



## **PRESS RELEASE**

High-level meeting on governance opens in Seoul with leaders committing to find innovative means to address globalization and development challenges

(Received from a UN Information officer)

Seoul, 24 May- The Sixth Global Forum on Reinventing Government opened today at the Convention and Exhibition Centre in Seoul, Republic of Korea, attended by nearly 5,000 participants representing 140 countries.

Several global leaders spoke at the opening ceremony including Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva, President of Brazil; Roh Moo-Hyun, President of the Republic of Korea; Hamid Reza Baradaran-Shoraka, Vice President of Iran; Emomali Rahmonov, President of Tajikistan; Ali M. Shein, Vice President of Tanzania, Lee Hae-chan, Prime Minister of the Republic of Korea, Thaksin Shinawatra, Prime Minister of Thailand, Donald J. Johnston, Secretary-General, Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development; and José Antonio Ocampo United Nations Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs.

The four-day governance meeting being held for the first time in the Asia- Pacific region is one of the largest gatherings on governance issues. Held regularly since 1999, this year's event focuses on increasing transparency within the public sector and developing mechanisms that will enable and encourage greater participation in governance.

Stressing the need for government innovation, President Roh Moo-Hyun said "The goal Korea pursues in initiating innovation in government is to create a government that is efficient, a government that respects its citizens, and a government that is decentralized. In this way, it is our goal that the government perform well."

"Innovative responses and creative partnerships must be employed to reach the people in our countries that have not always had the means or the voice to play an integrated part of civil society," said Secretary-General Kofi Annan in a message delivered at the opening ceremony.

As co-host of the forum, United Nations Under-Secretary-General José Antonio Ocampo referred to the upcoming September summit on progress in implementing the Millennium Declaration and emphasized the central role of good governance for any country's development agenda. "A clear consensus has indeed emerged that good governance is an essential component of efforts to advance progress in every area of development. We know that the strategies to implement the Agenda require transparent, accountable, and participatory systems of governance, based on the rule of law".

Other leaders spoke on the need to counter corruption, promote democratic processes, bring in reform and encourage the dynamism of the private sector.

Alongside the Global Forum, the International Innovation Exhibition also opened at the COEX Conference Centre this morning, with over 40 exhibitors including governments, the United Nations and non-governmental organizations, such as Transparency International showcasing innovative practices in public administration.

Following statements by Presidents and Prime Ministers, participants attended two plenary sessions on the changing role of the state and democratic governance.

The final two days of the meeting will see the United Nations Division for Public Administration and Development Management organising nine capacity-building workshops, in partnership with entities of the United Nations system on issues of effective governance and strategies to achieve just and prosperous societies. Regional cooperation and partnerships between governments, the private sector and civil society will be highlighted in the workshops.

A statement- "The Seoul Declaration"- is expected to be issued by attending dignitaries at the closing ceremony on 27 May, the final day of the Global Forum.

For background conference materials and media accreditation questions, please visit:

<http://6thglobalforum.org>

[http://6thglobalforum.org/eng/registration/online\\_reg\\_media.asp](http://6thglobalforum.org/eng/registration/online_reg_media.asp)

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