

## Develop and implement ICT policy, experts

Sithengi Festival, Cape Town SA, November 06

By: David Muwanga

14:18:59 13/12/2007

Article blurb Developing countries should create and implement effective information communication technology (ICT) policies if they are to catch up with the developed economies

Developing countries should create and implement effective information communication technology (ICT) policies if they are to catch up with the developed economies, an official has said.

"They should develop and implement comprehensive ICT policies that include technology to cater for ICT, telecommunications, television, radio and the economy," said Dr. Jyrki Pulkkinen of the Department of Development Policy in Finland.

"The policies should target eradication of poverty by creating employment opportunities while in the social political arena they should result into democracy, gender equality and environmental protection," he told a plenary session on 'Exploring the Future of E-government: Knowledge Engineering for Results' at the Kuala Lumpur Convention Centre.

He said that governments should set up ICT platforms that would enable the creation of knowledge and innovation centres whose results should put in place e-government for better service delivery.

"For us, we have set up a knowledge society and a development policy in information communication technology. However, in many countries these programmes have been found to be unsustainable and most of the ICT structures have failed due to lack of methodologies that would make them sustainable."

"Developing countries could learn from our experience. We identified structures that could be sustainable and these include creation of the information society strategy and information society regulations in addition to the knowledge structures that should include access to education, science and technology innovations and research and development."

He said the economic structures should include private sector development on ICT.

Meanwhile, the Malaysian Minister for Technology Lim Keng Yaik criticised governments that hesitate to adopt ICTs saying it remains a major source of information.

"Governments claim they have spent a lot of funds on roads, health care, education but there is always a gap. Where does the money go? Most governments know there is corruption but keeping information away from the people is one of the major causes of corruption."

"But all these and other problems can be solved if a government develops an information communication technology policy that allows impartiality, independence and accountability," Yaik said.

United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisations (UNESCO) assistant director for communication and information Abdul Waheed Khan said for effective attainment of e-government, governments should plan for provision of enabling environment for e-learning.