



**Speech of Dr. Salim bin Sultan Al Ruzaiqi – chief executive  
Of Information Technology Authority on the Occasion  
Of World Information Society Day  
19 May 2007**

HE. Mohammed bin Nasser Al Khusaibi  
Honorable guests  
Dear attendees

ITA is pleased to welcome you on the occasion of celebrating the world information society day which marks the seventeenth of current May, the celebration clearly reflects that the government of the sultanate is aware of the importance of information & communication technology which became part of modern life in all societies. On the other hand the celebration gives us an ample opportunity to review together the efforts of ITA in the field of information technology.

Information & communication technology has witnessed an unprecedented development for the last two decades. A clear example to this is the use of mobile phone in photography, sms and the possibility of accessing the internet. According to “The Economist” magazine in its April issue, the number of mobile phones used now is 2,8 billion increases by 1.6 million phone every day.

Now information technology is used in delivering different government services and in all national economy sectors such as education, health,

roads..etc.. Private sector institutions are also increasingly using information technology in all its activities.

## **Dear attendees**

The government of the sultanate is fully aware of the importance of utilizing information & communication technology to establish a digital society . In this regard please allow me to review the current initiatives and projects undertaken by ITA & the future plans. In addition to the basic infrastructure projects such as Ubar portal & electronic payment gateway & disaster recovery center and the advisory role, ITA has launched in coordination with the Ministry of Civil Service, a digital literacy training. Already 400 employees of four Ministries in Muscat, Nizwa and Sohar have been trained. This pilot was launched as part of ITA's national IT training and awareness initiative which aims to provide digital literacy training and bridge digital divide.

ITA is preparing to launch the second phase of the pilot program to train all members of the community in training centers all over the Sultanate.

In the 17<sup>th</sup> of May last year, the Sultanate has celebrated with all nations the world information society day. The occasion was an ample opportunity to inaugurate the successful digital Oman awareness campaign which started from Muscat to all other region including Sohar, Ibri, Nizwa, Salalah, Khasab, Buraimi, Sur and then Muscat through participation in Comex exhibition 2007. The second phase of awareness campaign will be launched shortly.

## **Dear attendees**

The interaction and cooperation with ICT organizations enhance our effort in developing use of this technology in social and economical development in our country. For this reason the Sultanate has participated at high level

delegations in the world summit for information society convened in Geneva in the year 2003 and Tunis 2005. The Summit urged developing countries to concentrate on bridging digital divide between all classes of society. The plan of action approved by the summit has been a guide to us in ITA to revise our programs and policies, which will eventually lead to the digital society in the sultanate. ITA has released it's first report on the initiatives of information technology in public & private sector which was sent to all international institutions.

We are really aware that some factors may have an adverse impact on our Endeavour to create digital society, however, the government through ITA is sparing no effort to overcome such obstacles to move towards a digital oman.

Finally I would like to thank HE. mohammed bin Nasser Al Khusaibi for his kind patronize to this gathering, my thanks are also extended to all of you for attending this function.