UNITED NATIONS E-GOVERNMENT SURVEY 2020 REGIONAL WEBINAR SERIES
E-Government Development in the Arab Region
Date: 23 September 2020
03:00 PM – 05:00 PM (Beirut Time)
08:00 AM – 10:00 AM (EDT, New York Time)
KUDO platform

Welcome Remarks
by Vincenzo Aquaro
Chief of the Digital Government Branch in the Division for Public Institutions and
Digital Government, United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs.

Excellences,
Distinguish guests,
Ladies and gentlemen

On Behalf of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations it
is also my great pleasure to welcome all of you to this very prestigious webinar.

As Chief of the Digital Government Branch in the Division for Public Institutions and
Digital Government, I am very honoured to be here today, at this regional event to
introduce the Arabic version of the 2020 E-Government Survey.

Now, at its eleventh edition, the E-government Survey is an invaluable dataset built
over the past 20 years, providing longitudinal insights of digital development
trends.

As a flagship publication of the UN DESA, it is humbling to say that the E-
Government Survey is widely recognised by digital ministers, national chief
information officers, as well as other policymakers and researchers in public
administration and information communication technology.

And it has become an important ranking, mapping and measuring tool for all UN
Member States in pursuing digital government.

But the E-Government Survey is also the result of collective team-effort, and I would
like extend appreciation to all the partners, experts and Member States who have
been contributed to the Survey in one way or another, during this long journey.

Among these partners I would like to particularly highlight close collaboration with
the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, starting from
the early stages of the E-government Survey design, continuing with expert

contributions for research and methodologies and insights into regional data analysis, and supporting us for the outreach and dissemination.

I am so grateful to my colleagues of ESCWA for working with DESA always as one team and one UN and - last but not least - for co-organizing this important event today for wider dissemination of the core finding of the Survey in the Arabic Region.

And talking about dissemination in the region, I would also extend my deepest appreciation and special thanks to the Telecommunication Regulatory Authority of United Arab Emirates, in translating the Survey into Arabic.

So, today I am so proud to announce that, thanks to UAE and ESCWA, the Arabic version of the 2020 E-Government Survey is now available on our portal and on ESCWA website, ready to be downloaded.

I am sure that the Arabic version of the report will reach a wider range of Arab-speaking audiences and will help policy-makers in the region to utilize its findings for further development on digital transformation.

In the next session, I will sharing some key findings from the 2020 survey on global and regional trends in e-government development –to set the scene for a fruitful discussion on the opportunities and challenges of digital transformation.

My colleague from ESCWA, Ms. Nibal Idlebi, will also share with you some insights on e-participations and open government data.

A lot of food for thought for our extraordinary guest speakers.

Today we are delighted to have a distinguished panel of discussants from Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Syrian Arab Republic, Tunisia, and United Arab Emirates, who would share their country-experiences, and offer insights on specific cases and regional initiatives advantageous for all.

But allow me to conclude my intervention, stressing the importance of e-government development in this unprecedented time of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Many countries have turned to digital solutions and innovative ways to deliver public services, preserve and ensure business continuity, recover and address new challenges for sustainable development through digital government.

But more need to be done for leaving no one behind.
My Department, in partnership with the regional commissions, will remain fully committed to supporting all Member States - and in particular the most vulnerable ones - in enhancing digital government for sustainable development in response to the unprecedented social and economic challenges generated by the pandemic.
Thank you and welcome again.