fact that improvements in e-Government had allowed public offices to respond promptly to citizens' needs, offer quality services and better address societal issues such as disaster prevention and relief, as well security and welfare.

4.   In a <u>message</u> delivered by Ms. Hyeun-Suk Rhee (Director, Asian and Pacific Training Centre for Information and Communication Technology for Development (APCICT)), Dr. Noeleen Heyzer (Executive Secretary, ESCAP) recognized the remarkable progress made by the Asia-Pacific region on e-Government and highlighted the need to complement the current e-Government discourse with prioritization of policies that address equity and the widening digital divide towards a more inclusive development process. With regard to natural disasters, she stated that disasters reverse development gains and contribute to the gap between the globally connected and the locally disconnected.

5.   Mr. Vincenzo Aquaro (Chief, e-Government Branch, DPADM/UNDESA) delivered the <u>opening statement</u> on behalf of Ms. Haiyan Qian (Director, DPADM/UNDESA) and also in his capacity of the e-Government Branch Chief. He

provided scene-setting remarks. After highlighting the digital divide as a major challenge, he introduced the conference programme to the audience. He also introduced the forthcoming UN e-Government Survey 2012, which assesses and reports on some of the key global e-Government trends (such as Whole-of-Government, one-stop service provision, user take-up and training).

SESSION 1: E-GOVERNMENT DEVELOPMENT IN THE ASIA-PACIFIC REGION

6.   In his <u>keynote address on Regional e-Government Issues, Opportunities and Challenges</u>, H.E. Mr. Mohamed Hashim Mohamed Kabir (Member of Parliament and Former Minister, Ministry of Tertiary and Higher Education, Sri Lanka) noted that countries in the Asia-Pacific region are at different stages of development and e-Government growth. He highlighted some commonly identified challenges that countries in the region face. He also noted that the opportunities outweighed these challenges, even in countries which rank at the bottom of the worldwide ranking of e-Government development.

H.E. Hashim pointed out that citizens, due to lack of awareness, rarely see e-Government as a priority. Politicians are also often reluctant to champion ICTs. He noted how it is therefore necessary to work on a strategy to make e-Government attractive to the public and to create an environment where citizens, particularly those who are the most vulnerable, will demand e-Government services as a right.

7.   Mr. Richard Kerby (Senior Inter-Regional Advisor, e-Government Branch, DPADM/UNDESA) provided <u>a Snapshot Review of the recent e-Government Development</u> in the region. He highlighted the upward trend of e-Government development within countries in Asia and the Pacific, while noting a major e-Government gap between these countries. He also raised the concern over the gap in broadband connection for countries with a high population.

He highlighted new features in the forthcoming 2012 United Nations e-Government Survey, as also mentioned in Mr. Aquaro's earlier statement. He added that the theme for the 2012 Survey would be to assess the efforts that governments have made to address environmental concerns by providing either e-environment information or information on e-environment services.

He made the following observations about countries in the Asia-Pacific region with regard to e-Government:

- There is a trend in countries in the Asia and Pacific region, moving up the e-Government Development Index;
- Nevertheless, there is still a major e-Government gap across and within countries in the region;
- Broadband is still a major concern for countries with a high population;
- Use of social networking tools has increased greatly; and
- Greater emphasis and resources should be allocated to m-Government.

8.   Complementing Mr. Hashim's regional perspective, Professor Jane Fountain's <u>Keynote Speech on e-Government and National Development in the Digital Age</u> addressed the national dimension of e-Government. Ms. Fountain is a Professor of Political Science and Public Policy at the University of Massachusetts Amherst and Director of National Center for Digital Government. She highlighted several chronic problems in e-Government, such as the reproduction of the status quo, islands of automation, poor programme management and poor modernization strategies, and insufficient strategic view resulting in project proliferation.

Looking ahead, she made four recommendations, namely:

- Think more carefully about networked governance, particularly as civil society and the government become increasingly networked;

- Accelerate the sharing of best practices;

- Train future civil service to prepare for the challenges of 21st century, particularly with regards to the information society; and

- Develop an adequate matrix/measure of network governance, the agility of the government and the role of civil society and citizen engagement.

With regard to citizen engagement, she described citizens as co-producers of information and services and stressed that it is important to consider how much citizen engagement is wanted. She also pointed out the lack of good connection between citizen engagement and policy-making. She stressed that citizen involvement is critical and that governments must encourage citizen participation and feedback into the various stages of the delivery path (for instance, in the identification of citizens' needs, design and delivery of services).

For illustration, she provided some examples from around the world, such as Norway's e-Government Monitor, a way of ensuring the public sector's responsiveness to the needs of businesses and citizens, a new US platform for collaboration and participation called "Challenge.gov", and the Open Foreste Italiane project used for environmental mapping.

To conclude, she pointed out that through their various e-Government activities, national governments are transforming the nature of the state. In this regard, she highlighted the importance of the transformation of policy-making and decision-making processes to leverage information resources and computational capacity as one of the critical opportunities for e-Government growth and development.

SESSION 2: E-GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS, INSTITUTIONAL, AND LEGAL AND REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

9.   This session was comprised of two parts: (1) CIOs, e-Government Officials and Institutional Framework and (2) Legal and regulatory frameworks.

PART 1: CIOs, E-GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS AND INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK

10.   Part 1 was chaired by Ms. Ann Steward (Government Chief Information Officer and Deputy Secretary, Australian Government Information Management Office, Department of Finance and Deregulation).

In her introductory remarks, she highlighted the positive effects of ICTs, which range from modernization of the government and the society, improvement of service delivery, efficiency and productivity gains, as evidenced by Australia's drastic productivity gains owing to ICT applications. She observed that ICTs are no longer back office function. ICT is endemic to the fabric of modern government and society and no longer exclusive province of CIOs.

In her view, CIOs are change agents, who should be senior government leaders at the highest level. While investing wisely in ICT, CIOs need to pay due attention to selection of technological tools and their effective application and combination of strategic objectives and investment. That said, CIOs need to pay a broad role, looking beyond technology. Future CIOs need to look across technology ecosystem. They need to recognize the importance of promotion of good governance, transparency and CIOs' accountability.

11.   The Chair then introduced and moderated a <u>Forum of CIOs/e-Government Officials </u>from countries in Asia and the Pacific. Forum panelists include:

- Mr. Abdur Rob Howlader (Secretary, Ministry of Science and Information and Communication Technology, Sri Lanka);

- Mr. Toshio Obi (Chair, e-Government Promotion Council, Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications, Former Policy Adviser to the Prime Minister on e-Government Policy Issues, and Professor of Waseda University, Japan);

- Ms. Susie Dorai Raj (Director, Electronic Government Development and Management Division, Malaysian Administrative Modernisation and Management Planning Unit, Prime Minister's Department, Malaysia);

- Mr. Faaig Umar (Chief Executive, National Center for Information Communication Technology Development Authority, Maldives);

- Ms. Juli Ana E. Sudario (Officer-in-Charge and Deputy Managing Director, National Computer Center, Commission on Information and Communication Technology, Philippines);

- Mr. Manruk Reshan Dewapura (Chief Executive Officer, Information and Communication Technology Agency, Sri Lanka);

- Mr. Sudharma Yoonaidharma (Commissioner, National Broadcasting and Telecommunications Commission, and Associate Professor, Thailand); and

- Mr. Thanh Yuyen Nguyen (Deputy Director General, Department of Information Technology, Ministry of Information and Communication, Vietnam).

12.   The objective of the forum was to facilitate the sharing of knowledge and experiences among CIOs and e-Government officials on e-Government policy and development. The themes that featured in the presentations by panellists included the changing roles of CIOs, required conditions for effective CIO roles, and institutional and regulatory frameworks. The following were noted: (a) the importance of the regulatory and other enabling policies, which set the stage for proper implementation of e-Government and uptake by citizens; (b) the challenge of how to effectively structure the policy and institutional framework; (c) the current trends of assessing CIOs by the productivity improvements that are brought about; and (d) critical success factors including the support and adherence to practices related to good governance, better quality projects, program delivery and improved transparency.

13.   The panellists specifically highlighted the importance of a coordinated approach on cross-agency issues such as inter-operability, knowledge and data sharing, policies and standards. In their view, the CIO should serve as the focal point to oversee the e-Government efforts within the agency and in collaboration with other agencies. The CIO aligns the agency's ICT goals with those of other agencies in implementing inter-agency systems. CIOs need to push for government-wide ICT initiatives and need to be innovators; they therefore need to have enough authority to influence decision-making related to ICT and administrative processes.

14.   During the ensuing discussions, a range of opportunities (such as a saving of the government budget by 20 per cent through e-Government applications) were highlighted. The following challenges were also identified:

- Lack of institutionalization of e-Government policy regulation;
- Lack of a direct communication line between CIOs and the Prime Minister;
- Problem of convincing the President to issue an executive order to appoint a focal head for IT heads of government agencies;
- The challenge of the changing CIO roles within the new overarching government plans;
- Limited capacities of e-Municipalities, resulting in greater challenges for the national e-Government; and
- Automation of inefficient processes resulting in citizen frustration.

15.   In view of these challenges, panellists highlighted:

- The importance of having to change e-Government strategies due to new innovations and changes in institutional structure;
- CIOs' and CIO councils' powerful mandate to improve efficiency;
- The importance of executive support, with the support of the President and cabinet;
- Separate policymaking functions to address frequent changes in political leadership that can be reported to politicians;
- The importance of not isolating e-Government from strategic reforms;

- The nurturing of networking as an extremely important function of e-Government leadership institutions;

- The need for e-Government leaders to be up-to-date on the business of the government and ICTs; and

- The need to change the role of the CIO with the new overarching government plans.

16.   In his pre-recorded <u>presentation on e-Government Leadership Institutions – Challenges, Models and Lessons</u>, Mr. Nagy K. Hanna (Transformation Strategist and Former Senior Advisor, World Bank) highlighted the critical importance of e-Government leadership institutions. He stressed that e-Government is not a technology project, but ultimately an institutional transformation project.

He outlined trends, such as: (1) countries moving from ad hoc responses and informal processes to institutionalized structures to respond to ICT-enabled development through more effective and autonomous agencies; and (2) shifting institutional leadership from the Ministries of ICT to ministries such as the Public Administration Ministry. He described five basic institutional models and their relative strengths and weaknesses. These models are:

- *Shared e-Government responsibilities* with distributed e-Development and policy development, and implementation among ministries; requiring a strong coordination and culture of trust (Example: Finland, Sweden);

- *Policy coordination function* with the coordination of an e-Development policy agenda function), without actual implementation; this will require many operational guidelines (Example: The United States);

- *Lead Ministry Model* with one or two (co-) leading ministries, such as Ministry of Public Administration or ICT Ministry. This may lack either technical expertise or be disconnected from the government reform process (This is common, particularly in developing countries)

- *ICT Focal Point Model* with a dedicated ICT agency within the civil service that has success in coordinating across ministries (Example: Republic of Korea, Singapore); and

- *Public-Private Partnership Model* with the ICT Agency operating as a Private-Public Partnership (PPP), free from government constraint (Example: Sri Lanka).

From these models, he concluded that there is great need to: (a) mobilize demand for effective e-Government leadership institutions to sustain an enabling environment for e-Government development; (b) build a new cadre of e-Government leaders; (c) find the correct balance between a decentralized approach and a drive for integration; and (d) continue to experiment with different e-Government models, especially given the lack of a single method for institutional design.

PART 2:   LEGAL AND REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

17.   This part was chaired by Mohd Noor Amin (Chairman, International Multilateral Partnership Against Cyber Threats, IMPACT), who explored various issues related to e-Government legal and regulatory frameworks.

18.   In his presentation on Determining e-Government Legal and Regulatory framework, Mr. Pilwoon Jung (Senior Researcher, Korea Communications Agency, Republic of Korea) explained that successful implementation of e-Government depended on choosing a proper form and mode of legislation. It could either take the form of an "Act" or "Decree".

Additionally, he discussed the merits of an e-Government Act, a single fundamental law regulating e-Government administration (Single Law System) versus the need for special laws regulating a specific issue in e-Government administration (Plural Law System). Mr. Jung added that a Single Law was more preferable in the early stages of e-Government, as seen in the case of Republic of Korea, while a Plural Law may be more effective in later stages. He stressed that while establishing an e-Government legal framework, it is important to make a distinction between e-Government Laws, ICT Laws and General Administrative Laws. Furthermore, he considered it important for countries to enact laws depending on the stage of e-Government development.

19.   In his Introduction and Overview of Information Security as an e-Government legal and regulatory challenge, Mr. Amin called attention to the growing cyber security threats and some key challenges such as the need for adequate and interoperable national or regional frameworks; lack of secure software and ICT-based applications; a need for appropriate national and global organizational structures to deal with cyber incidents; the shortage of information security professionals and skills within governments; and the need for closer international cooperation between industry experts, law enforcements, regulators, academia and international organizations to address this global challenge.

Mr. Noor Amin also spoke about IMPACT. As the cyber security executing arm of the United Nation's specialized agency, the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), brings together governments, academia and industry experts to enhance the global community's capabilities in dealing with cyber threats. More recently, IMPACT has taken steps towards the harmonization of national legal frameworks and the adoption by all countries of appropriate legislation against the misuse of ICTs for criminal or other purposes.

20.   In his presentation on the Internet Governance in China and Cyber Crime, Mr. Kaili Kan (Professor, School of Economics and Management, Beijing University of Posts and Telecommunications, China) discussed the Internet governance issue in China. He observed that the immense number of Internet users and Internet transactions had indeed made Internet governance a challenging endeavor. As the Internet becomes one of the most significant social infrastructure and fast growing factor in China's national economy, cyber crime also grows into a multi-billion dollar industry. Although both the public and private sector is trying to deal with this problem, many obstacles show that this is only the beginning of a long-term effort

that calls for global coordination and collaboration. Prof. Kaili Kan identified key challenges in fighting cyber crime, particularly the difficulty in locating criminals, who can easily hide themselves. He also noted that there was lack of proper legal instruments available to prosecute criminals and raise public awareness to help prevent crimes.

21.   In the ensuing <u>discussions</u>, moderated by Mr. Manruk Reshan Dewapura (Chief Executive Officer, Information and Communication Technology Agency, Sri Lanka), Mr. Amin highlighted the need to develop secure infrastructure to prevent failures in e-Government initiatives. In this connection, he pointed out the great challenge for CIOs to present to policy-makers and communities the case for investing in ICT security to defend against the potential security threats. In reference to the Chinese experience of little governmental support for the Internet sector, Mr. Kan stated that even though developing the Internet should be an initiative of the private sector, the government also needs to play an active role in policing the Internet and in preventing cyber crime.

DAY 2   THURSDAY, 12 MAY 2011

SESSION 3:   COUNTRY-SPECIFIC E-GOVERNMENT EXPERIENCES

22.   During this session, a series of presentations were made on country-specific e-Government experiences. Presentations were grouped by size of country, stage and conditions of development to allow a comparative overview of the countries and also to explore the impact of these factors on a country's e-Government development processes.   Mr. Awg Hj Azhar Haji Ahmad (Deputy Permanent Secretary, Prime Minister's Office, Brunei) chaired the session and Mr. Patrick Spearing (Senior Governance and Public Administration Officer, e-Government Branch, DPADM/UNDESA) served as the facilitator.

23.   **PART 1** concentrated on **e-Government Development in Countries in Special Situations** (landlocked, small island developing countries, conflict-and disaster-affected countries).

<u>Presentations</u> were made by e-Government officials and experts from: (a) Nepal (Mr. Manohar Kumar Bhattarai, Vice Chairman, High Level Commission for Information Technology);(b) Maldives (Mr. Mohamed Shareef, Deputy Director General of e-Government Division, National Centre for Information Technology); (c) Afghanistan (Mr. Abdul Mujeeb Mohmand, e-Government General Manager, Ministry of Communication and IT); (d) Mr. AlikiVuli Salusalu (Manager, Information Technology and Computing Services, Ministry of Finance, Fiji); and (e) Mr. Preminda J. Fernando (Associate Economic Affairs Officer, ICT and Disaster Risk Reduction Division, ESCAP).

24.   <u>Ensuing discussions</u>, which were moderated by Mr. Paula P. Ma'u (Secretary, Department of Communications, Ministry of Information and Communication, Tonga), led to several findings and conclusions, as summarized by the rapporteur, Mr. Tumennast Erdenebold (Deputy Director, Policy Implementation and Regulatory Department of Information and Communications Technology and Post Authority, Mongolia).

For example, common e-Government initiatives are found to include: modernization of rural e-Communities; integrated platforms for e-Government services through CIO wireless broadband networks; human resource development for e-Government components; strengthening the capacities of the Government and other related institutions; empowering citizens with the essential ICT skills (allowing them to benefit from modern ICTs in their daily life); creating a platform for social networking; and building telecentres to improve access to services. It also became clear that e-Government projects and opportunities are often different and need to be context-specific, depending on a country's circumstances and strategic plan.

It has also been found that the e-Government vision, strategic goals and action lines need to be elaborated on, with the participation of key stakeholders from the government, academia and the private sector, while also taking into account lessons learned from e-Government strategic planning from different countries' experiences.

25.   Nepal, a land-locked developing country began its e-Government development in 2005 with the formulation of an e-Government Master Plan (eGMP), which aims to achieve the goal of government transformation by harnessing ICTs. A number of e-Government projects based on the Master Plan were developed and have been in implementation since 2008. Key components of Nepal's e-Government initiative include the Rural e-Communities and the Government Enterprise Architecture (GEA), which envisions delivery of all e-Services and electronic information via the National eService Delivery Gateway.

Nepal Information Technology Policy (2010), Telecommunications Policy (2004) and Electronic Transaction Act (2006) are the key policy, regulatory and legal instruments available for implementation of e-Government initiatives in Nepal. With respect to the country's institutional framework, there is an elaborate network of institutions (such as High Level Commission for Information Technology) to support and sustain ICT and e-Government related initiatives.

Despite some encouraging trends, such as impressive growth in the mobile and wireless space, Nepal has to confront a number of challenges such as the current political context as Nepal sets out to draft a new constitution. More importantly, issues like change management, lack of broadband infrastructure, and structure, organization and capacity issues of the government are some of the factors that Nepal needs to confront directly, in order to ensure successful implementation of its e-Government initiative.

26.   In comparison, in the Maldives, a small island developing country, a number of e-Government projects are under way. These include: Transport Online, Government e-Letter Management System, e-Government Portals, Isle.egov.mv, e-Government Service Platform, Government Network of Maldives and e-Citizen Program.

The country has a number of opportunities arising from: (a) high-level mobile penetration – not just for m-services development but as a proxy indicator for technology adoption; (b) e-Government shared infrastructure – basic shared infrastructure comprising of a government data centre, a government network and

a number of key software applications, which can support the rapid development of online services; and (c) leadership and vision within the national strategic action plan, which clearly places e-Government in the most direct and strategic position for national development.

27.   In Afghanistan, a conflict-affected country, a total of 63 ICTs and e-Government related projects such as e-NID Cards, e-customized reception desk and e-Passport are underway in 14 government agencies. Most of the on-going projects are focused on building basic platforms for e-Government, which will be used as common infrastructure for public service delivery, enhancing internal administration, communication, and information sharing within the government. Important elements of the strategic framework for e-Government development in Afghanistan are the e-Government Directorate (eGD) and an e-Government vision. eGD will operate under the Ministry of Communications and Information Technology (MCIT) and will be the central coordinating, monitoring and evaluation office for e-Government development in the country. The e-Government vision envisages that within five years, most people in Afghanistan will benefit from equitable access to quality public information and services.

There are some strengths and weaknesses in implementing e-Government in Afghanistan. Strengths include: ICT champions in the government who are contributing to the strengthening of leadership; on-going ICT and e-Government projects to develop strategic and technological foundations for e-Government; and a great demand to tackle corruption and increase administrative efficiency. Weaknesses include: limited awareness of the strategic role of e-Government in the public sector; a weak legal and regulatory environment for e-Government; and isolated e-Government initiatives and projects.

28.   In the "sea-locked" pacific islands, 9.3 million people live in an area of about 30 million square kilometers, with the majority living in rural areas and remote communities. This sub-region is characterized by a huge diversity in physical geography, culture, language, socio-political organizations, size and resource endowment. Given this diversity and the relatively small size of the pacific island economies, the impact of natural disasters is drastic; consequently, managing and responding to a disaster in these island countries is equally challenging.

Depending on the type of disaster, demand for related e-Government and m-Government increases, including services related to: law enforcement, firefighting, emergency medical services, education, health, transportation, immigration, border and coastal security, and disaster response and management. In the Pacific, e-Government and m-Government service delivery, including disaster related service delivery is still in its initial stages, with certain countries leading the way.

29. In Fiji, where there is a strong political will to galvanize support and commitment to sustain e-Government implementation, a well-developed Master Plan is already visible. This plan aims to ensure a holistic approach to e-Government transformation, including a citizen-centric approach and mindset. It provides a governance framework with standards and guidelines to facilitate interoperability. Results are already visible and the government and citizens are already benefiting from the

effects of this plan. The first National ICT Development Policy was developed in 2003 and a National e-Government Blue print was developed from 2006-2007.

The areas of government processes and ICT governance seem to be lagging slightly behind, while for example, ICT infrastructure seems to have progressed faster. In terms of disaster preparedness, forecasting and monitoring, the National Disaster Management Office (NDMO) is working with international satellite information service providers to provide comprehensive disaster monitoring, alert, data analysis, incident reports, and aid in relief and recovery. Nevertheless, the link between the e-Government strategy and the disaster management strategy has not been clearly defined, including: addressing infrastructure resilience and back-up requirements as well as measures to address the increase in demand for e-Government and m-Government services during disasters; critical strategies to capitalize on mobile telephony in order to reach the unconnected for delivery of public information and services are also lacking definition.

30.   **PART 2** focused on e-Government experiences in **Countries at Different Stages of Development**. A presentation was made on Cambodia, a least developed country, by Ms. Bory Seng (Assistant GCIO, National Information Communication Technology Development Authority, NiDA, Cambodia). The second presentation, on a developed country was made by Mr. Shim Deok-Seob (Director General, Informatization Planning Bureau, MOPAS, Republic of Korea). Finally, Ms. Nguyen Thi Nguyet (Chief, Authority Office for IT Application Promotion, Ministry of Information and Communication, Vietnam) presented e-Government development in a developing country context. Ensuing discussions were moderated by Mr. Richard Kerby (Senior Inter-Regional Advisor on e-Government, e-Government Branch, DPADM/UNDESA), and Ms. Ariunaa Lkhagvasuren (CEO, Intec Company, Mongolia) served as rapporteur.

31.   In her presentation on <u>Cambodia</u>, Ms. Bory introduced NiDA, which was established in 2000, with the objective of formulating ICT promotion and development policy. NiDA formulated Government Administrative Information System (GAIS), a national pilot project implemented in the capital city of Phnom Penh with four core applications: (1) Electronic Approval System; (2) Real estate registration; (3) Resident registration; and (4) Vehicle registration. All of these applications are initially designed to improve government administrative services and revenue generation by using IT as a solution tool. The GAIS project achieved its goal, however, there were many challenges encountered in the process, such as: insufficient ICT workforce; insufficient and unreliable electricity services; inadequate laws and regulations to promote ICT growth; low literacy rate; and lack of local contents.

Recognizing the usefulness and success of the GAIS project, the government has expanded the system throughout the provinces in Cambodia. The second national project named Provincial Administration Information System (PAIS) has the same core applications. The current phase of the project is now in its maintenance phase. In the presentation, national ICT policy was also introduced. A reference was also made to the cyber law, which has been under establishment.

32.   Mr. Shim Deok-Seob presented <u>Republic of Korea's journey to e-Government</u>, starting from 1970s to the present time. He introduced the overall structure of e-Government, relevant organizations and their respective roles. The current status of Republic of Korea's e-Government was also presented, which has moved from Foundation phase I to Service Advancement phase II. At present, the country is at the level III (transactional level), where visas, passports and birth records can be obtained online, and taxes and fees can be paid online.

Key achievements, as evidenced by Republic of Korea's No. 1 ranking in the 2010 UN e-Government Survey, and critical success factors were described (e.g., outlining increased efficiency and transparency of administration and leadership from the President). It also provided information on e-customs (UNI-PASS), e-patents (Korean Intellectual Property Office (KIPOnet)) and e-procurement. Furthermore, it mapped out the vision for "Smart Government" via "Smart e-Government", which has four major strategies: (1) openness, (2) integration, (3) collaboration and (4) sustainable growth, and five agendas. These five agendas include: realization of the world's best mobile government; establishment of a safe and sound society; promotion of smart work that balances work and life; provision of personalized services by communicating with citizens; and building strong e-Government infrastructure by 2015.

33.   Ms. Nguyet presented the current status of <u>e-Government development in Vietnam</u>, based on IT use in management, IT use in serving citizens, enterprises and technical infrastructure, IT human resources and the legal environment. The major thrust of the country's e-Government development until 2015 was presented in detail, which was based on three objectives: (1) development of internal IT applications in state organizations; (2) IT applications for serving businesses and citizens; and (3) information infrastructure for e-Government. Ms. Nguyet identified flagship projects such as: the Government Information Data Center, the National Certificate Authentication System, e-signature system for state agencies, the National E-document management system for state agencies, e-Tax, e-Customs, e-Procurement, e-Passport, e-Medical record, and an integrated financial information system. Main policies to implement flagship projects include the mobilization of diversified budgets, Public-Private Partnerships, interconnection and interoperability.

34.   **PART 3** focused on **e-Government Experiences in Big versus Small Countries**, and whether the size of a country made a difference. Mr. Jigme Tenzing (Head, e-Governance, Department of Information Technology and Telecomm, Ministry of Information and Communication, MOIC, Bhutan) and Mr. Nong Li (Professor, Institute of Information, Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences, China) delivered presentation. Ensuing discussions were moderated by Mr. Thomasz Janowski (Head, Center for Electronic Governance, United Nations University, International Institute for Software Technology). Mr. Seow Hiong Goh (Executive Director, Global Policy and Government Affairs, Asia Pacific, CISCO systems, Singapore) served as a rapporteur for this part.

As Mr. Goh summarized, Mr. Li and Mr. Tenzing presented on the governance structures of their countries, including, progress made so far and the current status of e-Government and the supporting legislation, policies and strategy. They also discussed specific challenges that their countries faced.

35.   In his presentation on e-Government experience in a big country, Mr. Li explained that with IT revolution, China has carried out the construction of informatization on a large scale, with e-Government as one of the key construction areas. Introducing China's e-Government and its development, his presentation focused on five key aspects: (1) knowledge to e-Government construction; (2) organization and management mechanism; (3) periodical characteristics of China's e-Government development; (4) major Issues China faces today; and (5) major planned work for China in the next five years. The first aspect referred to people's recognition of e-Government in China, from the angle of functional and conceptual knowledge. The second aspect was related to China's e-Government system both at the state and regional level. The third aspect focused on China's strategy and legislation concerning e-Government. The fourth illustrated the challenges to the development of e-Government; and the last pertained to China's e-Government development objectives in the next years.

36.   Mr. Tenzing presented on e-Government development, legal and institutional framework in Bhutan, a small country. The country has a tele-density of about 57 percent (mainly through mobile communications) and Internet density of about 14 percent. MOIC, through the Department of Information Technology and Telecom, is the lead organizations for ICT development in the country. While all government organizations have their own ICT units (technical body), the Ministry is the parent organization for all ICT professionals.

Bhutan's ICT policies focus on harnessing the benefits of ICT development, with people at the center of the plans. The main document for Bhutan's ICT policies and strategies is the Bhutan ICT Policy and Strategy document (BIPS). Bhutan has the Bhutan Information, Communications and Media Act of 2006, which recognizes MOIC as the lead agency for e-Governance and legalizes data messages and electronic signatures. Some of the strategic initiatives include: deployment of a National Backbone Fibre Optic Network covering all districts and blocks within the country; putting over 100 of the most commonly availed public services online; and a national training program to provide ICT for development education to all leaders in the government, the private sector and within civil society.

He highlighted the advantages that Bhutan has as a small country with less complexity (as a result of having a small population to cover, simpler governance structures and easier change management). At the same time, he also acknowledged the lack of local capacity and lack of economies of scale, which result in challenges in sustaining projects.

37.   The ensuing discussions focused on the Chinese e-Governance structure, which includes the State Informatization Leading Group, the highest authority on informatization in the country. As isolated countries, Bhutan and Maldives face similar challenges, and lessons from Bhutan's experience in e-Government projects were particularly relevant to its strategies of how to enhance the sustainability of their projects. In response to a question on how the Government of Bhutan will address the shortage of ICT leaders and professionals, Mr. Tenzing explained that Bhutan is currently organizing training sessions for government officials and is also undertaking public –private partnership initiatives to address this problem.

On the specific question of whether size makes a difference, Mr. Tenzing explained that in Bhutan, the challenge is attracting talent for the development of projects, especially since scale is a factor. Mr. Goh highlighted the importance of the back-end processing and re-engineering required for e-Government, which may indicate the distinction between big and small countries. For example, bigger countries have more complex and challenging issues in terms of identifying its citizens, authenticating them for electronic transactions, and more levels of government that need to be streamlined for e-Government services. In contrast, smaller countries naturally have a much easier task in terms of setting up mechanisms such as authentication for its entire population.

SESSION 4: UNITED NATIONS PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION STUDIES (UNPACS)

38.   Messrs. Aquaro, Kerby and S.K. Belal Hassan (Programme Operations Expert, UNPOG) presented UNPACS. Mr. Aquaro outlined UNPACS' objectives and the role it will play in supporting emerging and developing countries in strengthening their e-Government strategies, policies, and institutional and legal structure through provision of pertinent information and documentation. Messrs. Kerby and Hassan then demonstrated the content of UNPACS and showed how it should be seen as a one-stop shop for all e-Government related information in each country. UNDESA would ensure that the information and documentation for each country is up-to-date and accurate.

The overall feedback from the audience was positive, especially from developing and least developed countries that do not have the financial means to replicate the content offered by UNPACS. Participants felt that UNPACS could be a valuable asset and repository for pertinent e-Government documentation and could provide the tools for the UN Member States to share their respective lessons learned on e-Government. E-Government officials and practitioners would benefit easily from available information, which could be useful for their own strategies and policies. Each country would also be able to ensure that the information on their respective country is accurate and up-date.

DAY 3	FRIDAY, 13 MAY 2011

SESSION 5: COUNTRY E-GOVERNMENT BRIEF AS A CONTRIBUTION TO CAPACITY BUILDING

39.   The concept of Country e-Government Brief as a potential capacity building tool was presented, along with a sample. The presentation was made by Ms. S. Ran Kim (Governance and Public Administration Officer, DPADM/UNDESA). Mr. Spearing facilitated the feedback discussions. The concept is based on using a standardized approach/template for quick comparison of e-Government development across different countries. E-Government officials could easily glance through the briefs and get an understanding of the e-Government strategies other countries have put in place.

40. The reaction to the concept from the participants was positive with comments that it was a good starting point for more elaborate research based on common agreed criteria or subject areas. Views diverged on the 'right' length of the Brief. Validation of contents was considered critical. The relationship between UNPACS and country briefs also featured in the discussion. UNPACS was a core repository and the Brief would be developed as a derivative product.

CLOSING SESSION

41. In the closing session, Mr. Abel Pires da Silva (President, East Timor ICT Association) presented, as a conference participant, his observations and overall reflections on the conference.

After outlining some lessons learnt as practitioner and former government official (e.g., importance of leadership, change of mindset of e-Government officials and participation of key stakeholders); he noted that the conference was definitely successful. It was valuable for participants, as the challenges and success stories presented at the conference provided ample opportunities for cross-learning. In particular, he highlighted useful insights gained from participants (especially, CIOs).

42. Mr. Howlader began his closing remarks by sharing with the participants the knowledge and insights he gained from the conference and discussing the e-Government related challenges and opportunities in the Asia-Pacific countries. He highlighted the importance of a CIO, of which concept has already been adopted in countries like Republic of Korea and Thailand - though not in Bangladesh. With respect to technology, he stressed that the strategy should focus on the existing, already available technology (including particularly, mobile technology) and how it can be used for public service delivery.

Based on his experience in managing e-Government programmes, he stated that the lack of knowledge and skill of government officials was a major impediment to e-Government development. He expressed his hope that some countries, which have already solved this problem, would help countries like Bangladesh to solve its own. In closing his remarks, he said that: *The increasing demand for e-Government is a demand of the time and would be a mandatory obligation for the governments in the region.*

43. Noting that the three-day long conference was coming to a close, Mr. Cho Joong-Moo delivered his final closing remarks, expressing his gratitude to the participants for their active and constructive participation. He underscored the disparities underlying e-Government development in the region. While the region takes pride in having countries that have risen into top rankings in the 2010 UN e-Government Survey, at the same time, it is also characterized by a big digital divide.

He highlighted the importance of continuous and consistent endeavour to innovate and upgrade government and public administration, considering it as one of the major insights gained from the conference deliberations. He emphasized that e-Government stands for "evolving government" and that CIOs are more than just Chief Information Officers, they are Chief Innovation Officers. He closed the meeting

by affirming the mandate and role of the e-Government Branch of UNDESA/DPADM in contributing to e-Government development and UPOG serving as linkage connecting CIOs in the region and enabling capacity development for e-Government.

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

Some policy recommendations arising from the conference deliberations are, as follows:

- The current uses and practices of e-Government strategies warrant careful assessment for realization of the potential of e-Government;

- Digital divide is a commonly identified challenge. Asia-Pacific countries need to complement the current e-Government policies by prioritizing policies that address equity and the widening digital divide for a more inclusive development process;

- Policymakers in the region should work on a strategy to make e-Government attractive to citizens and to create an environment where citizens will demand e-Government services as a right;

- When devising e-Government policies, careful attention needs to be paid to networked governance, particularly in view of increasingly networked relationship between government and civil society. In this regard, it is important to develop an adequate matrix/measure of network governance and promote the agility of the government (including particularly, training future civil service to prepare for the challenges of 21st century and the information society;

- E-Government should not be isolated from overall strategic reforms. E-Government strategies need to be changed, if there are new innovations and changes in institutional structure;
- E-Government officials need to clearly recognize that e-Government initiatives and projects are often isolated and that awareness of the strategic role of e-Government in the public sector is also very limited;

- It is better to understand CIOs as *Chief Innovation Officers* (not just Chief Information Officers), recognizing the importance of continuous and consistent endeavor to innovate. Furthermore, it is important to note that e-Government is not a technology project, but ultimately an institutional transformation project;

- It is necessary to find the correct balance between a decentralized approach and a drive for integration, and to continue to experiment with different e-Government models, especially given the lack of a single method for institutional design;

- E-Government vision, strategic goals and action lines need to be elaborated with the participation of key stakeholders from the government, academia and the private sector;

- Given the weak legal and regulatory environment for e-Government in many Asia-Pacific countries, it is essential to develop an adequate and interoperable national or regional frameworks;

- While recognizing the commonalities, it is important to bear in mind that e-Government projects, challenges and opportunities are often different and need to be context specific. Different challenges and conditions exist, even among the countries, which belong to the same country groups (e.g., countries in special conditions);

- Good understanding of who are the CIOs and what roles they play and can play in different country contexts is essential to effective cross-learning and networking among e-Government officials; and

- In order to facilitate further networking and cross learning among e-Government officials, it is paramount to develop a list of valid CIO/e-Government official (contact) information and update at regular intervals. The list prepared by UNDESA and UNPOG (see Annex 3) is the first step in this direction.