

Opening Statement at the Inauguration of the Capacity Development Workshop

Dr. Carlo Flamment, President, Formez, Italy

Dear ladies and gentlemen:

First of all, on behalf of Minister Mazzella and of the whole Italian Government and Parliament, I wish to thank all the delegates for their participation and the United Nations for organising these capacity development workshops and for its commitment to promoting dialogue and sharing of experiences on how to achieve excellence in governance and public administration. We actually believe that these workshops may be a useful tool for reaching these goals.

Although many improvements have been made in public administration recently, notwithstanding the enormous progress made in transparency, accountability, technology and institutional reforms, there has been an erosion, in varying forms, of public

sector human capacity in many countries. As it was discussed and pointed out by the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations, this erosion is due to a differing mix of converging factors that have diminished the social value placed on the public sector. The net result has been in some cases a tarnishing of pride within and of credibility outside the public sector.

As a matter of fact, we believe that the public sector still has a strong need of improving its own human capacity through permanent training and through exchange of “best practices” and success models. This is also due to the challenges of responding efficiently to evolving traditional functions of the state as well as the challenges of globalisation and other social changes.

As Minister Mastella underlined in his address, a modern public administration becomes really effective and attractive only if transparency, quality and accountability are ensured, and if human resources are properly supported and motivated. Involvement of all

public sector employees and managers is crucial in determining the outcome of any reforms.

These workshops were introduced for the first time in the context of the Third Global Forum held in Naples, Italy, in March 2001. They were organised by the Italian Ministry for Public Administration and by the Formez Training and Studies Centre – the institution of which I am the President - and focused on sharing knowledge, experiences, and administrative best practices, using case studies from the Middle East, Latin America, and Europe. The workshops proved to be very successful and highly rated by the participants, so much so that the Government of Italy decided to provide financial support for them at each following Global Forum. The United Nations is responsible for organising the workshops.

I am very pleased to see that the scope of these meetings and the number of international participants has significantly increased since the workshops in Naples, and that they have now become one of the most important platforms for high-level officials and key

stakeholders, from developing countries and countries with economies in transition, to exchange views and practical experiences on how to re-invent government.

I am also pleased to see that the United Nations has been able to bring together international institutions, academic and research centres, as well as a number of UN agencies to work together as partners in the organisation of these workshops.

The workshops that will be held today and tomorrow will deal with various aspects of innovation and quality in governance and public administration.

As a reflection of its commitment to international cooperation the Government of Italy is supporting the programme for innovation in public administration in the Mediterranean region, which will be discussed in a side event today.

Finally, I will conclude by saying that the Government of Italy is very pleased with the outcome of the workshops and thus it intends continuing to support the capacity development workshops. Thank you for your attention and active participation to all the seminars.