



SUMMARY OF THE E-GOVERNMENT PANEL DISCUSSION

Prof. Boonton Dockthaisong, the Chairperson of the Panel Discussion, welcomed the delegates from IPAIT member parliaments attending, other participants and observers. The Chairperson then declared the discussion open.

PARTICIPANTS

Chairperson	:	Prof. Boonton Dockthaisong Member of the Senate (Thailand)
Co-Chairperson	:	Mr. Tadic Tonci Member of the Parliament, Leader of delegation (Croatia)
Rapporteur	:	Hon. Mr. Niwes Phancharoenworakul Member of the Senate (Thailand)
Country Report Speakers	:	1. Mr. Oh Kyeong Hoon Member of the Parliament (Korea) 2. Mr. Nicolaescu Ioan Senator Leader of Delegation (Romania) 3. Mr. Chen Jiansheng Member of the Parliament (China) 4. Mr. Al-Aboud Fahad Member (Saudi Arabia) 5. Mr. Tadic Tonci Member of the Parliament (Croatia) 6. Mr. Owind Ouheng Harrison Member of the Parliament (Kenya) 7. Mr. Octavian Professor of Computer Sciences (Romania)

THE MEETING

The meeting lasted from 13.30 to 16.00 hours. About 30 participants attended the meeting. Five papers were presented on e-Government. This was followed by wide-ranging discussion on the key issues, with valuable inputs provided by attending delegates. The country reports will form part of the final report of IPAIT II.

POINTS RAISED IN THE DISCUSSION PERIOD

1. Investment in infrastructure is needed in order to prepare citizens for further development in technology. For example,
Kenya

- There must be suitable state policy to attract foreign investment in order to upgrade the people's technological skills so they can keep up to date in changes in technology.

China

- There is a development plan in technology such as broadband investment to increase internet users to more than 11% of its population. China also has a problem in unequal distribution of ICT access, between the urban and rural areas, which impact on the national e-Learning effort.

Thailand

- Thailand has a 5 year plan to solve poverty problems in rural areas to increase income and enable them to have better access to technologies. Another key aim is also to cut costs of using technology.

2. There were discussions on legal issues, state policy toward ICT, and intrusion in privacy facilitated by e-technology.

Romania

- There were concerns about security threats from hackers as more data is accumulated in state databases. There was a need for defensive measures for such databases. It was added that Romania is famous for its intelligent internet security software.

Thailand

- The legal issue on disclosure of private data is not yet settled, hence the planned implementation of smart cards is delayed.
- Thailand is satisfied with the idea of e-procurement because it helps solve the problem of corruption in the bidding for government projects, and is aiming to expand this for use at all levels of government.

3. There was concern about digital content and the problem of how to choose quality websites that are not commercialized and that assist in the educational efforts of the country.

4. Developing countries face the problem of English literacy, resulting in low use of the internet.

Thailand

- Thailand was improving the educational curriculum by teaching major languages such as English, Chinese, etc. at the elementary school level.

China

- This is not seen as a serious problem for China since its computer systems enable web browsing using Chinese characters. As a result, the people who were not English literate could access the internet.

5. There was no standard platform for software and there is a need for a common system so communication can be done more efficiently.

CONCLUSIONS

- Problems centered on lack of education of internet users and non-users which constrained ICT use at the mass level.
 - Security of personal data is a concern that constrains the expansion of e-Government at the people level. (smart cards, personal tax data)
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