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UNDESA Message
by
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SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE 2012 UN CONFERENCE
ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Distinguished Guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Welcome to the Conference on e-Government in Asia and the Pacific.

Let me first express my deep appreciation to Minister Maeng Hyung Kyu of the Ministry of Public Administration and Security for his continued support of my Department through the United Nations Project Office for Governance, in short, UNPOG.

UNPOG has been actively engaged in improving public governance for development in Asia and the Pacific region, and it has become a valuable regional hub for my Department.

We now live in an information age, and the conditions for effective governance are supported and strengthened by e-government.

E-government is a powerful tool. It can facilitate a country's social and economic development under difficult conditions. For example, e-government tools helped mitigate the effects of the financial and economic crisis by improving efficiency and extending the reach of public services. These achievements were noted in the 2010 United Nations e-Government Survey.

Asian-Pacific countries have been notably successful in the area of e-government development.

The Republic of Korea has made great strides in e-government development, ranking first in the UN's 2010 e-Government Survey. It is, therefore, fitting to convene this conference in Seoul, and I regret that because of duties at Headquarters I cannot be with you in person to join the discussion.

However, if the potential of e-government is to be realized, much remains to be achieved. The current uses and practices of e-government strategies must be carefully assessed, and technologies must be updated.

This conference has brought together many experts and practitioners who are in a position to advance this agenda. I encourage you to take this opportunity to exchange your experiences, such as e-government policies, and institutional and legal framework. You can also assist each other by sharing your expertise about how to support e-government efforts from a practitioner's perspective.

As we prepare for the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, also known as Rio+20, let us explore the role e-government can play in promoting sustainable development. Rio+20 can help us realize the full power and promise of e-government.

I hope that this conference will lead to discussions that inspire innovative thinking on e-government and inject new spirit into our work. I urge you all to take these discussions to the next level.

Thank you for your attention and I wish you a productive and successful conference.