



The Second General Assembly of the International Parliamentarians'  
Association for Information Technology -IPA IT II  
17-19 May 2004, Conrad Bangkok Hotel, Bangkok, Thailand

GA

IPA IT 2/2004/CR 02

**COUNTRY REPORT**

**BY**

**REPUBLIC OF KOREA**

## Country Report: E-Parliament Development

Hon. KIM Hee Sun  
Leader of the Korean Delegation

Honorable Chairman,  
Distinguished delegates,

First and foremost, I would like to extend my heartfelt gratitude to His Excellency Uthai Pimchaichon, President of the House of Representatives of Thailand, and the Thai people for making unsparing efforts to successfully host the 2nd IPAIT General Assembly and for the warm hospitality shown to the delegations.

I have no doubt that the General Assembly held here in Thailand will well position the IPAIT first launched in 2002 in Seoul as a core international inter-parliamentary organization in the field of information and technology under the leadership of His Excellency Uthai Pimchaichon.

Distinguished delegates,

In Korea where digital and information revolution is unraveling at a break neck speed unforeseen in other countries, information and communications technologies (ICTs) are broadly adopted and diversely utilized in political processes.

For instance, the government introduced the on-line People's Participation Center through which it received possible candidates for ministerial positions and collected policy ideas. Furthermore, one of the three major parties in Korea, the Millennium Democratic Party selected its presidential candidate for the 16<sup>th</sup> presidential election through on-line primaries where ordinary citizens were invited to participate and cast ballots.

E-politics or on-line electioneering using the Internet also played an important role in the 16<sup>th</sup> presidential election and 17<sup>th</sup> general election bringing about dramatic changes to the conventional political processes.

Rapidly developing information and communications technologies have rendered time and spatial barriers meaningless which have long hindered direct democracy.

Thanks to the technologies, politics became more accessible to commoners. They can take part in public policy decision making processes using digital communications devices, communicate directly with the government and politicians through the Internet, and participate in open discussions at forums provided by electronic media.

Effectively coping with e-Democracy or the digital revolution taking place in the political sector is significant to ensure the advancement of parliamentary democracy in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The same goes true for e-Parliament.

Distinguished delegates,

I think it is very important to share with you Korea's own experience, that is, the affect new information and communications technologies have had and is having on Korea's endeavor to realize e-Parliament.

Utilizing new information and communications technologies, the National Assembly of the Republic of Korea established the Legislative Knowledge Management System thus providing information to citizens essential to participate in politics.

Through the system, citizens can have access to legal information such as current laws, their review records, foreign legislation cases; budget and accounts information such as documents on budget and accounts and government suggestions; as well as information on how legislative bills, budget bills, motions and resolutions are handled at the Assembly. The Korean National Assembly also provides a database of minutes and documents on the inspection and investigation of state administration and broadcasts through the Internet meetings of the plenary, Special Committee on Budget and Accounts and other major hearings.

Furthermore, the Assembly introduced an on-line civil service center to facilitate direct opinion sharing with citizens. The English version of the service is also up and running on the Internet since 2003 for overseas Koreans and foreigners residing in Korea.

Taking full advantage of the latest technologies, the Assembly adopted an electronic voting system for plenary meetings allowing accurate and immediate tally, record, and announcement of results.

Parliamentarians have also been quick to adapt to these changes. With the help of the latest technologies, a significant number of politicians are making more transparent their political activities, striving to pay more heed to the voices of their voters, and encouraging citizens to actively participate in political debates in the cyberspace.

Distinguished delegates,

Information and communications technologies can serve as a strong locomotive in attaining two major goals of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, that are, democracy and economic development. Information and communications technologies can usher in the kind of future that we all desire.

Before I conclude, I would like to ask all the participants gathered here today to join forces to ensure that the IPAIT firmly takes root as an international organization that contributes to

international cooperation and agenda-setting by promoting discussions on ways to maximize the advantages of the digital and information revolution while minimizing its disadvantages.

Thank you.