AU – Northern Africa Regional Internet Exchange Point and Regional Internet Carrier workshop

Nouakchott, Mauritania – 10th June, 2014: On 8th June 2014, an African Union (AU) led Northern Africa Regional Internet Exchange Point (RIXP) and Regional Internet Carrier (RIC) Workshop was opened in Nouakchott, Mauritania with the aim to foster stakeholder discussions on supporting National Internet Exchange Points and Internet Service Providers to grow and become Regional Internet Exchange Points (RIXP) and Regional Internet Carriers (RIC) in order to promote intra-Africa internet traffic to be exchanged within the continent.

Organized by the Department of Infrastructure and Energy of the African Union Commission, in collaboration with the Ministry of Employment, Training, and Information Communication Technologies of Mauritania, the event aims to discuss and make recommendations on how to address slow and expensive exchange of intra-African traffic via overseas hubs.

“The establishment of National and Regional Internet Exchange Points will provide the African continent with the opportunity to keep pace with advanced Nations and accelerate trade and greater integration of the continent” Said the Hon. Minister of Employment, Training and Information Communication Technologies of Mauritania, Hon. Ismael BEDDE CHEIKH SIDIYA in his opening remarks.

The five (5) day workshop is a strategic follow up to the support provided by the African Internet Exchange System (AXIS) project of the AU to establish National Internet Exchange Points (IXPs). The workshop is expected to adopt policy recommendations to promote local hosting and peering and agree on guiding minimum criteria for selecting national internet exchange points to be supported to grow into regional internet exchange points.
“We are in the era of the internet of things and things of internet for which Africa must be ready and should not miss this digital era like it did for the industrialization era. Today Africa is currently paying a huge amount of money to overseas carriers to exchange “local” (intra-continental) traffic on our behalf. This is both a costly as well as an inefficient way of handling intra-continental exchange of Internet traffic” said Mr. Moctar Yedaly, Head of Information Society Division of the AUC in his opening remarks.

The workshop attracted fifty five delegates from the Ministries responsible for ICT, Regulators, Internet Exchange Points (IXPs), Internet Service Providers (ISPs) and Telecommunication Operators of the following Member States of the Northern Africa Region of the African Union: Algeria, Egypt, Mauritania, Tunisia, and Saharawi Arab Republic.

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