

Dear Bakyt Nurjanovich ,

Dear Mr. Brahim Sanou,

Dear participants of the Regional Development Forum,

Let me express my deepest gratitude for the invitation to this important event, it is a pleasure for me to be here on behalf of the UN agencies in the Kyrgyz Republic. I would like to welcome all of you at this forum where we will discuss regional and global challenges that need to be addressed to foster the development of telecommunications/ICTs and also how ICTs can contribute to overcome the development issues at national and regional levels. This platform allows us together to identify the priority areas for future interventions that are of great interest for the countries in the region.

In fact, ICTs play an important catalytic role in achievement of all SDGs, ensures cross-cutting synergies between all sectors of economic and social spheres, provides public services such as electronic government, e-health, mobile banking, e-education and many others, making them universally accessible and affordable, creates new opportunities for our daily life and work, helps us to protect environment and achieve sustainable development.

Talking about the contribution of UN in Kyrgyzstan, I would like to emphasize that **all UN agencies** present in the country provide the support to the Kyrgyz Government within their mandates to develop and introduce information systems in different sectors.

UNDP for example contributed to the development and introduction of the **sectoral information systems** for many line ministries and government agencies as well as the development of the **Government Programme on e-Governance introduction in the Kyrgyz Republic and its Action Plan for 2014-2017**.

As you know coordination and management of the e-governance introduction processes at national level are the key prerequisites for

success, taking into consideration cross-cutting nature of ICTs. Therefore, **establishment of the new State Committee on IT and Telecommunications this year demonstrates Kyrgyz Government's commitment and ownership to actively and systematically introduce ICT into the public sector.**

Let me also emphasize the achievement of Kyrgyzstan in **Open Data Development – Kyrgyz Government jointly with UNDP and World Bank** launched this initiative in 2014 and within one year, it allows the country to move from 98 position in 2014 to 34- in 2015 on the **Open Data Global Index** developed by Open Knowledge Foundation.

This year UNDP and WHO helped the Ministry of Health of the Kyrgyz Republic to adopt an **e-Health Strategy and its Action Plan for 2016-2020** by taking an active position in introduction of ICT and e-services in the healthcare sector to make it more transparent and accountable.

Also developed with UNDP assistance the e-municipality information system **“AYIL”** at present installed at all rural municipalities across the country and utilized by the National Statistic Committee for its e-household book module.

We are also supporting the **law-making process** in the field of ICTs/e-governance and **capacity building** of the state and municipal servants.

In view of the challenges and priorities, I would like to mention the following:

1. It is important to continue introduction of adequate **telecommunication infrastructure across the country** since more than 60% of the population living in rural areas.
2. We have to pay stronger attention to the development of **e-finance or e-trade applications and services**. E-finance services will extend access to the banking services for the rural citizens, since most of them has no bank account, but almost everyone has mobile phone.

3. The cybersecurity issues should be addressed as well in order to improve legislation and technical solutions; it is also a need to improve capacity of the civil servants on the secured use of ICTs, this issue also important for children's and youth safety use of the Internet.
4. Taking into consideration current regional integration processes, we are also should be prepared for **integration of the national information systems and processes at trans-national level**; here we see the need to enhance and unify standardization processes between countries.
5. And, traditionally, the **capacity building** in the area of e-governance of the **state and municipal servants** as well as **awareness raising of the citizens and business** remains important. Here we are talking not only about improving capacities of the IT-specialists, but also about ability and capability of the managers at all levels on understanding the e-transformation and change management processes.

I have mentioned only a couple of priorities requiring our future interventions in countries of our region and I hope that you will propose interesting solutions.

In conclusion, I wish all of you very fruitful work during these days and achievement of the objectives.