Report to the Committee of Experts on Public Administration on Redefining relationships and responsibilities to support participatory governance and responsive public service delivery, including through e-solutions

Contents

1 Executive Summary

The Committee for Experts on Public Administration (CEPA) is pleased to present to the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) its final report on the topic of "Redefining Relationships and Responsibilities To Support Participatory Governance and Responsive Public Service Delivery, Including Through E-Solutions." The following report discusses several comprehensive informal sub-topics ranging from national sovereignty in relation to the adaptability of possible methods for encouraging civic participation to smaller, local level initiatives for civic engagement created by the citizens themselves.

The second chapter of the report includes four draft resolutions, which the Committee is submitting and proposing to ECOSOC for consideration and adoption. The first draft resolution, entitled CEPA II/1, considers the importance of civic engagement and suggests measures to encourage Member States to increase civic participation. The second draft resolution, entitled CEPA II/2, focuses more specifically on ways that governments can provide public services with an emphasis on e-solutions and educational initiatives.

Draft resolution CEPA II/3, following the sentiments of draft resolution II/2, directs attention to the accessibility of public services and advises efforts to increase that accessibility to citizens via e-solutions. Finally, draft resolution CEPA II/4, recognizes the need for acknowledgement of national sovereignty and adaptability when discussing e-solutions, as well as proposes that the international community be aware of differences regarding development status and capability of Member-States to adopt these e-solutions.

Chapter three covers the deliberations and proceedings of the Committee that produced this report. It includes a summary of the relevant and significant debate on this topic as well as voting records for the draft resolutions included within chapter two.

Finally, chapter four denotes that this report was adopted.

2 Matters calling for action

2.1 CEPA II/2

Acknowledging the increased importance of the internet for government institutions,

Recognizing the complicated nature and multiple variables related to government e-solutions,

Taking into account the national sovereignty and diverse bureaucratic infrastructure of multiple nations,

Recalling the recommendations of previous Committee of Experts on Public Administration (CEPA), as well as United Nations Public Administration Network (UNPAN) recommendations,

Emphasizing that proper education for people and governments is a vital step in implementing government e-solutions,

1. Calls upon member states to train their public servants in utilizing e-solutions by:

   (a) Establishing appropriate training for existing government e-solutions;

   (b) Encouraging governments to establish plans in preparation for future technological advances to educate public servants when government e-solutions advance;

   (c) Working collaboratively with technology developers to assess and implement supplemental training when new technologies are introduced;

2. Advises ECOSOC to encourage member states to evaluate the precedents set by UNPAN in the Compendium on Innovative E-Government Practices and other resources available;

3. Further invites the various levels of government within member states to incorporate these previous recommendations;

4. Encourages Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) to educate citizens of member states on participating with government institutions through e-solutions by:

   (a) Developing informational tutorials in collaboration with the governmental institutions within respective states compatible with their unique government e-solutions;

5. Notes that not all member states have the same level of access to internet or e-solutions;

6. Suggests that governmental buildings can serve as centralized locations where access to online government services are available to the public.

2.2 CEPA II/1

Viewing with appreciation the success of Italy's FOIA4ITALIA, which increased the freedom of Italian citizens by opening communication channels between public bodies and those that they serve,

Noting with satisfaction the positive impact that Indonesia's "OpenGovJam" program has had on public and private sector collaboration by pushing an open government agenda and creating a government that is accountable, transparent, and participative,

Acknowledging Brazil's usage of advanced technology to promote inclusivity in the voting process by aiding those with unique circumstances,

1. Calls upon ECOSOC to suggest that member countries uphold their citizens' right to information pertaining to the work of public bodies through policies that promote communication between citizens and their public officials and institutions;

2. Further invites ECOSOC to encourage member countries to implement similar programs within local governments in the spirit of promoting citizen and institutional engagement with civic leadership;

3. Recommends that ECOSOC promote programs dedicated to improving technology regarding the voting and election processes within applicable member countries.

2.3 CEPA II/3

Guided by the reflective actions of the 2017 UN Public Service Forum in what is driving innovation in public service,

Acknowledging challenges in government services, and addressing those challenges with technology,

Expressing its hope in aiding governmental development to foster better public service delivery,

1. Recommends that governments develop e-services with intuitive interfaces for bureaucratic administration and civic engagement;

2. Encourages that institutions display their services and availability in a comprehensive manner if e-solutions are not accessible;

3. Endorses the implementation of e-solutions wherever possible if not currently accessible.

2.4 CEPA II/4

Realizing that each Member State differs in cultural and political circumstances, as well as global economic and social standing,

Further recognizes the need for conservation of national sovereignty,

Aware that cyber security affects all nations, regardless of development level,

Reiterating article 45 chapter 3 CEPA report 16 (E/2017/44),

Remembering Article 21 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights,

Recognizing the problems with funding E-Solutions throughout the world,

Reiterating the need for E-Solutions, which aid in the development of responsive public service delivery methods, including redefining the relationships and responsibilities of each nation in order to support participatory governance,

Reaffirming that ECOSOC works diligently towards E-Solutions,

1. Encourages ECOSOC to be adaptable while working towards E-Solutions, as not every E-Solution will work for every nation, due to differences in each nation;

2. Advises that ECOSOC stimulate and promote United Nation organizations like UNDP, UNESCO, and UNICEF, as these organizations all work towards educating developing nations and children in technology;

3. Suggests that through E-Solutions Member States involve citizens that governments can entrust with the responsibilities to protect national sovereignty of their government utilizing the delegation of Information Communication and Technology (ICT);

4. Invites member states to collaborate with ICT specialized NGOs and IGOs, such as the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), in promoting the accessibility, reliability and acceptance of ICTs with the intent of fostering civilian awareness and feedback on government activity.

3 Consideration of Redefining Relationships and Responsibilities to Support Participatory Governance and Responsive Public Service Delivery, Including Through E-Solutions...

Report to the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) on Redefining Relationships and Responsibilities to Support Participatory Governance and Responsive Public Service Delivery, Including Through E- Solutions

1. Deliberations...

The Committee of Experts on Public Administration (CEPA) first recognized the work done by some specific member states prior to this session, while taking care to acknowledge that work is still currently being done. While the Body made it clear that the developmental divide between certain Member-States make it harder to actually implement some software-driven solutions, the purpose of specifics have not been lost. Adaptability is an important virtue that all states recognized as being something that needed to be acknowledged repeatedly. National sovereignty never ceased to be at the forefront of discussion, while Member-States repeatedly vigorously affirmed their commitment to maintaining their respective country's jurisdiction. This directly ties in with adaptability, as no one specific solution will work effectively in all Member-States. It was also noted that holding Member-States of this body to particular international standards does nothing to positively influence individual actions being taken as it could discourage any more direct action to address the problem if it does not do significant and immediate change to international standing.

Once addressing the basic values driving any meaningful legislation that would potentially be drafted, States expressed interest in three primary topics of discussion within particular blocs. The first discussed civic engagement and ways the Member-States could better interact with its citizens through e-solutions. Additionally, the first block also discussed other accessible means regarding information and specific exercises with a citizen's government guaranteed in domestic legislation. The second discussed the actual realistic carrying out of said goals regarding specific actions taken by the Member-State's government through education and public service. The third discussed implementation in developing Member-States and the assistance the international community could provide without infringing upon sovereignty. Overall, the Committee remained very aware of the vast differences of background between one another and constantly presented innovative ways to implement similar strategies that could have the same basic effect at its core.

General concern focused on national sovereignty, simply because governments of Member-States within the Body are vastly different from one another and have different prerogatives based on region, culture, and history. Developing Member-States expressed this concern the most frequently due to the worry that they might take actions that larger, more developed Member-States have and ultimately fairly in the long term. Rather than blindly replicating a different Member-State's actions, they would prefer to continue implementing initiatives, which have already been formally introduced in many cases, then see the outcome of other initiatives and perhaps reconvene when the effects have been

In the first bloc, deliberations regarding the improvement of civic engagement through the use of advanced technology, states discussed their support for the usage of electronic voter registration, specifically via internet. Several Member-States acknowledged the importance of voter inclusion and the role that making accommodations for disabled voters through e-solutions should play in the electoral process. The Committee expressed their support for electronic voter registration due to its ability to eliminate mobility issues for those with disabilities. A majority of the States agreed that voter registration via the internet would help illiterate citizens register independently through the use of prerecorded audio aid.

States also discussed the possibility of encouraging citizens to use a channel to contact government officials about the state of their country. Not only did the Body emphasize the importance of the creation of said channel, but states agreed that the channel, which should be developed via internet when possible, should be promoted through Member-States governments. Public officials, as discussed by the states, should be accessible to ensure an accountable government.

To address citizens' access to government information, some Member-States agreed that Freedom of Information Acts (FOIs) should include pertinent information and be readily available when requested. Some States suggested that FOIs should encourage executive departments, agencies, bureaus, and offices to make public records, contracts, transactions, and any information requested by a member of the public, except for matters affecting national security available. It is suggested that countries promote FOI according to some states.

Local planning mechanisms and decentralization efforts were also recognized by members of CEPA as successful ways to improve civic engagement and public participation. States agreed that the implementation of decentralization around the world has permitted local innovation and transferred decision-making processes closer to citizens, enabling them to play a more prominent role in public life. Further, States identified nation-specific solutions for encouraging public participation.

In the second bloc, certain Member-States of CEPA wished to underscore the importance of improving public service delivery at the domestic level. These States highlighted two important aspects of public service delivery: emphasizing the need for education on e-solutions and working to bolster governmental development. First, on the topic of education, these States commented on how vital it is to promote education on Information Communication Technology (ICT) capabilities for both government officials and citizens of Member-States. Within the context of improving public service delivery through educating government officials, certain Member-States restated that government officials ought to receive proper training in how to best utilize e-Solutions in order to deliver effective public service to its citizens.

Moreover, Member-States suggested that to facilitate the sharing of best practices, Member-States should consider contributing to the United Nations Public Administration Network (UNPAN). Overseen by the Development Management of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations, UNPAN is a global network that promotes international, national, regional, and sub-regional institutions worldwide for the promotion of better public administration. These Member-States believed it to be beneficial for domestic governments to contribute to this program. Second, on promoting education to Member-States' citizens, these States discussed the importance of educational programs about government processes in order to ensure citizens are better informed. Additionally, the Committee mentioned how crucial it was for governments to instruct their citizens on how to use ICT-based government services and provide citizens access to said services.

Further, these Member-States discussed how to bolster governmental development when it comes to effectively delivering public service. Certain States encouraged governments to develop intuitive e-Solutions for bureaucratic administration and civic engagement. Second, the Committee wanted to stress the growing need for governments to implement e-Solutions whenever possible as the world is becoming a more connected place and citizens ought to have access to their government in every capacity.

Last, in the third bloc, certain Member-States of CEPA discussed efforts to promote collaboration between developed and underdeveloped countries. This could take the form of internships with other governments to facilitate transnational norms in domestic policy and information communication. Top to bottom education in this fashion would be effective, it would allow each State to increase the number of its citizens that are competent in accessing the internet, and generally the citizen's understanding of their collective rights. Other forms of solutions were highlighted such as the communication of best practices and the sharing of information.

However, concern was expressed from Member-States with regards to adaptability of these types of initiatives. Different solutions for countries of varying economic capabilities is crucial to tailoring an effective framework for change. It was also emphasized the importance of respecting sovereignty, so that each State has the freedom to exercise their own power over their e-solutions that best fit their self interests. Each Member-State will face limitations to certain solutions and the degree to which they are implemented. Focusing on the predominant solutions will foster a more effective implementation. Furthermore, CEPA recognized that Member-States all have varying levels of priority for e-solutions and ICTs.

2. Action taken by the Committee...

At the 2017 session of the Committee of Experts on Public Administration, the Body approved for recommendation for adoption by the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) four different draft resolutions.

The first draft resolution, CEPA/II/1, was sponsored by Italy, Brazil, Philippines, Germany, Spain, Australia, Morocco, Nicaragua, Switzerland, and the Republic of Indonesia. The delegation from the Republic of Indonesia requested a roll call vote on the draft resolution. The final draft resolution was adopted with a vote of 11 in favor, 0 opposed, and 5 abstentions. The votes were as follows:In favor: Argentina, Australia, Brazil, China, The Republic of Indonesia, Italy, Morocco, Nicaragua, Philippines, the Russian Federation, Switzerland;Opposed: –;Abstain: Bangladesh, Kenya, Spain, Turkey, the United States of America.

The second draft resolution that the Committee debated and adopted was CEPA/II/2. The draft resolution was sponsored by Argentina, China, Nicaragua, the Russian Federation, Spain, the United States of America, and Australia. The final draft resolution was adopted with a placard vote of 15 in favor, 1 opposed, and 0 abstentions.

198 The third draft resolution the Body adopted was CEPA/II/3. The draft resolution was sponsored by Argentina, Australia, China, Nicaragua, the Russian Federation, Spain, the United States of America, and the Republic of Indonesia. The final draft resolution was adopted with a placard vote of 13 in favor, 0 opposed, and 5 abstentions.

201 The fourth, and final, draft resolution that the Committee of Experts on Public Administration debated and adopted, CEPA/II/4, was sponsored by Italy, Morocco, Spain, Turkey, Switzerland, Kenya, the United States of America, and Bangladesh. Before being adopted, the draft resolution was amended twice; both were friendly amendments to fix simple grammatical oversights. The final draft resolution was adopted by consensus while Nicaragua abstained.

4 Adoption of the Report

At the 28th AMUN Conference, on 20 November 2017, the draft report of the Committee was made available for consideration. The Committee considered the report, and with one amendment, adopted the report by consensus with Bangladesh abstaining.

Passed by consensus, with 1 abstentions