



Ministro per l'Innovazione e le Tecnologie

ADDRESS BY

**THE MINISTER FOR INNOVATION AND
TECHNOLOGIES OF THE GOVERNMENT OF ITALY,
LUCIO STANCA**

**"GOOD GOVERNANCE FOR THE DEVELOPMENT
IN THE ARAB COUNTRIES"**

**"Good Public Governance for Development in the
Middle Eastern and North African (MENA) countries"**

Amman, 6th and 7th of February 2005

Mister...

Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of the Government of Italy, I would like to thank you for giving me the opportunity to participate and contribute to this important event.

Let me also congratulate Middle East and North African Countries, OECD and UNDP for this joint Initiative, aimed at giving a **new impulse to the ongoing reform process in the region** to promote investments and Public Governance.

The Initiative has a **political significance** that goes beyond the specific subjects we will be dealing with during the Conference. Middle East and North African Countries here represented have expressed the willingness to **engage in the twin path** of revitalizing their economies by creating an **environment more attractive for foreign and private investment**; and of reaping the economic and social benefits of "good governance" through the **reform of their Public Administrations**.

We, OECD Countries, are here to **help. Not to teach, nor to export a specific model**. But by **sharing our experiences** and show our availability to **cooperate on specific practical projects**, if requested.

The Government of Italy has been **very active** in the past 3 years in underlining the **essential role and importance of public administration reform internally and internationally**. This belief has been further reinforced by the outcome of the **World Summit for Information Society** held in Geneva in 2003. UN Countries have agreed in the **Declaration of Principles** that "ICT should be used as an important tool for good governance".

Since the beginning of my mandate, the Prime Minister of Italy Silvio Berlusconi has given me the responsibility to **transform and modernize Italian Public Administration through the use of ICT**. For this reason, I can say that we are very well aware of the **difficulties and complexities** imbedded in the quest for Good Governance, but at the same time we fully understand the **great social and economic benefits** that arise from pursuing this goal.

Italy has embarked in a extended program of international cooperation in the field of e-government, the "e-Government for Development" Initiative. Through this program, in partnership with important International Organisations such as the UNDP, the World Bank and others, **we are currently engaged in implementing 16 e-government projects in 11 different countries throughout the world**.

Particular emphasis has been given to our collaboration in this field with countries in the **Mediterranean and the Middle East**, where we are currently implementing several projects. I am particularly pleased today to inform you that **two Project Documents were signed** at the beginning of this year by the Jordanian Minister of Planning and the Resident representative of UNDP to implement, with financial and technical assistance from the Government of Italy, two e-Government Projects, **e-Accounting and e-Procurement**, that will support the **modernization process of Jordanian Public Administration**.

In addition, in line with UN Resolution n. 1546 of the 8th of June 2004, that asks UN Member States to support the Interim Government of Iraq in rebuilding its administrative capacity, **the Government of Italy is in these very days implementing the Digital Network of the Government of Iraq**. This network is expected to be operational by March.

Moreover, one of our partners in the e-Government for Development Initiative, the Development Gateway Foundation, has been approached by the **Governments of Morocco and Tunisia to propose an e-Procurement project for the Maghreb region**.

The World Bank, the Development Gateway Foundation, and the Government of Italy are evaluating, the possibility of jointly financing and implementing this important project.

I am proud to present today these projects as a contribution of the Government of Italy to the success of the partnership between OECD and MENA countries that we are launching today.

Arab Countries, through the partnership proposed by this Conference, are here provided with the opportunity to **take advantage of the several years of experience in public administration reforms in OECD countries** and to build upon this experience, its positive results.

I have personally witnessed that any attempt at Government reform needs **vision and leadership**. The former to set high goals, the latter to achieve them.

I am also convinced that **international partnerships can greatly increase the chances of success of these projects**. This is why, the Italian Initiative "e-Government for Development" is jointly implemented by the Government of Italy and some of the most important, active and capable international actors: **UNDP**, of course, but also **UNDESA**, the **World Bank**, the **Inter-American Development Bank** and the **Development Gateway Foundation**.

This OECD-MENA Initiative will allow us to work together in creating a **more efficient public administrations**, which will in turn support economic growth and development.

The OECD working model is key for this: through the mechanism of **peer review** and **benchmarking** we can improve our collective ability to singling out and **sharing our best practices and experiences**, and to jointly and efficiently match them with your necessities and requests.

To conclude, let me again underline the **commitment of the Government of Italy** to be **fully involved** in this **very important Initiative**. The Italian Administration will **actively participate** in the follow up of today's Conference.

The new Information Society, based on knowledge and digital innovation, is a **major opportunity** for all to reaffirm the **values of freedom and of economic development**. **Dialogue and cooperation**, as promoted by the Initiative that we are launching today, are **key factors** in achieving these goals.

Thank you for your attention !