Report of the Third United Nations Public Service Day
23 June 2005
New York, NY

(UNITED NATIONS PUBLIC SERVICE AWARDS CEREMONY and
EXPERTS’ MEETING ON INNOVATIONS IN THE PUBLIC SERVICE)
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I. United Nations Public Service Awards

The United Nations hosted the Third Public Service Awards ceremony in New York on 23 June 2005. Eight pioneering projects from the developing and developed world were honoured with the prestigious Public Service Awards 2005 at the United Nations Headquarters in New York. With good governance as a prerequisite in ensuring sustained development and the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), this year’s Awards focussed on innovative projects that prioritize accountability and transparency, service delivery, and the innovative use of e-governance.

This report highlights the 2005 Public Service Awards winners and their organizational achievements that made them uniquely qualified for this special award. It also summarizes the presentations made at and conclusions drawn from the Experts’ Meeting on Innovations in the Public Service that followed the ceremony.

The Public Service Awards were launched as a result of the deliberations of the 15th session of the Group of Experts on the United Nations Programme in Public Administration and Finance. During that session, the Expert Group recommended that an annual event be organized to recognize and encourage excellence in public administration by UNDESA - through its Division for Public Economics and Public Administration (now Division for Public Administration and Development Management).

The United Nations Public Service Awards Programme (UNPSA) recognizes institutional effort to design, provide, and expand services to citizen in a cost effective manner while promoting people’s participation in the design of services and the definition of their needs, for poverty alleviation and as a step forward to achieving the Millennium Development Goals. Equally important, it serves to enhance the visibility and motivation of public servants around the world.

This year’s selection process for the Awards was marked by an overwhelming response from around the world which brought in 215 nominations. A total of eight nominees doing innovative work were selected from six countries– Canada (The Vancouver Agreement and Industry Canada- Office of Consumer Affairs), India (Bhagidari Cell, Office of the Chief Minister, Delhi), Mexico (Secretaria de Agua, Obra Publica e Infraestructura para el Desarrollo and Unidad de Gobierno Electronico y Politica de Technologias de la Informacion), Morocco (Autonomous Establishment of Exports Control and Coordination), Singapore (Ministry of Trade and Industry) and Spain (Public Employment Service of Castile and Leon).

II. Public Service Awards nominations and award categories

In 2005, the awards were given in three different categories:
Category 1: Improving transparency, accountability and responsiveness in the public service

Category 2: Improving the delivery of services, and


Information about the Awards (including eligibility criteria, and methods of nomination) was widely disseminated among all Member States of the United Nations, partner agencies, as well as relevant regional and national institutions. Organizations, such as the International Institute of Administrative Sciences, the American Society for Public Administration, and many others were invited to nominate candidates for the various categories of awards. The Global Online Network on Public Administration and Finance (UNPAN) was a useful medium for transmitting information about the awards to the various stakeholders. Nominations for the awards have come from:

- Governments
- Government departments/agencies
- Universities/national schools/institutes of public administration
- Private-Public partnerships
- Professional associations

(1) Award for Improving Transparency, Accountability, and Responsiveness in the Public Service:

To qualify for an award in this category, a nominee had to demonstrate the capacity to promote:

- Equity;
- Transparency and accountability; and
- Professionalism.

In addition to these criteria the initiative had to:

- Represent a “radical departure” in design;
- Introduce a substantially new concept, and
- Produce qualitative and/or quantitative improvements

(2) Award for Improving the Delivery of Services:

The attributes that were likely to enhance the chances of nominees under this category included those indicating evidence that the nominees consistently took measures to:
Provide high quality service delivery;
Achieve effectiveness;
Achieve efficiency.

As in the first category, the initiative had to:

- Represent a “radical departure” in design;
- Introduce a substantially new concept, and
- Produce qualitative and/or quantitative improvements.

(3) Award for Application of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in Government: e-Government

Awards under this category targeted measures that apply ICT solutions to government operations and processes. Criteria used demonstrated that the innovation implemented by the institution had:

- Enhanced service delivery;
- Re-engineered government operations; and
- Fostered e-Participation (i.e., promoted interaction between public officials and the public).

III. The 2005 Public Service Awards winners

Out of the 215 nominations received for 2005, 102 met the requirements for further evaluation. From 102 complete nominations submitted by 34 countries, 8 winners from 6 countries emerged.

Due care was taken to ensure fairness and to account for the economic and social condition of each country and/or region. The 8 recipients indeed exemplify the best practices in public administration. It is expected that the dissemination of information regarding the achievements of the 2005 Awards winners will be shared with comparable bodies and institutions in different parts of the globe as models of excellence in public administration. Innovation can be a strong inspiration and motivator for all those who are strenuously working to improve the public sector.

The following list gives details about the Awardees and their respective representatives:

**Category 1: Improving transparency, accountability, and responsiveness in the Public Service**

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<th>ASIA AND THE PACIFIC</th>
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<td>India, Bhagidari Cell, Office of the Chief</td>
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### Minister, Government of NCT of Delhi for “Citizen-Government Partnership: Bhagidari in New Delhi”

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### EUROPE AND NORTH AMERICA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Canada, Vancouver Agreement for “Innovative Partnerships between Government Agencies, Community Groups and Businesses”</th>
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| **Address:** Ms. Isobel Donovan, Executive Coordinator
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### Category 2: Improving the Delivery of services

### AFRICA

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<tr>
<th>Morocco, Etablissement Autonome de Contrôle et de Coordination des Exportations (EACCE) for « Decentralization and expansion of the quality monitoring process of fruit and vegetables for exportation:</th>
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### EUROPE AND NORTH AMERICA

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<tr>
<th>Spain, Public Employment Service of Castile and Leon (Ecly) for “Modernization Program 2004”</th>
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| **Address:** Mr. Carlos Teresa Heredia, General Manager
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**LATIN AMERICA**

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<tr>
<th>Mexico, Secretaria de Agua, Obra Publica e Infraestructura para el Desarrollo for “Implementing El Programa Hidraulico Integral del Estado de Mexico”</th>
<th>Address: Mr. Benjamin Fournier Espinosa, Secretario Conjunto Sedagro, Rancho San Lorenzo, Metepec, Mexico, C.P. 52140 Tel.: 01 72 275 62 50 Fax: 01 72 232 78 78 Email: <a href="mailto:bfournier@edomex.gob.mx">bfournier@edomex.gob.mx</a></th>
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**ASIA AND THE PACIFIC**

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<tr>
<th>Singapore, Ministry of Trade and Industry for “Online Application System for Integrated Services (0ASIS)”</th>
<th>Address: Mr. Daniel Kuek, Assistant Director Enterprise Division Ministry of Trade and Industry 100 High Street, #04-04 The Treasury, Singapore 179434 Tel.: (65) 63327783 Fax: (65) 63340306 E-mail: <a href="mailto:Daniel_kuek@mti.gov.sg">Daniel_kuek@mti.gov.sg</a></th>
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<th>Canada, Industry Canada, Office of Consumer Affairs for “the Canadian Consumer Information Gateway (CCIG)”</th>
<th>Address: Ms. Paula Vieira, Manager Canadian Consumer Information Gateway Office of Consumer Affairs 255 Albert Street Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0H5 Canada Tel.: (613) 952 0826 Fax: (613) 952 6927 E-mail: <a href="mailto:vieira.paula@ic.gc.ca">vieira.paula@ic.gc.ca</a></th>
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IV. Summary of the 2005 Awards Ceremony

The Third Public Service Awards Ceremony, as mentioned above, took place at United Nations Headquarters on Thursday 23 June 2005, chaired by Mr. Guido Bertucci, Director, Division for Public Administration and Development Management, United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs.

The opening address was delivered by His Excellency Jean Ping, President of the 59th Session of the General Assembly. He noted that the UN Public Service Day is an annual event that the General Assembly has approved and is supporting strongly.

Mr. Jean Ping congratulated all civil servants throughout the world who are by their daily actions changing the world for the better and more particularly in developing countries where they frequently work under stressful and deprived conditions. He recognized that public service is vital to promote a democratic, responsive and sensitive environment for development. Mr. Ping emphasized that weak government is a major obstacle to achieve the MDGs. Innovation and exchange of experience between countries, especially South to South, could contribute to creative change in public administration. He finally commended this year’s recipients of the Public Service Awards for their exemplary efforts to improve delivery, accountability and responsiveness in the public service and for their successful application of ICT in Government. These cases, he said, are good examples of civil servants serving the common good in their country and it is a step forward to achieving the Millennium Development Goals.

Mr. José Antonio Ocampo, Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs, in his address, pointed out the particular significance of this year’s celebration as we
approach the fifth anniversary of the historic Millennium summit. As UN Conferences and summits over the last decade have contributed to building a comprehensive framework for action on development, it has made possible to reach internationally agreed commitments. One of them is a consensus that transparent, accountable and participatory systems of governance, based on the rule of law are essential to achieving all of the MDGs and to advancing progress in every area of development. Improving governance, fundamentally, requires vision and leadership from the public sector. This takes courage, curiosity, and especially innovation. This year’s UN Public Service Awards aim precisely to recognize public sector innovation, he added. He congratulated the eight award-winning institutions for pioneering ways to make services more efficient and accessible to all members of the society, and to engage people active participation in their design.

In addition to the statements of the President of the General Assembly and the UN Under-Secretary-General, the ceremony featured a video-conference to highlight national celebrations of the UN Public Service Day. Speeches and messages were webcasted from Prime Minister Hon. Professor Apolo Nsibambi of Uganda, Mr. Jorge Polinairis, Minister of National Planning and Political Economics of Costa Rica, Ms. Maria Alejandra Sepulveda, Executive Director, Project for State Reform and Modernization of Chile, and a pre-recorded message from Mr. Jordi Sevilla, Minister of Public Administration of Spain.

The Right Honorable Professor Apolo Nsibambi, Prime Minister of the Republic of Uganda and the Chair of the United Nations Committee of Experts on Public Administration, was speaking from Uganda where a Special Event was organized for civil servants at the Ugandan Institute for Management. He noted that today is the Africa Administrative and Civil Service Day and the United Nations Public Service Day to observe the work of public servants everywhere who are struggling to improve living conditions. In Uganda, this day has been celebrated since 1997. A half-day workshop is held on a theme chosen with the African Training and Research Center on Administration for Development (CAFRAD) for public sector, private sector, academic and civil society participants.

African civil servants and public sector managers need to cope with globalization and modernization. To meet new demands stemming from these developments, public servants need to be trained, valued and recognized, and assisted to understand their contributions in terms of implementing policies and delivering services. Without dedicated and motivated public servants, countries will have difficulties in realizing the Millennium Development Goals, especially in Africa. In Uganda, a reform programme to improve the public service, Support for Innovation and Modernization of the Public Service, focuses on decentralization and fostering private sector growth. The challenges in implementing this reform include how to best use scarce resources, invest in sustainable development, benchmark against best practices and ensure an integrated and harmonized national plan. Ultimately, public servants need to be transformed into effective change agents.
Next, His Excellency Mr. Jorge Polinaris Vargas, Minister of National Planning and Economic Policy, the Director of National System of Monitoring of Costa Rica and the President of the Latin American Center for Development (CLAD) spoke about current developments in his country. He is currently in Spain, where he was attending the 7th Ibero-American Conference of Ministers of Public Administration and State Reform.

In Costa Rica, the President’s commitment to better administration has led to better monitoring and better links between the execution of the budget and the national plan. In addition, there is a draft bill before the legislative assembly, outlining the obligations of the State and the duties of citizens. Within the framework of education, a University of Labour has been set up to facilitate the social mobility of the graduates of technical studies into professional positions. For information and communication technologies (ICTs), efforts are being made to use ICTs to develop small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) in conjunction with the Ministry of Economy and the Ministry of Science and Technology. These are important initiatives in the struggle to reduce poverty, strengthen transparency and accountability of the democratic system and to ensure growth and development.

Ms. Maria Alejandra Sepulveda, the Executive Director for the Reform and Modernization of the State of the Ministry of the Presidency of Chile followed. Also speaking from Spain, she described the reform and modernization focus of state services which are shifting to become more citizen-centered.

In a globalizing world, it is important to ensure equal access to services by all and to motivate the day-to-day work of public servants. To facilitate these two goals, various reform measures have been carried out to simplify bureaucratic processes to provide services on a 24/7 basis. A 2001 presidential decree was proclaimed on the better use of ICTS to provide better information that will lead to more democracy. Since that time, 207 new steps have been adopted such as facilitating income tax payment over the Internet. 235 internet services have been introduced. In addition, 34 initiatives for e-governance have been introduced since 2002. It is hoped that 36 on-line procedures will have been concluded by 2006. In focusing on the citizens, efforts have been made to better understand the diverse needs (e.g. urban vs. rural) of the citizens. In focusing on the public servants, attention has been paid to training of the trainers, bi-partite and tri-partite committees have been formed and exemplary public servants have been recognized.

Finally, His Excellency Mr. Jordi Sevilla Segura, Minister of Public Administration of Spain and a member of the Higher Corps of State Finance Inspectors delivered a message from Spain where was organized simultaneously on UN Public Service Day a meeting of all the Ibero-American Governments involved in the reform and modernization of public administration. He said that they strongly supported the UN initiative to single out successful innovations in public administration. He noted that the work on transforming the State that they were reviewing would be reported to the Ibero-American Conference of Heads of Government to be held in Salamanca next October 2005.
Public administrations are the essential instruments of democratic development, he added. They contribute to the effective implementation of the rights and obligations defined by the constitution. They also help preserving social cohesion. In Spain, in particular, the government is trying to introduce more flexibility in order to better meet the needs of the citizens. At the same time, there is also an effort made to design a system of permanent monitoring involving users’ feedback to assess the impact of governmental work, and make corrections if needed. The goal is to move towards an open system of administration, with increased transparency, integrity and accountability. He reaffirmed that all these initiatives have been undertaken to serve the citizens.

V. Summary of Main Discussions at the Experts’ Meeting on Innovations in the Public Service

In the afternoon of 23 June 2005, the 2005 UN Public Service Awards’ winners were invited to make a presentation on their achievements and to share with other government officials, experts and United Nations officials their direct experience in promoting excellence in public administration. A summary of their presentations is hereafter reported.

A. Innovations in Public Service: Some lessons learnt by Professor Gowher Rizvi

This session was introduced by a keynote speech by Dr. Gowher Rizvi, Director of the Ash Institute for Democratic Governance and Innovation, Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University.

Dr. Rizvi gave some general remarks about the ill feelings of the general public about their own governments around the world and insisted on the steps that need to be taken in order to restore the confidence of the citizens in their governments:

1. Governments must become citizen-centric. Governments are no longer rulers but rather their role is to create an enabling and facilitating environment in which the citizens can advance their societal visions and aspirations.

2. They must cater to the diverse and plural communities – one size no longer fits all. The constitutions, institutional arrangements and political processes have to be reordered and adapted so that majority view is tempered by the sensitivities and the needs of the minorities.

3. Effective service delivery and greater transparency and accountability are essential to restoring the trust in government. And it must do all these things and many more for less tax money.
4. And above all the government must create an even playing field so that a socially just and equitable society is created. No government can claim legitimacy that does not put social justice at the heart of its agenda.

Dr. Rizvi also shared with participants the main lessons learned from twenty years of Innovations from the American Government Awards competition managed by the Ash Institute at Harvard University with funding from the Ford Foundation. The Program recognizes and celebrates the best innovations in local, state and national government in the US. A recent study has shown that over three quarters of innovations recognized by the Program have been replicated elsewhere. Professor Sandford Boris has reviewed the innovation files and here are the lessons he has drawn from them:

What are the principal characteristics of the innovations?

- Holistic
- Use a new or an existing technology to the public sector
- Focus on process improvement
- Empowerment of citizens
- Focus on prevention rather than problem solving
- Use of incentives rather than regulations
- Promotion of attitudinal changes
- Inclusion of spillovers to benefit others
- Adoption of new management philosophies
- Promotion of partnership arrangements
- Use of volunteers to achieve program objectives

Who are the innovators?

- Public servants or middle level managers (by far the most important group).
- Agency heads or political appointees.
- Politicians, and
- Others such as pressure groups, individual citizens, service users or clients

Why do people innovate?

Because of:

- Internal problems (about half)
- Opportunistic reasons (about a third)
- Crisis or Failure
- Political factors
- New Leadership
How does one innovate?

- It comes from a deeply held desire to serve the public
- It involves tentative beginnings: pilot projects, consultancy reports, public consultations, inspiration from a successful innovation which they try to adapt and replicate, and client surveys.
- It requires careful planning & vision
- It allows for spontaneous groping – muddling their way through

What problems must innovators overcome in order to succeed?

- The bureaucratic culture of status quo and the risk of seeking change.
- Internal obstruction: personal rivalries or turf war or logistics, or trade union, or middle management, or just the fear of change and the implications for the individual. Managing change is the most difficult part of innovations.
- Political problems: inadequate resources; regulatory constraints; and political or ideological opposition (often change of administration serious impacts an innovation conceived by the previous governor or mayor.)
- Dealing with the Public: skepticism, suspicions, does it reach the target group, those whose interests are affected, public sector becoming competitive takes away business from the private sector.

How does the public sector overcome obstacles? By:

- Developing a vision statement
- Finding resources through creative ways
- Training and consulting to overcome worker opposition; persuading & accommodating.
- Demonstrating of the beneficial aspects of the innovation
- Marketing & developing strategic communications
- Encouraging demonstration projects
- Seeking political support and legislative sanctions
- Using Mid course corrections
- Allowing for recognition and passing credit to others
- Sacking and compensations; allowing opposition articulated in ideological terms.
- Managing change.

Professor Rizvi concluded his presentation by reaffirming that Government remains central to the ordering of our society; it is here to stay; and for the foreseeable future there is no alternative to it. The challenge is two-fold. First, systematic innovations in government have to be encouraged so that it is better capable of meeting its responsibilities in a changed environment. And the second challenge, given the enormous complexities of governing the society with ever decreasing resources, is to discover mechanisms and procedures that will enable the three principal actors – government, market and civil society - to play in concert and to supplement each others’ capability.
Significant strides have been made in the reinvention of the government, and the various innovations and reforms have done much to make governments more effective. However innovation in public management is a means to an end and not an end in itself. The end is to serve the citizens and to enhance the quality of their life. Above all the purpose is to create a society that is socially just.

Innovation is central to enabling societies to build anew the models of government and governance now needed to address the dramatic challenges of the twenty first century. There is no doubt that governments are capable of addressing these challenges. However, we cannot wait for these innovations, adaptations and rethinking to come through leisurely, slow and evolutionary means but instead they will have to be encouraged deliberately, imaginatively and through determined and innovative leadership. Herein lies the important contribution of the UN in stimulating innovations through the Public Service Awards program.

After these insightful comments from Dr. Rizvi, each Award winner took the floor to discuss their experience and share with participants how the idea of their initiative emerged. The following is a summary of the presentations.

B. Winners’ Presentations

**The Vancouver Agreement- Canada**
*Building partnerships for community change*

THE CHALLENGE: Vancouver’s downtown Eastside, once a vibrant commercial and entertainment district was completely paralyzed, economically and socially by 1990. The reason-- a public health crisis-- rampant drug use and dealing on the main streets of the area.

THE SOLUTION: The Governments of Canada, British Columbia and Vancouver recognized that a sustainable solution to the area’s problems required relationship-building and participation of the local community and business partners. With continued efforts from all sides the “Vancouver Agreement”, was drawn up which produced an environment that has brought a complete shift in the administration of public services in Vancouver’s downtown Eastside. This positive collaborative model was based on innovative partnerships between 12 government agencies and non-governmental organizations at the federal, provincial and city levels. The Agreement has resulted in commercial redevelopment, environmental construction of scenic pathways and green spaces that draw people into the community, the first legally-supervised injection site, two affordable housing pilot projects and a Mobile Access Project offering respite and safety from violence for sex-workers.

**Bhindari Cell, Office of the Chief Minister of the National Capital Territory of Delhi- India**
*Bringing people into government decision-making*
THE CHALLENGE: The lack of people’s participation in formulating or evaluating government policies which often result in administrative processes working in isolation and having little impact on citizens’ lives.

THE SOLUTION: In 2000, the Government of the National Capital Territory of Delhi decided to involve all stakeholders to transform Delhi into a world-class capital city. Bhagidari, a citizen-government partnership with an innovative approach to governance was initiated. Through the Bhagidari Cell, networks of local groups such as Resident Welfare Associations, Market and Trade Associations, Industrial Associations and non-governmental organizations have emerged as new, collective decision-making actors. The initiative has grown from 20 citizen groups in 2000 to more than 1,600 citizen groups representing about 3 million people today. These networks discuss problems hampering effective delivery of civic services with government representatives and then produce joint workable solutions to improve their environment and quality of life. As a result, mutually accepted schemes pertaining to civic needs like water supply, sanitation, school system, power supply, urban transport, protection of their environment and people’s security have been developed and implemented, leading to vast improvements in public service that benefit all citizens.

Secretaría de Agua, obra Pública e Infraestructura para el Desarrollo- Mexico
Bringing water into millions of homes

THE CHALLENGE: The State of Mexico is the most populated region of the country. A serious water shortage for the population had developed into a critical issue due to the over-exploitation of its water-bearing strata.

THE SOLUTION: To address this crisis, the “Secretaría de Agua, obra Pública e Infraestructura para el Desarrollo” was created to coordinate and monitor the hydraulic policy of the state of Mexico. For the first time this initiative has led to the development of the “Programa Hidraulico Integral del Estado,” which looks at the problem long term and determines for the next 25 years the water policy in the area. More immediately, the Secretariat has successfully increased and improved water supply to the population of the State of Mexico on a daily basis. The initiative has vastly improved the delivery of water and now serves 13.64 million people – with an emphasis on sustained service that is equitable and of high quality. Due to the continued efforts of the Secretariat, an additional 1.9 million have access to potable water, and the quality of the water is guaranteed by 1,812 testing systems. In addition, the initiative has provided millions with the benefit of a new sewage system. The Integral Hydraulic Program of the State, the only one in Mexico, has created an innovative formula, which has enabled the department to improve service delivery – accomplishing 217 public works at the speed of one per week. They have also installed 961 kilometres of pipelines and constructed 151 systems for potable water. The programme has initiated the construction of a macro-circuit for the distribution of potable water with a longitude of 123.5 kilometres for 2.100 million
citizens. A knowledgeable staff certified for hydraulic works has increased efficiency and organizes awareness contests and exhibitions to educate students on the care of water.

**Autonomous Establishment of Exports Control and Coordination- Morocco**  
*Increasing efficiency of commercial networks*

THE CHALLENGE: In a hyper competitive liberalized environment there was a strong need for companies involved in exports from Morocco to reduce costs and delays of supplies and enhance the competitiveness of domestic firms.

THE SOLUTION: The Government-sponsored Autonomous Establishment of Exports Control and Coordination started improving the delivery of services, coordinating export activities and providing technical inspections of Moroccan food, free of cost. The department works to guarantee the conformity of Moroccan products with international requirements and also aims to improve export management through implementing measures that adapt exported products qualitatively and quantitatively to various importing market constraints. The department’s activities have been strengthened by a personnel policy characterized by the recruitment of highly skilled employees such as engineers and technicians. The benefits of this state intervention have been many. This new decentralized quality-control system now deals with 100 per cent of the exports, for it is carried out within Moroccan firms themselves rather than being implemented, as it had been done previously, by three regional delegations waiting for the products to arrive. This has reduced costs of supplies, enhanced competitiveness and considerably improved the transparency, accountability and responsiveness of the whole Moroccan export process.

**Public Employment Service of Castile and Leon- Spain**  
*Innovating the role of public service*

THE CHALLENGE: Castile and Leon is the largest region in Europe with a population of 2.5 million, representing 9 provinces and 2,249 municipalities. The area’s vision of the future was conceptualized into the Modernization Programme, designed to use human capital as the main force for involving citizens. This initiative implied the need for everyone in this vast geographical region to be involved in the administration of Castile and Leon, build a consensus and maintain a continuous dialogue between all of the interest groups.

THE SOLUTION: This Modernization Programme did become a reality through the creation of a new service— the Public Employment Service. The Service is responsible for training and promoting employment as well as mediation in the job market. This entity unifies the region, allowing the community to reach its employment goals. The Public Employment Service staff members undertake job market research, provide personalized services for job seekers and match applicants with job profiles that align with the person’s experience and career goals. One of the main factors behind this initiative’s success has been the internal integration of personnel, incorporating a teamwork culture and assimilating all interest groups in knowledge management. The Modernization
Programme is currently being implemented throughout the region of Castile and Leon through 43 employment offices.

Industry Canada, Office of Consumer Affairs- Canada
Restoring balance to the modern marketplace

THE CHALLENGE: With thousands of businesses and products available, how do consumers in the world’s second largest country get complete and accurate information on what is being offered? How do they cut across provincial, territorial and federal boundaries to access services through a single window?

THE SOLUTION: The Canadian Consumer Information Gateway is Canada’s most extensive online source of inter-jurisdictional information for consumers with information from more than 450 government and non-governmental organizational partners. The web-portal can access more than 7,000 programmes, services and subjects and is based on pioneering multi-jurisdictional partnerships. Consumers can now cut across geographical boundaries to access services through a single source. The Gateway provides a menu of relevant topics, access to timely highlights and tools to help consumers save time, money and better protect themselves from fraud and deception. The most powerful tool on the Gateway is the Consumer Complaint Courier – a bold transformation of the way government agencies handle consumer complaints. The Courier guides consumers on filing complaints with business links, relevant information and connections to appropriate agencies. Equally important, in the world’s second largest country which spans six time zones, is that the service is offered 24 hours a day, 365 days a year and in all locations.

Unidad de Gobierno Electronico y Politica de Technologias de la Informacion- Mexico
Enhancing transparency and accountability through technology

THE CHALLENGE: How does the state machinery identify and implement a programme that yields multiple results--counter lack of accountability, improve transparency, enhance access of public services to millions of people and make policies more citizen-centred?

THE SOLUTION: In 2001 the Mexican Government implemented a digital governance strategy to modernize the government. One of the main goals of the Good Government Agenda was to improve the transparency and efficiency of governance. The working programme that was adopted had four objectives: to satisfy the social necessities of the citizen; to convert the government into a competitive entity; to reconnect with the citizen and the private sector; and to collaborate with a view to creating a good government at different levels (Federal, State, and local). This initiative has enhanced efficiency and led to a more citizen-centred approach to service delivery. The programme has successfully integrated e-processing into government operations and enhanced access to services for millions of citizens through 1200 direct services, including filing taxes, applying for
passport, and several permits. The re-engineering of the governmental process has brought in change, ensuring government accountability and participation of citizens.

**Ministry of Trade and Industry- Singapore**

*Using technology to enable a positive business environment*

THE CHALLENGE: In its quest to encourage private enterprise, the Government of Singapore was confronted with some core issues. How does the state make the process of opening new businesses simpler, inexpensive and less time-consuming?

THE SOLUTION: In order to foster a pro-enterprise environment for business in Singapore, the Government initiated the Online Application System for Integrated Services (OASIS) project. The initiative provides an effective platform to purge bureaucratic inefficiencies within many government agencies. Extensive policy reviews were conducted and systems re-engineered to allow the average processing time for licenses to be reduced from 3 weeks to 12.5 days. Coupled with the revised fee structures, savings accrued to businesses now exceed $1.8 million per year. Thereafter, the Online Business Licensing Services (OBLS), an important milestone of the OASIS project, was developed. In Singapore, 80 per cent of all new businesses, approximately 30,000 enterprises annually, can now apply online through the OBLS for one or more of the 69 licenses which are commonly needed to start their businesses, without resorting to offline means. Equally important, throughout the entire business-licensing process, entrepreneurs will need to access only this single portal for all their needs. As a natural extension to the online application service, the OBLS will allow applicants to complete license renewals, updates and terminations online as of August 2005. The main factor of success for OASIS was a simple thinking of “Many agencies-one government”. From that there the initiative was developed as a win-win situation for both government agencies and businesses.

**VI. Conclusions and recommendations**

Mr. Bertucci, Director DPADM/DESA, thanked the presenters and opened the floor for discussions.

Participants expressed extreme interests in the presentations. They encouraged the United Nations to continue with the initiative of UN Public Service Awards and celebration of Public Service Day. They agreed that highlighting the best experiences in public administration could be a catalyst for changes in other public organizations.

The issue of innovation and its development was also analyzed. It was recognized that the United Nations should make every effort to disseminate successful practices in government and to assist countries in accessing the information about them, in particular through the UN Portal on public administration UNPAN (www.unpan.org).