



**Workshop on Strengthening the Capacities of Institutes of Public Administration (IPAs) and Management Development Institute (MDIs) through the Standards of Excellence for Public Administration Education and Training in Asia**

**12 July 2010 - Bali, Indonesia**

**Opening Remarks by Ms. Haiyan Qian  
Director of the Division for Public Administration and Development of the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs**

Our host, the Chairman of the National Institute of Public Administration of Indonesia,

Mr. Asmawi Rewansyah,

The Director General of IIAS, Mr. Rolet Loretan

The President of IASIA, Prof. Allan Rosenbaum,

Participants,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am pleased to have the opportunity to make these opening remarks before we start this important capacity building workshop on Strengthening the Capacities of Institutes of Public Administration (IPAs) and Management Development Institutes (MDIs) through the Standards of Excellence for Public Administration Education and Training in Asia.

As we are all aware, governments are operating in a world that is becoming increasingly complex and uncertain. They face challenges brought about by globalization, large-scale crises, unprecedented natural and man-made disasters, while at the same time working to

fulfil, the promise of achieving internationally agreed development agenda, including the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in a timely manner.

In preparing public administrators for optimal managerial performance in these complicated and dynamic environments; close attention must be paid to equipping them with appropriate knowledge and skills to ensure that they are citizen-centric, action oriented, adaptive, communicative, and innovative, with ample acumen for teamwork and for managing modern information and communications technology (ICTs) to introduce greater levels of efficiency and responsiveness in their work environments.

Developing such public competences and capacities is a task that falls squarely on the shoulders of institutes responsible for public administration education and training, and necessitates the work which my Division and IASIA began back in 2002, in Turin, Italy, through the establishment of a task force for Standards of Excellence for Public Administration Education and Training. The challenge that lies ahead for this task force is to guide the development of reservoirs of new knowledge, skills and ideas that governments can harness and productively utilize to serve the public better, especially in times of crises, and that will hasten socio-economic development toward achieving the MDGs, ultimately, toward the realization of sustainable global equality.

I compliment the Institutes of Public Administration and the Management Development Institutes for the valuable work that has been accomplished to date. These organizations have continued to be inclusive in their approach to knowledge and capacity building. The participation of representatives from 45 countries at this conference is evidence of the

broad international relevance of your work and of this annual forum. I especially recognize the achievements of the Task Force for Standards of Excellence for Public Administration Education and Training and the various management development institutes for the design and popularization of the Standards, which has provided a set of principles that serve as points of reference in the process of developing the capacities of institutions responsible for public administration education and training.

Let us be mindful, however, that the world has not stopped changing and, therefore, institutes responsible for public administration education and training must continue the search for the best ways of preparing human and institutional capacities to enable governments to take advantage of the benefits of the emerging changes to avoid any risks that may accompany them. A number of questions must, therefore, remain on the minds of the managers of such institutes. They include the following:

- 1<sup>st</sup> What are the **most pressing needs** for public administration in terms of competences, capacity development, and leadership?
- 2<sup>nd</sup> What are the **best approaches and methods** that institutes responsible for public administration education and training can adopt to develop at all organizational levels, including the necessary competences, capacity and leadership? and
- 3<sup>rd</sup> How can institutes responsible for public administration education and training **ensure that they remain relevant and responsive** to the public sectors that they serve?

All of these questions are imperative at this time and are likely to absorb much of our efforts and time together. But, here I would like to share with you, briefly, what I found

to be inspiring, from the discussion that ensued at a recent Ministerial Round Table, held in Barcelona Spain as part of the celebrations for the United Nations Public Service Day. Ministers from seventeen countries debated the challenge of “how to build leadership capacity in public organizations.” I am aware that the issue of leadership is already one of the major aspects of the work accomplished by this Task Force, with an emphasis on problem solving, organizational transformation, conflict and crisis prevention, public sector ethics, and others.

Among those Ministers, however, the ideal leader was conceptualized more as one “enlightened”, who, although illuminating their environment, would not *independently*, with any degree of certainty, guide or even know which would be the most advantageous direction. In these dynamic and uncertainty times where traditional models of authoritative and charismatic leadership, and power brokering seem to be somewhat challenged, I found that discussion of leadership thought provoking and further contemplated the scholarship on this subject.

For instance, some aspects of the work of Ronald Heifetz and his associates on leadership are certainly pertinent in the current global context; in particular, the call for “adaptive leadership” as a conduit for generating opportunities for leadership capacity development at all levels of the organization. Indeed, the concept of adaptive leadership as citizen-centric and action oriented, building on the advent of the Information Age to be more accountable, effective, efficient, inclusive, responsive and transparent is worth embracing. In this regard, the strategy that I readily suggest for advancing adaptive leadership capacity building is that of facilitating the access and delivery of information

services and promoting knowledge sharing to achieve more informed decision-making and evidence-based public policy development.

We know that the advancement of ICTs has provided the opportunity for creating networks among institutes for reaching wider audiences for training, and for adapting new methodologies in delivering training generally. Hence, I invite you to consider the following: **How have institutes responsible for public administration education and training harnessed the potential offered by ICTs to expand, improve and make more accessible their training offerings?** I trust that we will explore standards of excellence in education and training from the position of better incorporating and utilizing modern technologies in our quest for excellence. We have seen a lot of evidence of the effectiveness of ICTs to public sector reform in the cases submitted for the United Nations Public Service Awards over the past eight years. In over 90 per cent of the winning cases that focused on public administration reform, success resulted from incorporating ICTs.

Determined to lead by example, my Division has put in place a number of instruments to contribute to the development of the capacities of public administration especially in terms of knowledge and networks. One is the United Nations Public Administration Network (UNPAN), the second is the United Nations Public Administration Knowledge Space (UN-PAKS), and the third is free online training in various areas of public administration that can be accessed through UNPAN at [www.unpan.org](http://www.unpan.org). I invite you to regularly visit these websites to access the latest information on public administration and

to guarantee that your students are aware of opportunities for learning and training online as a complement to the training you offer to them.

Furthermore, I would also like to draw your attention to the online version of the Standards provided by my Division together with IASIA, and other related institutions. I am pleased to say that this has become one of the most visited websites by UNPAN users world-wide. Online access will be useful in demonstrating and popularizing its use as a tool for self assessment as well as for developing online training courses. I am calling for further collaboration on this initiative with IASIA and other associated institutes.

Finally, as the focus of the Annual Ministerial Review by the United Nations Economic and Social Council in 2011 will be on “Implementing the internationally agreed goals and commitments in regard to education”, I do hope that your good work and the outputs from the discussions of our workshop will become valuable inputs to the Review.

Thank you very much and I look forward to fruitful discussions.