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## **Strengthening Governmental Effectiveness Through Improved Public Administration Education And Training: The United Nations/ IASIA Task Force And The Creation Of The International Commission On Public Administration Education And Training (ICAPA)**

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## STRENGTHENING GOVERNMENTAL EFFECTIVENESS THROUGH IMPROVED PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION EDUCATION AND TRAINING: THE UNITED NATIONS/ IASIA TASK FORCE AND THE CREATION OF THE INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION ON PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION EDUCATION AND TRAINING (ICAPA)

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### Abstract

The aim of this article is to identify and outline the relationship between governmental effectiveness and public administration education and training. The recognition of some very basic realities of the worldwide political and governmental context within which public administrators of necessity must work is highly significant for this relationship. These basic realities are revealed and discussed.

The new challenges place new demands upon the institutions preparing people to manage the governments and require a renewed attention to the manner in which the next generation of public administrators will be educated and the quality of education and training provided for them. The efforts to enhance the quality of the education and training led to the establishment of the International Commission on Accreditation of Public Administration Education and Training Programs (ICAPA) by the International Association of Schools and Institutes of Administration (IASIA).

The article deals with the developed eight Standards of Excellence which, on the one hand, serve as the basis for IASIA accreditation assessments and, on the other, serve to provide critically needed guidance for encouraging greater excellence in education and training activities. In this way, building of more effective government is a consequence of promoting excellence in public administration education and training.

**Keywords:** governmental effectiveness, public administration, International Commission on Public Administration Education and Training, Standards of Excellence.

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## 1. Introduction

Throughout the world, the past several decades have been difficult ones for the public sector. Demands for government services have grown, but providing adequate funding has become ever more difficult. The widespread, usually erroneous, glorifying of the efficiency of the private sector, has taken its toll on both the functioning of government and upon those who make it work and manage it. Issues of compensation and pensions for public employees have increasingly become topics of great political controversy as often dubious evidence has been mobilized to make the case that public administrators are both overpaid and incompetent. Civil service systems have come under attack not only in the United States and Europe, but in other parts of the world as well. Similar issues, many of which serve to undermine the capacity as well as the effectiveness of the public sector, are increasingly topics of political controversy in one country or another. Nevertheless, the public problems which countries all across the world face continue to grow and the task of addressing them becomes ever more difficult and complex.

The consequence of these realities is highly significant for those involved in public administration education and training. The demands and the needs of contemporary society, and the problems it faces, continue to grow even more difficult and demanding. The tools and technologies with which public administrators need to work become ever more complex. Nevertheless, in many critical respects, the task facing those involved in the education of the next generation of public administrators (and those involved in the training or re-training of the current generation) is both a good deal more fundamental and, ultimately, much more profound than simply the teaching of new techniques and the learning of new approaches to service delivery. More critical is the recognition of the very basic realities of the worldwide political and governmental context within which public administrators of necessity must work. These include:

### *1.1. Acknowledging the central importance of good government*

One significant consequence of the past half century of attacking government has been the declining recognition that strong and effective government – which public administrators manage and lead – is the single most important, and the one indispensable, institution of any modern society. This is especially the case in the more highly economically developed countries of Asia, Europe and North America. There are at least three reasons why this has been so and will undoubtedly continue to be the case.

First, it is government that sets the rules for virtually every other institution of society and thus it plays an absolutely essential role as the necessary pre-condition and/or facilitator/enabler of these institutions – whether they are commercial, non-profit, religious or social. When government plays this role effectively, then society is likely to prosper and to develop in very positive ways. When it does not play this role effectively, as we have seen in terms of the failure of financial sector regulation in

many Western democracies over the course of the past dozen years, the possibilities for personal and institutional corruption, greed, and taking great risks with society's resources can lead to economic and social disaster.

Second, it is government, and only government, run and managed by public administrators, that is given the authority to legitimately utilize force to maintain the rules of order in modern society. Consequently, it is government, and again only government, that possesses the legitimate right to take away one's property, one's liberty and, in some countries, one's life. These are awesome powers which are not legitimately the province of any other societal institution but one managed by public administrators. This, alone, sets government, and those who manage it, apart from all other societal institutions and also is why, despite its indispensable centrality to the creation of a good society, holding government and those who manage it, fully accountable at all times is also a critical condition for societal well-being.

Finally, in almost all cases, it is the public sector, the government, run by public administrators, which is the source of much of the most important innovation in modern society. Most of the new inventions that have transformed all of the developed and perhaps, even more significantly, the less developed World, have been the product of research and development either carried out by government employees or directed and guided through government initiated contractual relationships with nonprofit or private sector entities.

The computer and radar were pioneered by the British government during World War Two. The internet, geographic information systems, hydraulic fracturing (which has almost overnight changed the worldwide balance of power in terms of energy resources), the medicines which have played a major role in combating AIDS and other epidemic-like health concerns have all been significantly shaped by, or are the direct result of, important government research initiatives. Similarly, much of the technology that has made the owners of Apple and Google multi-billionaires is the product of US government research (Mazzucato, 2013).

Taken together, these three realities – government's crucial role in enabling the functioning of the other major institutions of society; the awesome authority granted to government; and its ability to produce or facilitate major innovation in society – serve to ensure that government is the one irreplaceable and indispensable institution of modern society. Consequently, the role of those responsible for operating, managing and sustaining government, namely public administrators, is in fact as important a role as there is in modern society. Unfortunately, the prevailing anti-government attitudes of the past half century have obscured this fundamental reality and, in so doing, have helped to undermine the actual effectiveness of government by both discouraging talented individuals from pursuing the profession of public administration and disillusioning those who currently are public administrators. Thus, the very first task of public administration education and training is to educate both those entering the field or already involved in it, as well as the public more generally, that this is the one activity that is absolutely central to the future well-being of society.

## *1.2. Defending democratic government*

Between 1950 and 2000, the number of governments around the world that could be characterized as reasonably democratic doubled from about 50 to 100, while the next few years saw the continuation of the process of greater democratization. However, as the democratic building of the past decade clearly demonstrates, the process of democratization is neither a simple nor a very straightforward one. Nor is it adequately assessed by tallying up institutional rearrangements at two different points in time and doing a mechanistic assessment of changes in them. The reality is that democracy is inevitably and will always be a 'work in progress'. As the past decade has demonstrated, liberal democracy is not the inevitable outcome of society's march forward. It is very evident that there will be both steps forward, as well as backward, in both democratic and non-democratic countries.

In fact, democracy is not only a work in progress, but it is a far more fragile reality than is frequently recognized. This fragility is significantly enhanced by the fact that democratic governance is never simple, and often not very pretty, and sometimes not very effective. As Winston Churchill is supposed to have once commented about democracy in the United States, the US government will always come up with the appropriate solution to any problem after it has tried all other alternatives and they have failed miserably. Whether this statement is true or apocryphal, it is nevertheless all too often a rather accurate one. This reality seems to be increasingly encouraging the growth of anti-democratic attitudes, both in the US and in many other countries throughout Europe and the rest of the world.

Public administrators, as individuals committed to promoting good governance, have a very great responsibility to be both the protectors of, and especially in times when democracy is under attack in many parts of the world, the advocates for, encouraging, sustaining and enhancing the democratic character of the countries in which they work. As individuals who have been trained to reflect the highest standards of governmental integrity and administration, they bear a very large burden in terms of providing in a fair, effective and responsive way, the high quality, and fully transparent, public services that individual citizens seek from their government. In so doing, they support and significantly enhance democratic governance. However, this burden and responsibility is made more difficult by the fact that so many citizens, constantly bombarded and influenced by those attacking government as a means of advancing their own interests, find themselves frustrated and disillusioned with their governments.

## **2. The UN/IASIA Task Force on Standards of Excellence**

Recognizing the critical problems facing the increasingly complex public sector, the International Association of Schools and Institutes of Administration (IASIA) has, over the course of its fifty-five year history, pursued many strategies in its efforts to enhance the quality of the education and training provided by its member institutions. It was in this context that, among other initiatives, IASIA, in 2012, decided to initiate a worldwide system for the accreditation of public administration education

and training programs. Towards this end, IASIA established the International Commission on Accreditation of Public Administration Education and Training Programs (ICAPA) which is composed of a number of leading figures in the field from throughout the world. The process by which IASIA took the decision to establish such a body was a long and very deliberate one.

In fact, IASIA first took up discussion about the creation of a worldwide accreditation process 20 years ago at an annual conference where Maria Gintowt-Jankowicz, then the Director of Poland's National School of Administration, and subsequently a member of the Country's Constitutional Court, chaired a panel on the topic of accreditation. Panelists included Margo Gordon, then the Dean of the School of Public Affairs at the University of Washington in Seattle and Michael Brintnall, who was then the Executive Director of the US based National Association of Schools of Public Affairs and Administration (NASPAA), which had long been involved in accreditation activities in the United States. While not organized for the purposes of making a specific recommendation, the general consensus was that accreditation was a topic that should continue to be discussed and considered by IASIA.

Throughout the first five years of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, both through its working groups and a variety of other activities, IASIA continued to address the issue of how to most effectively encourage and enhance excellence in public administration education and training. Several initiatives were undertaken but perhaps the organization's most notable response was initiated in partnership with the Division of Public Administration and Development Management of the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN/DPADM).

Just as the issue of excellence in public administration education and training had long concerned IASIA, so too had it been a growing concern for the UN/DPADM. In the face of an increasing number of requests for assistance from public administration education and training institutions throughout the world, UN/DPADM initiated conversations with the leadership of IASIA as to how to address best such matters. After a year of discussions, it was jointly agreed to establish a Task Force on Standards of Excellence for Public Administration Education and Training. In July of 2005, task force members were jointly appointed by Guido Bertucci, the then-Director of UN/DPADM, and Turgay Ergun, the then-President of IASIA. Allan Rosenbaum, a past president of IASIA, was asked to chair the Task Force whose fourteen members came from all regions of the world and included, among others, Barbara Kudrycka, Poland's Minister of Higher Education and the heads of major public administration education and training institutions in Africa, Asia and Latin America, as well as the Executive Director of the Network of Institutes and Schools of Public Administration in Central and Eastern Europe, Ludmila Gajadasova<sup>1</sup>.

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1 The task Force Membership included: Allan Rosenbaum, Chairperson of the UNDESA/IASIA Task Force, Current President of IASIA and Director of the Institute for Public Management and Community Service at Florida International University (FIU), Miami, Florida, USA;

The first meeting of the Task Force occurred in Como, Italy and subsequent meetings occurred in Warsaw, Brussels and Rio de Janeiro, among other places. In line with the Task Force objectives, various members conducted one or more open hearings at public administration conferences in every region of the world. Altogether, 1,500 individuals participated in these hearings. On behalf of the Task Force, the UN undertook a major survey of public administration education and training institutions in transitional countries, which was carried out by one of Africa's most prominent public administration scholars, Jide Balogun. Also, at the direction of the Task Force, the UN commissioned a variety of papers designed to provide relevant background information and research and preparation of the volume, 'Excellence and Leadership in the Public Sector: The Role of Education and Training', edited by Allan Rosenbaum and senior UN administrator, John-Mary Kauzya.

The task force completed its deliberations and issued a report in the Spring of 2008, which was accepted by UN/DPADM and by IASIA at its annual conference in

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Turgay Ergun, Co-Convenor of the Task Force and Director General, Public Administration Institute for Turkey & the Middle East, (TODAIE), Ankara, Turkey, and immediate Past President of IASIA, Brussels, Belgium;

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Jide Balogun; formerly Director General of the Administrative Staff College of Nigeria and Inter Regional Advisor with the U.N.;

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July of 2008 in Kampala, Uganda. That report included the eight Standards of Excellence, as well as criteria by which one might assess an institution's progress towards achieving excellence. In its introduction to the Standards, the Task Force noted its belief that the purpose of public administration education and training is to provide public administrators with the competencies and capacities to contribute to the improvement of the quality of life and the building of a better world, especially for the most economically, socially and politically disadvantaged members of society. It then enumerated its eight Standards of Excellence, which are:

1. **Public Service Commitment:** The faculty and administration of the program are defined by their fundamental commitment to public service. They are, in all of their activities (teaching, training, research, technical assistance and other service activities), at all times absolutely committed to the advancement of the public interest and the building of democratic institutions. This is true within all facets of the program including internal organizational arrangements, as well as programmatic activities at local, regional, national and international levels.
2. **Advocacy of Public Interest Values:** The program's faculty and administration reflect their commitment to the advancement of public service by both their advocacy for, and their efforts to create, a culture of participation, commitment, responsiveness and accountability in all of those organizations and institutions with which they come into contact. In so doing, both by pedagogy and example, they prepare students and trainees to provide the highest quality of public service.
3. **Combining Scholarship, Practice and Community Service:** Because public administration is an applied science, the faculty and administration of the program are committed to the integration of theory and practice and, as such, the program draws upon knowledge and understanding generated both by the highest quality of research and the most outstanding practical experience. Consequently, the faculty, administration and students of the program are actively engaged through its teaching, training, research and service activities with all of its stakeholder communities, from the smallest village or city neighborhood to the global community at large.
4. **The Faculty are Central:** The commitment and quality of the faculty (and/or trainers) is central to the achievement of program goals in all areas of activity. Consequently, there must be, especially in degree granting programs, a full-time, core faculty committed to the highest standards of teaching, training and research and possessing the authority and responsibility appropriate to accepted standards of faculty program governance. This faculty must be paid at a level that allows them to devote the totality of their professional activities to the achievements of the goals and purposes of the program and must be available in adequate numbers consistent with the mission of the program. In that regard, a ratio of one faculty member per twenty graduate level students and at least four full-time faculty members would represent the typical minimum requirements. Faculty teaching responsibilities should not be greater than two academic courses



(or their equivalent in a training institution) at any time in the calendar year in order to allow for necessary involvement in research, training, service and technical assistance activities.

5. **Inclusiveness is at the Heart of the Program:** A critical element in the achievement of excellence in public administration education and training is an unwavering commitment on the part of faculty and administration to the diversity of ideas and participation. The people who participate in programs, including students, trainees, trainers, administrators and faculty, should come from all of the different racial, ethnic, and demographic communities of the society. The ideas, concepts, theories and practices addressed in the program should represent a broad variety of intellectual interests and approaches. Inclusiveness in terms of individual involvement (including sensitivity to issues of ethnicity, nationality, race, gender orientation and accessibility to all) within a program also serves to encourage inclusiveness in terms of ideas. Both forms of inclusiveness, intellectual and participatory, are the hallmarks of excellent programs.
6. **A Curriculum that is Purposeful and Responsive:** A principal goal of public administration education and training is the development of public administrators who will make strong, positive contributions to the public service generally and, in particular, to the organizations they join, or to which they return. This requires public administration education and training programs to have coherent missions that drive program organization and curriculum development. In addition, it is critical that those who educate and train public administrators communicate, work with and, as appropriate, be responsive to the organizations for which they are preparing students and trainees. It also requires that the student and/or trainee be inculcated with a commitment to making a difference and that their education and training prepare them to effectively communicate (both verbally and in writing) with the people that they work with.
7. **Adequate Resources are Critical:** An important prerequisite to creating a program of excellence in public administration education and training is the availability of adequate resources. Many different kinds of resources are required including facilities, technology, library resources and student services (in terms of assistance with meeting such basic needs as housing, health care, etc.). The availability of these resources is obviously a function of the availability of adequate financial resources. Those financial resources must be able to sustain full-time faculty and/or trainers, provide needed assistance to students and faculty (such as funding to participate in international conferences, etc.) and ensure the availability of adequate classroom, research, training and meeting space, as well as individual offices for each faculty member and as needed for students.
8. **Balancing Collaboration and Competition:** Finally, and most importantly, there must be among the program faculty, trainers, administrators and students and/or trainees a sense of common purpose and mission deriving from the program's commitment to the advancement of the public interest. There must also be a sense

of determination, indeed, even competitiveness, that drives the program to be the best and creates a desire to meet and exceed world class standards of excellence.

Subsequent to the release of the Task Force Report, IASIA deliberated at some length regarding next steps in the implementation of the Standards of Excellence Report. Initially, the intention was that the Standards of Excellence would serve principally as a developmental instrument which could be used by any institution, but especially those in developing parts of the world, for self-assessment and institutional development. Towards that end, a committee co-chaired by Bernard Boucault, then the Director of France's *École Nationale d'Administration*, subsequently, Prefect for the Paris region, and Meredith Newman, the then-President of the American Society for Public Administration, considered at length a variety of approaches by which IASIA might assist institutions from throughout the world in utilizing the Standards of Excellence for their own institutional development.

At the same time, the UN/DPADM undertook a variety of initiatives to both publicize and encourage the utilization of the Standards throughout the world. These included organizing workshops on the Standards and their use in many parts of the world, including Kampala, Uganda; Rome, Italy; Rio de Janeiro, Brazil; Warsaw, Poland; and Bali, Indonesia. UN/DPADM also initiated further efforts to promote the Standards through the United Nations Public Administration Network (UNPAN) and publicized the Standards of Excellence at a number of UN-sponsored and organized conferences in many parts of the world.

Individual institutions also found themselves utilizing to the Standards of Excellence as a vehicle to carry out their own self-assessment activities. The School of Public Administration of the University of Pretoria, South Africa, both used the Standards for its own self-assessment and encouraged their use throughout the country. The National Institute of Public Administration of Finland drew upon the Standards of Excellence in its efforts to help the governments of Namibia and Tanzania to establish national training organizations in their countries. The Chinese Academy of Governance utilized the Standards of Excellence as themes for conferences convened involving the leadership of public administration education and training institutions from throughout China and Asia more generally. This, in turn, led to the translation of the final report of the UN/IASIA Task Force into a variety of languages including Arabic, Chinese, French, Italian, Portuguese, Spanish and Turkish and its publication on the UN website.

Encouraged by this quite unexpected, but quite extensive, utilization of the Standards of Excellence Report, further deliberations by the leadership of IASIA and that of the special committee charged with considering further implementation of the Task Force Report led to a decision to initiate a worldwide system of accreditation of public administration education and training. IASIA's institutional membership from Africa and Asia took leading roles in encouraging the IASIA Board of Management to move rapidly forward towards accreditation activities. They anticipated that such activities would be at the center of IASIA's continuing efforts to build a better world

through the building of more effective government as a consequence of promoting excellence in public administration education and training.

### **3. On the potential benefits of accreditation**

An effective accreditation process can produce numerous benefits for the participating institution. The first critical element in successful accreditation activity is the quality of the standards applied in assessing whether an institution qualifies for accreditation. Carefully developed standards, whether highly specific or more general, provide critically important guidelines that enable the faculty of a program to engage in a process of self-assessment and reflection about the state of their program. In so doing, they provide the foundation upon which the most important part of any accreditation activity – institutional self-study and self-assessment – is carried out.

Such standards also serve as a means for encouraging a more self-conscious recognition of the nature of the values which a program promotes and a greater awareness of the knowledge and skills which ought to be provided to the student or trainee. In part, this is because the process of self-assessment, preceding the accreditation site visit, requires an institution to systematically examine what it is doing and why it is doing what it does. In so doing, the program going through accreditation must reach out to all of its various constituencies including students, the local community and other relevant professional organizations. The standards developed for the accreditation process thus serve to provide critically needed guidance in terms of building and encouraging greater excellence in education and training activities.

Equally important, the accreditation process often provides a unique opportunity for individual programs and departments to seek the increased resources necessary for the development of their programs as they seek to gain the approval of the accrediting body. The reality is that even in the best of times, the resources needed to provide high quality education – knowledgeable staff, adequate infrastructure and the like – are almost always in short supply. The effective accreditation process not only provides an opportunity for systematic self-assessment, but it also provides an opportunity to establish and set priorities for future program development. Furthermore, while concern about successfully navigating the accreditation process is not likely to produce a huge influx of new resources for a program, experience in the US and Europe with such matters suggests that accreditation initiatives will frequently result in at least modest investment by senior administrators as they seek to either reinforce the strengths of a program or, alternatively, to address apparent weaknesses.

In both the United States and Europe, accreditation has become highly institutionalized as a powerful tool in fostering and supporting the further development of public administration education and training programs, at least at the Master's degree level. In the United States, for much of the past four decades, the National Association of Schools of Public Affairs and Administration (NASPAA) has carried out a very successful program of accreditation activities which, by all accounts, has proven

to be very useful in terms of building the quality of public administration education and training there. The fact that, with but one or two exceptions, almost every major university program in public administration in the United States has sought and, in most cases, received, accreditation is testimony to the importance that these processes have assumed there.

In Europe, over a dozen years ago, several of that continent's most prominent public administration education and training institutions came together to create the European Association for Public Administration Accreditation (EAPAA) which modeled its activities after NASPAA. Both organizations focused on accrediting only Master's degree programs on the assumption that for Europe and the US that is the principle degree for the preparation of government administrators (EAPAA has recently begun to also accredit Bachelor's programs). They also utilize similar criteria and procedures for the carrying out of accreditation activities. In both cases, there is an accreditation commission which makes the final decisions on the accreditation of a program based upon their assessment of the self-study report prepared by the institution undergoing accreditation and the results of a three days site visit typically carried out by a team of three individuals selected for that purpose by each organization's accreditation body.

#### **4. About the ICAPA process**

While past experience with peer review accreditation in the field of public administration education and training has focused entirely on Master's degree programs, the process which ICAPA initiated some years ago included Bachelor's degree, Master's degree and PhD programs, as well as the training activities carried out both by universities and the world's various types of training institutions. This broader scope is of particular benefit in many parts of the world where ICAPA has begun to carry out accreditation activities since the predominant form of public administration education often is either at Bachelor level or in non-degree programs organized at various national, regional and local training institutions.

The IASIA/ICAPA approach to accreditation varies from more traditional approaches in at least two very important ways. First, it is much more developmental in nature since, in many cases, the institutions with which ICAPA intends to work with in Africa, Asia and Latin America are ones that are themselves involved in transition. Consequently, the IASIA/ICAPA approach to accreditation puts a great deal more emphasis upon assisting institutions to more fully develop their own capacity, and not on the assessment of the current state of their development.

IASIA/ICAPA engages in three distinct types of activities through its accreditation system. The first is advisory in the sense that the ICAPA, drawing upon the resources of IASIA's nearly 200 member institutions, can provide basic advice to developing programs as regards the ways and means by which they can strengthen and build the quality of the education and training which they provide. This is done, obviously, only at the request of an institution, by dispatching one or two individuals to visit

it for three to five days to provide general advice and guidance regarding program development activities.

The second type of activity will involve the development of a roster of high quality, but not quite fully mature programs. These will be ones which have significant islands of strength, but do not meet various of the criteria necessary for formal accreditation. They will, however, be placed upon a list of rostered programs which will be created by the ICAPA. Inclusion on this list indicates that, while not fully developed in all aspects necessary for accreditation, the program does, nevertheless, demonstrate many of the attributes identified with outstanding programs. Finally, for programs that are more fully developed, ICAPA will carry out formal assessment for the purposes of accreditation. The self-assessment process includes not only the faculty and administrators involved in the program, but also requires consultations with all of the program's stakeholders – including students, potential employers, alumni of the program and relevant government officials.

Following appropriate review of the documentary material submitted by the program, ICAPA appoints a site visit team of three (possibly four if more than one program is to be reviewed) individuals. In each case, three of the site-visitors will be members of the ICAPA who are not from the country in which the program is located. One individual might be a practitioner or student in the field selected by the ICAPA (but with the possibility for recommendations of individuals by the program being reviewed).

## **5. Conclusion**

Throughout recorded history, various regions of the world, and sometimes the entire world itself, has gone through periods when a particular ideology or a certain approach to governing has been dominant. However, major events, often unanticipated, can serve to bring about significant changes in prevailing attitudes and philosophies. Beginning in the 1970s and 1980s, many countries entered into an era in which the dominant ethos focused upon minimizing government, and often in its place there was the encouraging of various forms of 'governance that delegated important responsibilities to the private and non-profit sectors. Under such arrangements, government assumed the role of a mere partner which joined with the private sector and civil society to guide the development of the broader society. The financial crisis that came to a head now nearly a decade ago began a slow process of ushering in a new era. Many countries seemed to be moving from a 'governance' era to a 'post-governance era', in which government, in some cases in significantly less democratic forms, has returned to a more central role.

Inevitably, however, new eras present new challenges and, most assuredly, these new challenges place new demands upon the institutions preparing people to manage the governments that will shape the changing times. Many of the new challenges are, in fact, quite familiar to those who are concerned with the education of the next generation of public administrators. Whether new or old, however, these challenges

require a renewed attention to the manner in which the next generation of public administrators will be educated and the quality of education and training provided for them. IASIA's initiation of an international accreditation system represents an important step in this regard.

Concerns about how its member institutions can best prepare themselves to meet the demands of changing times has been at the center of IASIA's activities since its inception. This concern has been manifested in many different ways. It can be seen in the activities of and the continuing renewal of IASIA's working groups. Most significantly, it was with these realities in mind that the United Nations and IASIA sought to develop the Standards of Excellence for Public Administration Education and Training. Originally begun as an exercise intended to produce a document useful for self-assessment purposes, the report of the Task Force generated much greater interest and attention in many parts of the world than had been anticipated. This, as well as a number of other developments, led to the establishment of ICAPA which is enabling IASIA to respond in new and more effective ways to the needs of its member institutions and the world of public administration education and training as well.

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