

AFRICAN UNION

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**THIRD CONFERENCE OF AFRICAN MINISTERS
IN CHARGE OF COMMUNICATION AND
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGIES
03 - 07 August 2010
Abuja, NIGERIA**

AU/CITMC-3/MIN/Rpt/(III)

REPORT OF THE MINISTERIAL SESSION

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The 3rd Ordinary Session of the African Union Conference for Ministers in charge of Communication and Information Technologies (CITMC-3) was held from 6 to 7 August 2010, in the congress hall of the Transcorp Hilton Hotel, Abuja, Federal Republic of Nigeria. The experts' meeting held from 3 to 5 of August 2010 preceded the Ministerial Conference. The Ministers deliberated on the report of the experts' session and other agenda items.

II. PARTICIPATION

2. The following Member States took part in the meeting:

Algeria, Angola, Burkina Faso, Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, Egypt, Eritrea, Gabon, The Gambia, Ghana, Mali, Mauritania, Mozambique, Nigeria, Saharawi Democratic Arab Republic, Senegal, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Sudan, the United Republic of Tanzania, Tunisia, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

3. The following Regional Economic Communities (RECs) were also in attendance: Economic Community of Central Africa States (ECCAS) and Economic Community of West Africa States (ECOWAS).

4. The following African and International Organizations and Agencies also took part: African Telecommunication Union (ATU), Pan African Postal Union (PAPU), United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA), École Supérieure Multinationale des Télécommunications (ESMT), International Telecommunication Union (ITU), Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD).

5. Representatives from the private sector and the following organizations and associations were also present: Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN), West African Telecommunications Regulatory Assembly (WATRA).

III. OPENING CEREMONY

Welcome Statement by H.E. Mr. Labaran Maku, Minister of State, Information and Communications, Federal Republic of Nigeria,

6. The Minister of State welcomed the delegates and recalled the commitments of the African leaders from the 14th Assembly of the AU held in

Addis Ababa in February 2010 and dedicated to the ICT “development in Africa, Challenges and Prospects for development”.

7. He stated that the huge digital gap that separates Africa from the rest of the world has been identified as a collective challenge that Africa must meet to boost economic development and good governance in the continent.

8. The Minister concluded his remarks by recalling that the challenge for Africa at this moment is the development of the Broadband Infrastructure adding that this Conference was an opportunity to create a pathway forward.

Statement by Dr. Elham Mahmoud Ahmed Ibrahim, Commissioner for Infrastructure and Energy of the African Union Commission,

9. The Commissioner expressed, on behalf of His Excellency Jean Ping, Chairperson of the African Union Commission, and on the behalf of the AU delegation, her gratitude to **Dr. Goodluck Ebele Jonathan** President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, to the Government and the People Nigeria, for the warm welcome and excellent organization of the conference. She further thanked the experts for the hard work and input to the ministerial session which will facilitate the Ministers’ deliberations.

10. After underscoring the vital role of Information and Communication Technologies in the life of the citizens and in the organization of businesses, the Commissioner presented the context of Information Society in Africa. She highlighted the underdevelopment and the insufficiency of infrastructure in the continent as the major problems and barrier to economic and social development of our States and to the integration of the Continent.

11. The Commissioner concluded by saying that she has “no doubt that our conference will take the appropriate decision as to foster the concretization of these initiatives and projects”and wished fruitful deliberations.

Statement by Mr. Brahim Sanou, Head of the ITU Regional Office for Africa, delivering the message of the ITU Secretary General, Dr. Hamadoun Touré,

12. In his remark, Dr. Touré indicated that we should always be aware of the need to include the maximum number of Africans in the Information Society by focusing on the broadband infrastructure. In this context, partners of the Kigali Connect Africa Summit committed to invest USD 55 billion in Africa by 2015. As at the end of 2009, 21 billion were already invested. He also noted the creation of the Broadband Commission by ITU and UNESCO to accelerate attainment of the MDGs.

13. Dr. Touré further addressed the cyber security issues by stressing the need for Africa to put in place technical, legal and regulatory measures to secure the cyberspace, protect children and other vulnerable segments of the population. He also addressed the use of telecommunications for emergency preparedness and response as well as disaster management to prevent and mitigate natural disasters.

14. Concluding on a note of optimism he described Africa as the market of the future. He requested the African participants to the Plenipotentiary Conference to be well prepared in order to properly address the continent's needs in the post-crisis ITU Strategic Plan.

Statement by H.E. Prof. Dora Nkem Akunyili, Minister of Information and Communications, Federal Republic of Nigeria

15. The Minister started by expressing her great pleasure at being among the personalities of the 3rd ordinary session of the CITMC and welcomed all delegates and participants to Abuja the capital of Nigeria.

16. She also stated her pride at the re-nomination of the Secretary General of the ITU Dr. Hamadoun Touré and wished him the best of luck.

17. The Minister then underscored her pleasant at the fruitful outcome of the Expert Session, pointed to the journey towards the deadline of the MDGs and how Africa could make the difference by meeting the said goals.

18. She emphasized the need to integrate the ICT into a broader policy framework and coordinated with the different programmes at both national and continental level.

19. She drew the attention of the meeting to the importance role of the CITMC as the highest policy making entity in the continent for the ICT sector and highlighted the challenges during the chairmanship of Nigeria.

20. The Minister recalled the outcome of the 14th Ordinary session of the Assembly of the Africa Union dedicated to the ICT: “challenges and prospects for development” in the continent, and describing it as a life-time opportunity for the African leaders to speak with one voice to make ICT a major platform for development.

21. The Minister Concluded by wishing the delegates and participants a pleasant stay in Nigeria and invited them to enjoy their stay in Abuja.

Opening Address by H.E. ARCH. Mohammed Namadi SAMBO, GCON, Vice President, Federal Republic of Nigeria,

22. The Vice President, after welcoming the delegates stated that the conference was a follow up of the first two editions held in Egypt and a symbol of our collective vision for ICT as a fundamental premise for establishing an economy based on knowledge and innovation.

23. He added that to achieve rapid and sustained economic, social development, Africa must overcome the knowledge and technology gap between the continent and the developed world

24. The vice President presented the status of the ICT sector in Nigeria and urged the participants to focus the deliberations on harmonization of telecommunication policies and regulations and on building a strong broadband infrastructure to reinforce the African Internet Network.

Vote of Thanks was delivered by Mr. Mohamed Bashar, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Information and Communications, Federal Republic of Nigeria

IV. PROCEDURAL MATTERS

1. Adoption of Agenda and Work Programme

25. The meeting adopted the following agenda:

a) Procedural Matters

b) Report by the Conference outgoing Bureau

c) Working Sessions

- Consideration of the report of the experts' session Governance of the CITMC
- Consideration of draft Declaration
- Date and venue of the next CIT Ministerial Conference (CITMC-4)
- Consideration of the Draft Final Communiqué
- Any other business
- Consideration and adoption of the Ministerial session report
- Vote of thanks

d) Closing ceremony

2. Election of CITMC-3 Bureau and Steering Committee

26. The Ministerial meeting elected the following Members to the Bureau and Steering Committee of the CITMC-3:

EASTERN AFRICA:

- Republic of Sudan Chair of the Bureau and the Steering Committee
- United Republic of Tanzania Member of the Steering Committee

SOUTHERN AFRICA:

- Republic of Zimbabwe First Vice Chair of the Bureau and Steering Committee.
- Republic of Angola Member of the Steering Committee

CENTRAL AFRICA:

- Republic of Chad Second Vice Chair of the Bureau and Steering Committee.
- Republic of Gabon Member of the Steering Committee

NORTHERN AFRICA:

- Arab Republic of Egypt Third Vice Chair of the Bureau and Steering Committee.
- Republic of Tunisia Member of the Steering Committee

WESTERN AFRICA

- Federal Republic of Nigeria Rapporteur of the Bureau and Steering Committee.
- Republic of Senegal Member of the Steering Committee

27. The elected chair of the Conference, the Minister of Sudan being not present in person and because of the unavailability of the first vice-chair, the Minister of Zimbabwe, the meeting was chaired by the second vice-chair, the honorable Minister of Chad assisted by the honorable State Minister of Nigeria as Rapporteur and the AUC as secretariat.

V. REPORT BY THE CONFERENCE OUTGOING BUREAU

28. The outgoing Chair of the CITMC Steering Committee, listed the activities performed during Nigeria's tenure and their outcomes including:

- The organization of the meeting of the Bureau of the CITMC in July 2009 in preparation for the 14th Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the African Union;
- The initiation of the Extraordinary Session of the CITMC held in November 2009 for the preparation of the 14th Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the African Union dedicated to ICT, January 2010, Addis Ababa;

VI. CONSIDERATION OF THE REPORT OF THE EXPERTS SESSION

29. The Experts' Session report was presented by Egypt as the Rapporteur of the outgoing CITMC Bureau.

30. Following the presentation, delegates adopted the report and raised the following issues :

- The need for energy for the ICT networks specifically in the remote and rural areas
- The necessity to exchange best practices and experiences among member States and Regions for capacity building and Human Capital Development
- The necessity for the elaboration of awareness programmes for better use of CIT by the people
- Policy makers must provide the enabling environment for investors to boost ICT an economic development

VII. CONSIDERATION AND ADOPTION OF THE DECLARATION

31. The Ministers adopted the **"2010 Abuja Declaration"**

VIII. DATE AND VENUE OF THE NEXT CIT MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE

32. The Ministers appreciated and accepted the offer from Sudan to host next session in Khartoum in 2012.

IX. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

33. Participants called for the support of the African candidates for the ITU different organs

34. Participants thanked the Nigeria and the AUC for the organization of the Conference and reiterated their request to strengthen AUC capacity for the optimum implementation of the 2010 Abuja Declaration.

X. CLOSING SESSION

35. At the closing session, The Commissioner of Infrastructure and Energy expressed her gratitude to all delegates and to the participants for the outcomes of the meeting.

36. H.E. Prof. Dora Nkem Akunyili, Minister of Information and Communications, Federal Republic of Nigeria, also welcomed the results of the conference and thanked participants and organizers for the outstanding work and emphasized on the need to work in harmony to implement the adopted declaration

37. The Chair of the Ministerial session in his turn thanked all and wished for all to meet in 2012 in Khartoum

XI. CONSIDERATION OF THE COMMUNIQUÉ AND VOTE OF THANKS

38. The final communiqué was read by the Rapporteur in the presence of the media

39. The vote of thanks was read by the South Africa Representative

40. **The meeting was adjourned at 14 hours local time on the 7th of August 2010**

Abuja 07 of August 2010