

Welcome Message to Participants of
UNPOG Capacity-Development Programme on Local e-Government

Ms. Haiyan Qian, Director, UNDESA-DPADM

Distinguished participants,

On behalf of the Division for Public Administration and Development Management of the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, I would like to welcome you all to *UNPOG's Capacity Development Programme on Local e-Government*.

As you know, the use and application of Information and Communications Technologies (ICTs) is widespread in our economic and social lives, ranging from inter-personal communications in the private sphere to social communities mutually interacting and articulating their voices in the public sphere. In our daily lives, ICTs are also important with reference to industrial production, business transactions and routine banking operations. When ICTs are used to improve the delivery of public services and to facilitate and expedite public administration operations, we are entering the realm of e-government in which there are complex domestic and global challenges, including citizens' growing demand for more and better services, and the need for efficient, responsive, and adaptive public governance.

The concept of citizen-centric service delivery implies that it makes more sense for governmental bureaucracies to adapt to people than for people to be compelled to adapt to bureaucracies. For instance, instead of citizens being obliged to go ten different institutions, it makes more sense for those institutions to work together and coordinate their actions to facilitate the delivery of services. It is the effective implementation of services at the *local* and *municipal* administration level that will bring about tangible benefits to the citizens.

Local administration can become public service delivery in action. Municipal creativity and innovation are critical keys to salient public administration and democratic governance. ICT provides significant developmental potential from which governments around the world – central and local alike – are striving to reap the maximum benefit. It is within this context that UNPOG's Capacity Development Programme finds its meaning and utility, namely by providing opportunities for knowledge-sharing which is essential in developing efficient, transparent and sustainable local e-governance.

In your respective municipal setting, the first step toward change may be a modest one. But to make a

difference – whether big or small – it always takes a leap of courage, to which I hope this UNPOG initiative will provide a small contribution.

On that last note, Ladies and Gentlemen, I hope that you all have a productive meeting. I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate Mr. Choi and his team at UNPOG for organizing this meaningful event.

Thank you.