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**Department of Infrastructure and Energy
Information Society Division**

**Workshop for AU Member States on Cyber-
Strategy, Cyber-Legislation and Setting up
CERTs**

Addis Ababa 23 – 27, July 2018

Concept Note

ICTs have become indispensable tools for governments, businesses, civil society, and individuals across the globe. These technologies have spurred tremendous economic development, increased the free flow of information, and promoted gains in efficiency, productivity and creativity across Africa.

However, as our societies become more interconnected and dependent on the Internet and ICTs, we become more vulnerable to the misuse of these technologies and we need to ensure that the security of our people and critical infrastructure is continually improved in order to maintain users trust and reliability of services provided through these critical infrastructure.

Cybersecurity risks pose some of the most serious economic and national security challenges of the 21st century today, different countries around the world are vulnerable to electronic attacks, including attacks on critical infrastructure and utilities, as well as cyber espionage. African countries need to defend their ICT, critical network infrastructure and banking systems with strong local hub of well trained and world class technicians who would assist their governments to preserve their country digital independence.

This is why in their Declaration on Internet Governance adopted in the AU Summit of January 2018, the AU Heads of State and Governments reaffirmed their “... *commitment to the need for stability, for the safety of citizens and enterprises, confidentiality of online data security, through the AU Convention on Cybersecurity and Personal Data Protection, and taking into account the scalability of Africa’s Internet infrastructure..*”;

They pledged “...*to work together in the fight against the inappropriate use of Information and Communication Technologies in a bid to reach a consensus, in the medium term, on the best cyber security mechanisms and practices in Africa...*”. They also “...*undertake to cooperate at regional and international levels to combat cybercrimes while promoting personal data protection and respecting human rights within appropriate legal frameworks*. In so doing, the Heads of State and Governments intend to preserve the integrity and reliability of the regional Internet Infrastructure as well as local users’ trust and reliance on the Internet for secure electronic transactions

This declaration of the Heads of State and Government came in support of the 2017 Addis Ababa Declaration of the Ministers in charge of Communications and ICT which was endorsed by the Executive Council whereby they committed themselves to:

- collaborate with relevant African and international stakeholders on the Internet Governance, Cybersecurity and Cyber Criminality
- ensure the follow up of the signing and ratification by Member States of the African Union Convention on Cyber-Security and Personal Data Protection and to dedicate appropriate resources for the implementation of a comprehensive Cybersecurity programs including assistance to AU Member states to adopt cyber strategies and Cyber legislations and to establish CIRT/CERT;

The Ministers requested also the AU Commission to undertake **the** necessary measures to adopt the cyber-security as a flagship project of the African Union Agenda 2063;

In 2015 the AU Commission in collaboration with US Department and Symantec surveyed 32 of 55 Member States, geographically and economically diverse to find out that:

- Only 08 of them has National Strategy on Cybersecurity
- Only 11 have adopted Cybercrime laws
- Only 13 do have National CERT

It is against this background that the African Union Commission in cooperation with African (RECs and International partners from Public and Private Sectors is organizing for AU Member States a workshop on Cybersecurity Strategies, Cybersecurity legislation and setting CIRT/CERT. The Workshop will take place in Addis Ababa at the AU HQ from 25-29 June 2018 and aims at providing AU Member States with the appropriate knowledge to prepare and adopt National Cybersecurity and National Cyber legislations as well as requirements for the setting of a Computer Emergency Incident/ Response Team (CERT/CIRT).

The AU Commission will sponsor 3 experts (a Policy Maker, a Legislators, and Technicians) involved in Cyber security policy and strategies, cyber legislation and building CERTs.