

Opening Remarks by Dr. Najat Zarrouk

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Official Online Global Launch of the Standards of Excellence for Public Administration Education and Training

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السلام عليكم ورحمة الله تعالى وبركاته

Dear Mr. Juwang Zhu, Director of the Division for Public Institutions and Digital Government of UN-DESA, Co-Convenor of the Global TaskForce;

Distinguished Peers, colleagues and members of the Global TaskForce;

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a great day today for both UN-DESA/DPIDG and IASIA, and an honor for me to stand before you all today, during this Official Online Global Launch of the 2025 Standards of Excellence for Public Administration Education and Training.

This moment marks a major milestone -not only for UN-DESA and IASIA as co-Leads of this initiative, but for everyone committed to building strong Public Institutions and strong Public Sector at all levels of Governance, through shared values, transformational leadership, and quality education, in line with the Global Agenda 2030 for the Sustainable Development, the 11 Principles of Effective Governance, and the Digital transformation.

On behalf the entire IASIA Community and its Board of Management, I would like to begin by warmly thanking and expressing our eternal Gratitude, to Mr. Juwang Zhu and his outstanding Team at the Division for Public Institutions and Digital Government of UN-DESA for their leadership, their support and time, their deep commitment to strengthening Public Administration, Public Governance, and Public Sector globally.

Today's event is the result of our close, sound, fruitful, and inspiring Partnership, marked by our shared values and principles for our common good and concerns, our spirit of collaboration and co-creation and our commitment to professionalism and enthusiasm, oriented to find solutions and achieve results that fit our ambition and expectations.

This launch is the culmination of nearly two years of work, based on an initiative from our beloved and unforgettable friend Prof. Allan Rosenbaum who was the pioneer and initiator also of the first generation of the Standards of Excellence in 2008. Where you are today, Dear Allan, we will stay eternally Grateful to you and to your outstanding legacy.

Dear all,

As you know, the process to review and update the Standards of Excellence began in April 2023, with the establishment of the UN-DESA/IASIA Global Task Force. It was followed by multilingual global surveys, regional consultations, and in-person sessions in Africa, Asia, Middle East, Latin America, and Europe.

The inclusive, multilingual, and participatory nature of this process resulted in more than 1,000 contributions—making these Standards truly global, diverse, and grounded in real institutional needs.

As Mr. Zhu said in October, *“These new Standards will shape the future of public administration education—at a time when excellence in public service is more critical than ever.”* I could not agree more. These revised Standards reflect the evolving challenges facing Public service today: from digital transformation and inequality to the demands of the 2030 Agenda. They also affirm our strong commitment to SDG 4 on quality education and SDG 16 on effective, accountable, and inclusive institutions.

Beside our eternal gratitude and warmest thanks to UNDESA DPIDG, we are also deeply grateful to all the honorable Members of the Global TaskForce: Thank you from my heart for your dedication, your time, your advices, and your wisdom. I also want to express sincere thanks to the many academics, practitioners, and students and who contributed with their ideas, reflections, and critical feedback through both the surveys and the workshops. Your engagement and input gave life, depth, and legitimacy to these Standards.

I am also deeply grateful to our colleagues and friends at UN-DESA/DPIDG, namely Dr Adriana, Dr Cristina, Gregory, Francesca, and Andrea, and to Cesar, the IASIA Executive Secretary. This journey itself was a sound demonstration of the Values and Principles of a true team work and effort, dedication, coordination, and collaborative spirit at every stage made this achievement possible.

The revised and updated Standards are structured around eight core pillars and will be presented to all of you today, as adaptable, aspirational, and impactful.

We have also invited the ICAPA Governance bodies, through the Honorable Acting Chairperson, Prof. Hamid, and the Chairs of ICAPA Accreditation Commission, Prof. Juraj and Prof. Michiel, to support this initiative by designing or adapting Indicators for each of the 8 new Standards as it was done during the first generation.

We expect this webinar to result in greater global awareness and understanding of the Standards and their relevance to leadership, mindsets, and capacities in today's VUCA world. It will also foster knowledge sharing on training practices and inspire further collaboration, including training-of-trainers initiatives. A post-webinar survey will help identify the capacity-building needs of schools and institutes as they consider implementing the Standards, paving the way for future peer learning, peer review, and targeted support activities.

Let me conclude by reaffirming our shared responsibility to invest in a new generation of public leaders and public civil servants. Through quality education, training and empowering, we pledge, all together to prepare professionals to shape the future of governance for the World We Want. IASIA remains fully committed, together with UN DESA/DPIDG, and ICAPA, to supporting institutions in this next phase.

Thank you all once again—for your trust, your collaboration, and your commitment. Together, we are helping and doing our part to raise the bar for excellence in public administration education—worldwide.

With my eternal gratitude for your kind attention./.