

The 15th KSC SC meeting, 4 October 2023

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| Agenda Item No. 2: | Opening Remarks by Mr Girish Chandra Murmu, Comptroller & Auditor General of India and the Chair of Knowledge Sharing & Knowledge Services Committee(KSC) |
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His Excellency Counsellor Hesham Badawy, \ President of the Accountability State Authority of the Arab Republic of Egypt, \

His Excellency Gamaliel A Cordoba, \ Chairperson of the Commission on Audit, of the Republic of Philippines, \

Her Excellency Ms. Datuk Wan Suraya Binti Wan Mohd Radzi, \ Auditor General of Malaysia \

His Excellency Dr. Francisco Javier Fernández, \ Auditor General of Argentina \

Mr. Mohamed Rashed Al Zaabi, \ Undersecretary of SAI UAE \

Distinguished delegates, \ Ladies and gentlemen, \

A very Good Morning,

It is with great pleasure and humility \ that I stand before you today as the Chair of the INTOSAI Knowledge Sharing Committee, \ here in the magnificent city of Abu Dhabi, UAE. \

I extend my heartfelt gratitude to the Supreme Audit Institution of UAE \ for hosting the 15th Meeting of the Steering Committee of the Knowledge Sharing Committee. \ I also extend my gratitude to colleagues in SAI UAE \ for their warm hospitality, generous support \ and excellent organization of the event. \

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Esteemed Colleagues, in the words of Francis Bacon, "Knowledge is power." Indeed, knowledge empowers us to understand, innovate, and shape our world. It is the compass that guides us through uncharted territories, illuminating the path of progress and enlightenment. As we harness the power of knowledge, we embark on a journey of discovery, unlocking the boundless potential within ourselves and our society.

Knowledge building is the foundation of effective public auditing. It ensures audits are conducted with accuracy, consistency, credibility and efficiency. It supports a culture of continuous improvement as knowledge helps in identifying potential risks.

As we convene for the 15th KSC Steering Committee Meeting, I am fueled by an invigorating sense of optimism and determination to foster a collaborative environment for innovative knowledge exchange among all members. The INTOSAI Knowledge Sharing Committee (KSC), steers INTOSAI's Knowledge Sharing Goal through specialized working groups, each dedicated to distinct audit domains.

We have gathered here in Abu Dhabi to review and recognize the progress made in the past one year and to chart our course forward in the journey of knowledge sharing for excellence in public audit.

Over time, the KSC and its dynamic working groups have consistently pursued excellence, embraced innovation, and disseminated best practices, all in the pursuit of the greater public welfare.

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In line with INTOSAI Strategic Plan, KSC has coordinated the creation of INTOSAI Guidance (GUID) documents on the Audit of Public Debt, Disaster Management, Privatization and Public Procurement which were endorsed during the XXIV INCOSAI 2022 in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. During the XXIV INCOSAI, fourteen non IFPP documents covering a variety of issues relating to audit of plastic waste, sustainable transport, climate financing, audit of sustainability issues, cyber security etc. were also endorsed by the Congress.

We have also contributed to the sharing and dissemination of knowledge through webinars, seminars, training programs, publishing newsletters and articles and collaborating through INTOSAI Community Portal and other online tools. Our knowledge generation and dissemination endeavors are structured around a series of strategies that involve research, training, cooperation with INTOSAI organs like regional associations, the IDI, and the INTOSAI Journal of Government Auditing, and stakeholder engagement.

Colleagues, in these tumultuous times, our commitment to knowledge sharing acquires a new resonance as we navigate unprecedented challenges that transcend boundaries, demanding united action.

The recently released UNSDG 2023 report¹ indicates that half of the evaluated 140 targets exhibit considerable deviations from their desired trajectories.

¹ https://sdgs.un.org/sites/default/files/2023-09/FINAL%20GSDR%202023-Digital%20-110923_1.pdf
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Over 30 per cent of these targets have witnessed stagnation\ or, even more troubling,\ regression below the 2015 baseline.\ The lingering impact of the COVID-19 pandemic is evident,\ having halted decades of steady progress in poverty reduction\ and ushering in a resurgence of poverty.\

Colleagues,\ in this context, SDG 13,\ the pivotal endeavor to combat climate change,\ is inherently intertwined with the other 16 SDGs.\ Presently,\ we bear witness to unprecedented climate extremities\ that manifest as extensive ecological damage to plants,\ animals, and forest ecosystems.\ The World Meteorological Organization's dire prediction underscores a 66% likelihood\ that the world will surpass the 1.5-degree Celsius target set by the Paris Agreement within the next five years.\

SAIs can wield considerable influence by assessing the alignment of their countries'\ existing policies and Nationally Determined Contributions\ highlighting climate change mitigation measures,\ including climate-related targets for greenhouse gas emission reductions,\ with the timely attainment of the 1.5-degree Celsius goal outlined in the Paris Agreement.\ Recognizing the need of knowledge intensive nature of audit of emerging areas,\ the KSC Working Groups are at the forefront of leading an impactful change.\

For instance,\ INTOSAI Working Group on Environmental Auditing (WGEA) led by SAI Finland\ has meticulously crafted guidance documents tailored to assist SAIs in auditing areas\ such as Plastic Waste, Climate Finance, Sustainable Transport,\ and Sustainable Development Goals.\

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The latest plans of the WGEA revolve around two central hubs: the Climate and Biodiversity Hub, and the Green Economy Hub. Two high-priority projects - Climate Scanner project and the Global Cooperative Audit on Climate Change Adaptation Actions (CCAA) are currently under implementation.

International Centre for Environment Audit and Sustainable Development (iCED), Jaipur, the Global Training Facility for WGEA in India has been designated as a *Centre of Excellence on Audit of Blue Economy* in 2023. Simultaneously, the INTOSAI Working Group on SDGs and Key Sustainable Development Indicators (WGSDG KSDI) led by SAI Russia has brought out “Practical Guidance on Sustainable Development Goals Audit at the Regional Level” which is tailored to empower regional audit institutions in conducting SDG audits effectively. Moreover, this group is actively developing further guidance, including the Audit of Reliability of Macroeconomic Forecasts and a comprehensive exploration of environmental, social, and governance (ESG) audits.

A strategic advocate against corruption and money laundering, the INTOSAI Working Group on Fight Against Corruption and Money Laundering (WGFACML) led by SAI Egypt recognizes the critical role of anti-corruption measures in the broader context of Sustainable Development Goal 16.

The WGFACML has formulated guidelines that promote social controls on public funds, facilitate the recovery of stolen assets, and facilitate audits on corruption prevention within public procurement.

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Colleagues,

In the realm of rapidly evolving technologies lies a golden opportunity for transformation. These technologies are reshaping our world, introducing unprecedented possibilities for innovation, enhanced productivity, and positive societal shifts. However, their potential also comes with substantial risks and uncertainties that necessitate vigilant management. This year, the World Economic Forum has highlighted emerging technologies like green hydrogen, digital medicine, data trusts, and quantum sensing, hold the promise of addressing critical global challenges spanning climate change, healthcare, data security, and scientific exploration. The possibility of their success rests upon robust governance, regulation, and ethical standards to ensure their responsible and secure integration.

Audit professionals have to be attuned to the latest advancements and assess their profound impact. Envisioning a future where innovation harmonizes with responsibility, our working groups i.e. INTOSAI Working Group on IT Audit (WGITA) led by SAI India, Working Group on Impact of Science and Technology in Auditing (WGISTA) led by SAI UAE, and Working Group on Big Data (WGBD) led by SAI China – have taken several effective steps to share knowledge on audit of emerging technologies.

For instance, WGITA has introduced Data Analytics Guidelines, addressed Cyber Security and Data Protection Challenges, and established a Global Curriculum on IT Audit.

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It also spearheads the creation of General Capacity Building Requirements\ for conducting IT Audits in Supreme Audit Institutions (SAIs),\ along with a comprehensive Handbook on IT Audit.\ WGITA Webinars on subjects like IT and cyber-security audit work,\ digital awareness, and enterprise-wide audit processes\ have further enriched the landscape.\ In parallel,\ WGISTA's impactful report on Emerging Technologies highlights their applications\ and the development of expertise within Supreme Audit Institutions\ in utilizing Science and Technology for auditing.\ The INTOSAI Working Group on Big Data has crafted guidelines for\ audit activities leveraging data analytics\ and delving into research on innovative auditing technologies,\ with specific focus on big data applications in social security,\ health services, and the integration of artificial intelligence in audit processes.\

This has been a very productive year in knowledge sharing\ and compiling this knowledge into practical Compendiums\ and Guidance's etc.\ I am pleased to note the valuable contributions made by each KSC Working Group,\ as they actively engage in assessing the effective implementation\ and impact of policies, programs, and projects\ aimed at achieving sustainable development goals.\

The Working Group on Public Debt (WGPD) led by SAI Philippines\ has undertaken substantial efforts,\ including the development of a research paper titled\ "Mapping of SAIs' Mandates on the Audit of Public Debt,"\ which examines institutional capacities and the Regional Organization's support\ and resources.\

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Additionally, they have produced a Compendium document\ on the intricacies of Public Debt Authorization,\ Contracting, and Legal Frameworks across different countries.\

Similarly,\ the Working Group on Audit of Extractive Industries (WGEI) led by SAI Uganda\ has contributed significantly by introducing a Framework for government auditing specific to oil companies\ operating under service contracts.\ They have also developed the Extractive Industry Auditors Toolkit (EI Toolkit),\ a valuable resource for professionals in this field.\ The Working Group on Public Procurement Audit (WGPPA) led by SAI Russia\ has made a substantial impact by creating a guidance document\ focused on the audit of public procurement processes.\ The Working Group on Value and Benefits of SAI (WGVBS) led by SAI Mexico\ has played a pivotal role in developing INTOSAI principles\ that emphasize the value and benefits of Supreme Audit Institutions (SAIs)\ in the pursuit of good governance and accountability.\

Furthermore,\ the Working Groups on Financial and Economic Stability (WGFES)\ and Evaluation of Public Policies and Programs (WGEPPP)\ led by SAI USA and SAI Switzerland respectively\ have actively organized webinars and workshops\ to disseminate knowledge on emerging issues within their respective audit domains.\

Esteemed Colleagues,\ as our gaze extends into the future,\ it becomes clear that embracing unconventional approaches is essential to\ amplify our knowledge and usability of our KSC products.\

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Groundbreaking technologies like artificial intelligence, blockchain and data analytics present an unparalleled opportunity to revolutionize knowledge sharing and audit practices, greatly optimizing their efficiency. To truly harness the potential of these innovations, let's wholeheartedly engage in the exploration of pilot projects and strategic partnerships. Embarking on this collaborative journey advances our cause and also catalyzes meaningful change within our SAIs.

I encourage all members to actively participate in new initiatives and foster collaboration across regions. Collaborations among SAIs from different parts of the world provide distinct perspectives, enriching our collective knowledge pool through the multiplier effect of shared insights.

I hold a strong belief that this 15th KSC Steering Committee Meeting will mark the inception of a new era of excellence and a fresh work plan cycle. Let us engage in productive discussions, exchange invaluable viewpoints, and plot a roadmap that will shape the future of INTOSAI's knowledge sharing endeavors. I extend my gratitude for your steadfast dedication, and I eagerly anticipate the fruitful outcomes of our meeting in Abu Dhabi.

Together, let us continue leading by example and making a constructive impact on the global stage.

Thank you!

(1779 words for 10 minutes - Opening Remarks)