

Opening Speech by the Commissioner of Statistics Korea

2010 International Seminar on Information and Communication Technology Statistics

July 19 - 21, 2010, Walkerhill Seoul, Korea



Mr. Paul Cheung, Director of the United Nations Statistics Division,

Distinguished Representatives of National and International Organizations, and Ladies and Gentlemen,

Welcome all and thank you for your participation in the International Seminar on Information and Communication Technology Statistics

We, Statistics Korea, are very pleased to hold this meeting in Seoul, in joint effort with the United Nations, ITU, UNCTAD, and Partnership on Measuring ICT for Development,

< Significance of the Seminar >

In the context of ICT development, the year 2010 is especially meaningful, being in the midpoint between the 1st World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) and the 2015 target year for the global information society.

Through this seminar, work done over the past 5 years can be assessed and the work to be completed in the next five years can be planned.

It has been a long time since the United Nations showed interest in ICT related statistics.

For this seminar, representatives of the statistical offices and IT policy organizations of all participating nations have convened to continue constructive dialogue on the necessity and importance of information statistics

measurement, the development of its future strategy, and the importance of continuously monitoring statistics.

This year's seminar will focus on various topics, including measurement of information society, future strategies, production and utilization of ICT statistics, measurement of information boundaries, and necessary policies for ICT statistics.

< Trend of ICT and Communication >

In recent years, information technology has advanced so rapidly that new terms such as Cloud Computing, Wibro, WiFi, Smart Grid, Embedded Software, and Digital Convergence seem to surface every day - demonstrating the fact that we live in a dynamically changing society.

IT technology, however, seems to drive toward a "human-oriented and emotion-filled society." Twitter provides an example through which an unknown person can become very famous in a network. The communications among people have never been easier.

In a recent edition of the <Harvard Business Review>, Nicholas Carr* said, "IT doesn't matter." This statement is understood as IT technology has already fulfilled all of the functional needs for information and technology.

Our future challenge is to create human centered cultures through networks. These networks are the nets connecting machine and machine, people and machine, and most importantly, people and people.

It has been 41 years since the Internet was first introduced.

In 1969, two computers in remote locations were connected to communicate with each other. As of October 2009, it is estimated that about 4.6 billion pieces of equipment are now connected to the Internet.

These include cell phones, digital TVs, computers, navigators, and gaming machines. Almost all digital equipment can now be connected to the Internet as a node.

The IT technology works for us today, just like the air does when we breathe. It is part of our daily lives, acting as one of our sensory organs, working as our

hands, feet or head do.

< Korean ICT Industries and Status of ICT Statistics >

Honorable guests and national representatives,

The Korean government has put a great deal of effort in building ICT infrastructures and its people have shown a great interest in the technologies. Development in a variety of related research areas have also been carried out broadening the application areas of ICT. As a result, the Korean ICTs have been recognized as a world class industry.

As an example, the Korean e-government system was awarded the grand prize of 192 member countries evaluated by the United Nations. In the business sector, Samsung SDS won a \$420 million contract for the development of an oil well security system. The contribution of ICT to the Korean economy is fairly substantial, contributing about 10% to the GDP.

Related to the area of ICT statistics, the rate of Internet usage, the rate of PC using households, and the rate of Internet commercial transactions have been compiled since the very early years of the new millennia. In recent years, we are continuously putting forth efforts to develop statistical indicators for the number of DMB users, IPTV users, number of cyber security problems, and to measure the largest gap between ICT users.

< Utilizing ICT in Statistics Korea's surveys >

The development of ICT has helped speed up the "common usages of the Internet" in the area of statistics.

The traditional interview method has run into limitations and we've started to employ Internet based electronic survey management systems such as CATI and CAPI that collect statistics more efficiently and more precisely.

In the 2010 Population and Housing Census, Statistics Korea plans to adopt the most advanced IT technologies and collect more than 30% of the Census via the Internet, which could turn out to be the highest in Census history.

Using ICT, Statistics Korea has been improving data quality, providing better services for people, increasing the response rates, reducing survey workloads, and shortening the time required for generating statistics.

< Future Plans >

Despite our continuous efforts, changes in the economic and social environment and the IT culture are so rapid that it is rather difficult to predict what directions ICT statistical methods must head toward.

The issues facing us now include the diversification of the information society and the fusion of diversified technologies. This makes it cumbersome to identify an integrated indicator to represent the overall development level.

It is also a challenge to set up appropriate policies for generating relevant and reliable statistics that reflect diversified and constantly changing environments. These subjects can be addressed more effectively through international cooperation with member nations.

The time is ripe for us to revisit how to measure this information society, how to measure the information economy, how to develop future strategies, and how to create future policies related to ICT statistics.

My hope is that this seminar will provide an excellent opportunity for these issues to be thoroughly discussed. Many world renowned experts are among us today and I hope fruitful results will be discovered through our collaboration.

< Closing >

In closing, I hope that the UN, ITU, UNCTAD, and the Partnership will continuously play a leading role in the production and development of ICT statistics that are timely, accurate, and relevant in a rapidly changing environment.

For this mission, Statistics Korea will strengthen cooperation activities with the United Nations, and continue to play our role as a responsible member in

the international society.

Thank you very much.

Insill YI
Commissioner, Statistics Korea