

UNITED NATIONS PROJECT OFFICE ON GOVERNANCE

UNPOG Workshop on Border Control Biometrics 14 - 15 January 2010, Thimphu, Bhutan

The UNPOG Workshop on Border Control Biometrics was held on 14 – 15 January 2010, at the National Library of Bhutan in Thimphu. The workshop was organized by the United Nations Project Office on Governance, with the support of the Honorary Consulate of Bhutan to Korea, and sponsored by the Ministry of Home and Cultural Affairs of the Royal Government of Bhutan. It was attended by around 40 participants, mostly government officials from the Bhutanese immigration department.

Summary of Proceedings (14-15 January 2010)

The Opening Session featured welcome and congratulatory remarks from Honorable Secretary, Ministry of Home and Cultural Affairs and the Head of UNPOG (Jongmoo Choi), and was attended by directors and Chief officers from various departments and ministries of the Royal Government of Bhutan.

On the first day of the workshop, following the opening session, the first session started with a presentation made by Gregory Pokorny, Principal Researcher, National Information Society Agency on Korea's e-Government: History and Lessons Learned. The second session continued with a presentation from Soonam Kim, Director, Korea Immigration Service, under the theme of immigration service of Korea. After lunch, a presentation was made by the Department of Immigration of the Ministry of Home and Cultural Affairs on the situation and key challenges of the Bhutan in dealing with its border control. In the morning of the second day, the Korea Immigration Service demonstrated to participants how Korea Immigration Smart Service (KISS) functions.

Interactive discussions and exchange of best practices provided the local participants the opportunity to discuss and consider issues and challenges of immigration services in Bhutan. The workshop was well received because UNPOG succeeded in matching the detailed interest of a developing country in immigration service with UNPSA-won case in the

area from the Republic of Korea. The Bhutanese government has been concerned about its border control due to its unique geographical position between India and China. To curb illegal influx of workers and immigrants, the Bhutanese government expressed strong intention to introduce an advanced system of the Korea Immigration Service.

The Bhutanese government also expressed keen interest in future collaboration with the Korean government for organizing trainings of immigration officers. The Korea Immigration Service responded that they would consider a follow-up visit to discuss ways that can help address the needs of the Bhutanese government.

Presentations materials were uploaded onto UNPAN, along with the Bhutanese white paper on its ICT and e-government strategy, for wide reference.

Workshop Conclusion

The Head of UNPOG (Jongmoo Choi) gave the Concluding Remarks where he emphasized that the workshop paved way for future collaboration between the Bhutan and Republic of Korea, and UNPOG will continue to do its part to facilitate the cooperation between the two sides when needed. UNPOG expressed its gratitude to the Ministry of Home and Cultural Affairs for providing local logistics which helped make the workshop a success.

The Ministry of Home and Cultural Affairs and the Korean Immigration Service designated focal points to continue its partnerships and future follow-ups.