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**DEPARTMENT OF INFRASTRUCTURE AND ENERGY**

**AND**

**DEPARTMENT OF INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION**

**CONCEPT NOTE ON THE ORGANIZATION OF THE THIRD SPECIALIZED TECHNICAL COMMITTEE (STC) ON COMMUNICATION AND ICT**

**Sharm El Sheikh (Egypt), 22-26October 2019**

1. **Introduction**
2. The Specialized Technical Committees (STCs), which constitute an important technical organ of the African Union (AU), were established under Article 25 of the African Economic Community Treaty (the Abuja Treaty). With the transformation of the OAU into the AU, the STCs were carried over by the Constitutive Act of the African Union under Articles 14 to 16.
3. Following AU Assembly referenced Assembly/AU/Dec.227 (XII) reconfiguring the existing STCs the STC on Communication and Information Technologies called Committee on Communication and ICT (CCICT) has been established as one the fourteen committees set up to work in close collaboration with the various departments of the Commission (AUC) so as to provide well-informed inputs in their areas of specialization to the work of the Executive Council. It’s also expected the Committee be involved in monitoring programme development and implementation by the AUC and Regional Economic Communities (RECs) on behalf of the Executive Council.
4. The first and second ordinary sessions of the Committee took place in September 2015 and November 2017, respectively. In line with the provisions of the adopted Rules of Procedure that the STC should be organized every two years, the second ordinary session should take place in 2019. An extra-ordinary session was organized in 2016.
5. This concept note aims at providing substantial information on the modalities of the organization of the planned meeting including objectives, agenda, date, venue, expected results and participation.
6. **Objectives**
7. As per its mandate, the major objectives of the third ordinary session of the CCICT are as follows:
8. Prepare projects and programmes of the Union and submit them to the Executive Council;
9. Ensure the supervision, follow-up and evaluation of the implementation of adopted programmes and decisions taken by the organs of the Union;
10. Ensure the coordination and harmonization of projects and programmes of the Union;
11. Submit to the Executive Council either on its own initiative or at the request of the Executive council reports and recommendations on the implementation of the AU programmes;
12. Carry out any other functions assigned to it for the purpose of ensuring the implementation of the provisions of the African Union Constitutive Act;
13. Consider the progress made in the implementation and the way forward on the following projects:
    * + African Internet Exchange System (AXIS);
      + Dot Africa;
      + Pan African e-Network;
      + Connectivity of Post offices
      + Establishment of the Pan-African TV and Radio Channels.
14. Adopt projects and programmes of the Union on issues related to Communication and ICT.
15. In consideration of the 2017 Addis Ababa Declaration and the 2018 Assembly Declaration on Internet Government on Internet and Digital Economy that reaffirmed digitalization agenda as an essential and the greatest opportunity for Africa to drive the fundamental changes of the world in the 21st century and catalyst in achieving national development agenda, the AU Agenda 2063 aspirations and the UN Agenda 2030 development goals and therefore must be given the highest priority, the 3rd Ordinary Session of the Committee will consider and adopt the Comprehensive Digital Transformation Strategy for Africa.
16. The meeting will also offer opportunity for capacity building on rural access to basic infrastructure.
17. **Date and venue**
18. Following the renouncement of the Republic of Algeria, the third session of the CCICT is scheduled to be held on 22-26 October 2019 in Sharm El Sheikh (Egypt). The planned program is as follows:
    * 1. Experts session on 122-24 October 2019;
      2. Ministerial session: 22-26 October 2019.
19. **Agenda**
20. The draft agenda includes:
    * + Reports of the outgoing Bureau and the AU Commission
      + Consideration and adoption of the implementation of projects
      + Consideration of issues related to Internet:
      + Comprehensive Digital Strategy for Africa;
      + Policy and Regulation Initiative for Digital Africa (PRIDA);
      + Unlocking access to basic infrastructure for rural and remote areas;
      + …..
21. **Participation**

1. The CCICT will gather Ministers in charge of Communications and Information Technologies and Ministers in charge of Information and broadcasting, senior officials, private sector and media from AU member States in addition to participants from:
   * 1. Regional Economic Communities (CER)
     2. AU Specialized Institutions (African telecommunications Union-ATU, Pan African Postal Union-PAPU, …)
     3. African Development Bank (AfDB)
     4. Smart Africa
     5. UN Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA)
     6. African and International Specialized Organizations and partners (ITU, UPU, European Union, …)
     7. African Media Organizations and Houses (Federation of African Journalists-FAJ, African Editors Forum-TAEF, International Federation of Journalists-IFJ, African Media Initiative-AMI, …);
     8. Private sector, academia and NGO.
2. **Expected results**
3. The expected result will include:
   * + Ministerial Declaration with recommendations drawn from the reports, strategies and action plans for projects and programs implementation; and,
     + Adopted Comprehensive Digital Transformation Strategy for Africa.
4. **Conference documents**

The conference documents are available on <https://au.int/en/newsevents/20190916/third-ordinary-session-african-union-au-specialized-technical-committee-stc>