

AFRICAN UNION
الاتحاد الأفريقي



UNION AFRICAINE
UNIÃO AFRICANA

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia P. O. Box 3243 Telephone: 5517 700 Fax: 5517844
Website: www.africa-union.org

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

AU/CITMC-3/EXP/Rept.(III)

REPORT OF EXPERTS' SESSION

REPORT OF EXPERTS' SESSION

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The meeting of the experts of the Third Conference of African Ministers in charge of Communication and Information Technologies was held at the Transcorp Hilton Hotel, Abuja, Federal Republic of Nigeria, from 3 to 5 August 2010.

II. ATTENDANCE

2. The following Member States took part in the meeting: Algeria, Angola, Burkina Faso, Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, Egypt, Gabon, The Gambia, Ghana, Mali, Mauritania, Mozambique, Nigeria, Saharawi Democratic Arab Republic, Senegal, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Sudan, Tanzania, Tunisia, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

3. The following Regional Economic Communities (RECs) were also in attendance: Economic Community of Central Africa States (ECCAS), 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), Ecole Supérieure Multinationale des Télécommunications (ESMT), International Telecommunication Union (ITU), Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD).

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

6. The list of participants is attached as Annex I

III. OPENING CEREMONY

7. At the opening ceremony, the following remarks and speeches were made:

Welcome Remarks of Mr. Mohammed S. BASHAR Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Information and Communications, Federal Republic of Nigeria.

8. Mr. Mohammed S. BASHAR started his remarks by welcoming participants to the 3rd Ordinary Session of the CIT Ministerial Conference.

9. He emphasized that, African ICT development hung on the deliberations that would take place in the next three days. He stated that the decisions that the Ministers would adopt and subsequent endorsement by the Heads of State and Government, would accelerate development in the continent.

10. Mr. Mohammed S. BASHAR concluded his remarks by recalling that ICT plays a vital role in development. He therefore appealed for further mobilization of resources to address the acute shortage of broadband capacity in Africa and to tackle

legal, policy and regulatory obstacles for cross-border provision of ICT infrastructure and services.

Remarks of Mr. Aboubakari BABA-MOUSSA, Director for Infrastructure and Energy at the African Union Commission

11. After conveying his gratitude to the Government and the Authorities of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, Mr. Aboubakari BABA-MOUSSA stated that since May 2008, Nigeria has chaired the CIT Ministerial Conference and done a lot to promote closer dialogue and cooperation for better participation in the continent in building the knowledge society.

12. He recalled that this Third Ordinary Session of the CIT Ministers Conference would consider the implementation of the various decisions on ICT development including those of the CITMC-2 held in Cairo, Egypt, on 14 May 2008 and the Sessions of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the African Union.

13. Concluding, he assured participants of the readiness of the African Union Commission to deploy effort to implement the decisions that would emerge from the meeting.

Opening speech by Mr LABARAN MAKU, the Minister of State of Information & Communications of the Federal Republic of Nigeria

14. On behalf of Nigeria's Federal Ministry of Information and Communications, the Minister heartily welcomed the African experts and other stakeholders to the 3rd Ordinary Session of the CIT Ministerial Conference

15. The Honourable Minister expressed the hope that this Conference would avail us the opportunity to deliberate, analyze and proffer solutions that would advance the development of ICT in Africa.

16. He emphasized that the 2nd CIT Ministers Conference held in Cairo, Egypt in 2008 had adopted key recommendations to guide the sector in the continent. He stated that this year in Abuja, Nigeria, the CITMC-3 would look back on these recommendations, and take stock of the extent to which the various Governments had gone towards their implementation.

17. The Honourable Minister underlined the need to acknowledge the efforts of Member States in executing the mandate of the Bureau and highlighted a number of initiatives that have been taken by the Government of Nigeria towards the implementation of the Cairo recommendations.

IV. PROCEDURAL MATTERS

18. The meeting adopted the Agenda and the Work Programme as proposed (Annex II).

V. PROCEEDINGS AND FORMAT OF THE EXPERTS SESSION

19. On the proceedings and format of the Experts Session, the AUC led the participants through the sets of working documents prepared by AUC and submitted for consideration. Each agenda item would be subject of a paper and/or a presentation. The latter would contain pertinent background information and proposals.

20. Draft recommendations would be considered by the experts. After experts' consideration and adoption, these recommendations would form a set to be submitted to the Ministers for consideration and adoption.

Report of the CITMC Steering Committee Chairperson

21. Engineer Solomon INGBA, representing the 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;
- The organization of CITMC-3.

General Presentation of AUC Report

22. Mr. Moctar Yedaly, Head of Telecommunications and Post Division, summarised the report of the AUC (refer to Working Documents AU/CITMC/EXP/2(III)).

23. Following the presentation, the participants made the following comments. Experts recommended the AU Commission to provide:

- A consolidated report on the general status of ICT in Africa for the CITMC;
- Timelines and specific measurable objectives for implementation of projects where applicable ;
- A benchmarking on the approaches for harmonization of the sector.

VI. IMPLEMENTATION STATUS OF DECLARATIONS AND DECISIONS ADOPTED DURING PREVIOUS SESSIONS OF THE CIT MINISTERS' CONFERENCE AND AFRICAN UNION ASSEMBLY SESSIONS

PART 1: The Reference Framework for the Harmonization of Telecoms and ICT Policies and Regulations in Africa

- a) **Programme for Infrastructure Development in Africa (PIDA) (Doc-001 /PIDA /Eng Rev1)**

24. The presentation highlighted that the Programme for Infrastructure Development in Africa (PIDA) is a joint initiative of the AUC, the AfDB and NEPAD.

25. It further underscored the main objective of PIDA, which is, to maximize efforts and use of resources and to enable African stakeholders to speak with one voice on the basis of a common agenda and a common vision for infrastructure development.

26. Participants were informed that PIDA covers four sectors: transport, energy, telecommunications/ICT and trans-boundary water sector, and addressed the regional and continental dimensions of these sectors. It would be implemented in two major phases: study phase and implementation phase.

27. The outcomes of the implementation of the PIDA study phase are: (i) sector policies; (ii) regional and continental infrastructure programs, projects and master plan ;(iii) priority actions plans; (iv) funding measures and monitoring and evaluation processes.

28. Regarding the implementation phase, it was noted that the sectors studies started in May 2010 and that PIDA was officially launched on 24 July in Kampala during the 15th African Union Summit. In addition, the Kick-Off Workshop on the inception report of the study was held on 28-30 July 2010 in Addis Ababa. The total cost of the study is 7.78 million Euros and it is planned to carry out the study in 18 months.

b) NEPAD Planning and Coordinating Agency (NPCA) Broadband Projects (Doc. 002/NPCA/ Eng Rev1)

29. The NEPAD ICT Broadband Infrastructure Program aims to connect all African countries to one another and to the rest of the world through existing and planned submarine and terrestrial cable systems. The program involves the development of the NEPAD ICT Broadband Infrastructure Network (NEPAD Network) comprising two segments:

- UHURUNET: a submarine cable system encircling the continent and ensuring that every coastal and island country is connected to a submarine cable;
- UMOJANET: a cross-border terrestrial network linking the capital city of each country to capital cities of its neighbouring countries.

30. The NEPAD ICT Broadband Infrastructure Program was adopted by the NEPAD Heads of State and Government Implementation Committee (HSGIC) as a top priority of the NEPAD at its meeting held in Abuja on 9 March, 2003.

31. The developmental objectives of the NEPAD Network are: (i) reduce the cost of communication in Africa to a level comparable to those charged in developed countries, and (ii) have abundant, reliable and secure broadband connectivity in all countries of Africa.

32. The expected results are: (i) by the end of 2012, all coastal and island countries in Africa should be connected to broadband submarine cables, (ii) by the end of 2014, all land-locked countries in Africa should be connected to submarine cables via cross-border terrestrial broadband links, and (iii) by the end of 2015, a majority of African countries should be connected to their neighbours by cross-border terrestrial broadband links.

33. Achievement of the above results and the developmental objectives of the NEPAD Network would go a long way in enabling Africa to actively compete in the global knowledge economy. The NEPAD ICT Broadband Infrastructure Program would also contribute significantly to the integration of the continent and enable trade, social and cultural interchange to take place with ease and affordability.

c) RASCOM Satellites Project (Doc-003/RASCOM/ Eng Rev1)

34. RASCOM mission is to provide, on commercial basis, efficient and economic means of telecommunications in all areas in African countries to meet their various ICT connectivity requirements using a Regional African Satellite System, complemented as necessary by other appropriate technologies and properly integrated into existing and/or planned national networks, with a view to fostering the development and integration of Africa. Today, RASCOM has 45 member countries plus the West African Development Bank (BOAD) as a non-signatory member.

35. RASCOM acquired the orbital slot for Africa in 2002 at 2.9 degrees East and the first financing closed in 2003. The construction of the first Pan African satellite was completed in 2006 and launched in 2007. It covers the entire African Continent. The commercial operations started in 2008. The Pan African e-network - a joint project of the Indian Government and the African Union Commission - is currently served by the RASCOM satellite. The second generation of RASCOM satellite has been launched on 04 august 2010.

Comments and Recommendations on the presentations on PIDA, NEPAD broadband projects and RASCOM satellite.

Comments:

36. Following the presentations, the meeting made the following comments:

- i) The need to collect and disseminate pertinent information about on-going ICT projects within the continent;
- ii) Define the level of intervention of States in the governance of PIDA;
- iii) Establish mechanisms to ensure inter-regional connectivity (for example, connectivity between Nigeria, Niger and Algeria) and promote public- private partnerships;
- iv) On RASCOM, there is need for information to be disseminated to all AU members as the matter is important pertaining to the privatization of INTELSAT and the need for Africa to take up the opportunity to secure allocation of unused ITSO orbital space and resources.

Recommendations:

37. The Honourable Ministers are invited to:

- i) Note the progress achieved in the implementation of PIDA, the challenges and benefits and appeal to Member States to contribute to the implementation and participate in all phases of the project;
- ii) Direct the African Union Commission to strengthen the governance of the implementation of this important programme by appointing a focal point for each of the projects in and for each relevant region/country;
- iii) Note the progress achieved in the implementation of the NEPAD ICT broadband infrastructure programme and the review of the Kigali Protocol, and call upon Member States to actively participate in the on-going review of the Protocol;
- iv) Note the Resolution No. 3 of the RASCOM Assembly of Parties which aims at supporting RASCOM in securing the orbital/spectrum resources required to accommodate follow on continental satellites, and applying as a block to secure allocation of unused ITSO orbital resources to Africa as a priority.

d) Harmonization of ICT Policy in Sub-Saharan Africa (HIPSSA) Project (Doc-005/HIPSSA/Eng- Rev1)

38. The project for the “Harmonization of the ICT Policies in Sub-Saharan Africa” (HIPSSA) aims to support the African Union, the Regional Economic Communities (RECs) and their respective member countries (43 beneficiary countries) in developing and promoting the use of harmonized ICT policies and regulatory frameworks on to ICT markets in the sub-region and in providing human capacity building in the field of ICT.

39. Part of a common global initiative of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) and the European Union (EU) to the benefit of ACP countries, this project contributes actively to the implementation of the “AU Reference framework for harmonization of telecommunications/ICT policies and regulation in Africa” adopted by the 2nd CITMC. The HIPSSA project has created a successful dynamic regarding the development of a harmonized regulatory environment in Africa taking into account the high degree of heterogeneity of its various sub-regions.

40. Reaching its mid-term the project has already delivered the following outputs: (1) publication of a comparative study of all regional harmonization initiatives, (2) development and update of regional acts in partnership with RECs like the Economic Community of Central Africa States (ECCAS) and the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and regional associations of regulators like the West Africa Telecommunication Regulators Assembly (WATRA) and (3) the implementation of the regional acts at national level in a number of beneficiary countries. Further

activities in progress include the cross-border frequency coordination and regulatory benchmarking at regional and pan-African levels.

e) Harmonization of ICT policies across Africa: Presented by Bashir Gwandu, PhD, Executive Commissioner, Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC)

41. The presentation covered the following issues:

- Performance of Mobile Market;
- Low ICT index for Africa;
- Broadband, Its Trends, Gaps and Impediments;
- Advantages of Spectrum Harmonization;
- Advantages of Sub-1000MHz Spectrum in Broadband and Challenges of Switch-over;
- Economic Impact of Mobile and the Synergy to be derived from Switch-over;
- Digital Dividend Across the World;
- Nigeria's Peculiarities of Minimal Dividend;
- Proposal for Dividend Utilization;
- Harmonization of policies/Frames for Undersea and Cross-border fibre;
- Harmonization of Cyber-security Framework;
- Harmonization of Consumer Protection framework;
- Harmonization on Rural Access;
- QoS Policy Harmonization.

Comments and Recommendations on the presentation on HIPSSA and Harmonization on policies across Africa

Comment

42. After these presentations by the representative of ITU and NCC, the meeting made the following comment:

- i) Access to e-applications can be effective only with provision of broadband infrastructure.

Recommendations

43. The Honourable CIT Ministers are invited to:

- i) Note the progress on the implementation of the HIPSSA project and its positive contribution to the implementation of the "AU Reference Framework for harmonization Telecom/ICT policies and regulation in Africa";
- ii) Urge Member States to participate in and contribute to, the implementation of the project at national and regional levels;

- iii) Clarify the concepts of law making and regulation and also clearly spell out and separate the roles in terms of policy making and regulation;
- iv) Ensure that analyses are conducted by geographical regions given the fact that some countries are members of more than one REC and support the extensive roll out of the HIPSSA project's approach in the continent;
- v) Set up a task force in each of AU sub-region to prepare a multilateral administrative agreement on cross-border frequency coordination;
- vi) Request the African Union Commission and the ITU to work together with the donors and all development partners to expand the project in order to implement the remaining components of the Reference Framework adopted by the CITMC-2.

f) Cyber-security (Doc-004/Cyber-security/ Eng – Rev1)

44. The Extraordinary Conference of African Union Ministers in charge of Communication and Information Technologies meeting in Johannesburg, South Africa, from 2 to 5 November, 2009 requested the AUC to develop jointly with the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), a convention on cyber legislation based on the continent's needs, and which is compliant with the legal and regulatory requirements on electronic transactions, cyber security and personal data protection (EXT/CITMC/MIN/Decl. (I)).

45. Cyber security has many dimensions, and people ultimately expect cyberspace systems to function in a trustworthy environment despite many potential threats.

46. Providing legal protection to the information society system of values is a necessity essentially made manifest in the need for appropriate legislation to combat cyber crime. The aim of the convention on cyber security is to provide guidelines for the development of such legislation.

47. The objectives are: (i) define key cyber terminologies in legislation, (ii) develop general principles and specific provisions on cyber legislation, (iii) outline the cyber legislative measures required at Member States level, and (iv) develop general principles and specific provisions on international cooperation on cyber legislation

48. Terms of Reference have been formulated and a draft convention developed on cyber security.

g) Analogue Switch Off for the Broadcasting Sector (Doc-006/ ASO/ Eng Rev1)

49. Broadcasting in African countries is characterized by different structures; and in some instances there has been no regulation until only recently. The systems differ from state to state depending on the specific contexts.

50. Making the transition to digital broadcasting is a complex process. It is far from being merely technical. It affects all segments in the broadcasting value-chain and it has major social, political and economic implications.

51. The 2006 Regional Radio-Communication Conference approved frequency plans for digital terrestrial broadcasting that should be implemented by 17 June 2015 with exception of some developing countries, for which the transition period will end on 17 June 2020 in the VHF band.

52. ITU's Telecommunication Development Bureau (BDT) has initiated a project – Digital Broadcasting Roadmap in Africa – for smooth transition from analogue to digital broadcasting. This project consists of: (i) a feasibility study carried out in African countries with the objective to collect relevant information on current status of television broadcasting as well as African broadcasters programs in shifting from analogue to digital including digital terrestrial television broadcasting (DTTB) and mobile television (MTV), and (ii) development of guidelines for transition to digital broadcasting.

53. Independent of national variations, experience has shown that it is essential to meet a number of conditions to achieve a successful transition to DTTB and the introduction of MTV services.

Comments and Recommendations on Cyber–security and Analogue Switch Off for the Broadcasting

Comments

54. After the presentation, participants made the following comments:

- i) There is need to find ways and means for implementation of transition to digital broadcasting in the countries;
- ii) CITMC-3 needs to take into account the Ouagadougou Declaration of June 2010 further to the Forum on Best Practices dedicated to cyber security and make it a working tool;
- iii) AU and ECA would enlist the contribution of all the RECs by organizing regional workshops for the purpose of collecting and harmonizing the contributions of Member States;
- iv) AU Commission plans to present the final draft of the Convention on cyber security to the CITMC Bureau by end of 2011;
- v) The Convention on Cyber Legislation would serve as a model convention on the issue of Cyber Security in the same vein as the model law on e-Commerce;

- vi) Participants underscored the importance of the migration from analogue to digital for broadcasting as well as the use of digital dividend;
- vii) Need for coordination and involvement of all stakeholders at national regional and continental levels.

Recommendations

55. The Honourable CIT Ministers are invited to:

- i) Call upon the African Union Commission and the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa to finalize the draft Convention on Cyber legislation and mobilize resources for its implementation in the member States in 2012;
 - ii) Take note on the work already done by the ITU and the ongoing activities relating to the “Guidelines for the Transition from analogue to digital broadcasting”;
 - iii) Urge Member States to set up National Multi-Disciplinary Committee or Expert Group (Telecoms/ICT experts ,regulators and policy makers , broadcasting experts and regulators and policy makers) on the end of the Analogue Switch Off with the mission, among others, to oversee the national strategy and to coordinate with similar committees at regional and continental levels;
 - iv) Direct the AUC in collaboration with the ITU to organize workshops on digital migration in the continent in order to assist Member States in their implementation strategies for this migration;
 - v) Urge Member States to harmonize the use of digital dividend;
 - vi) Request the African Union Commission to ensure that Member States are selecting interoperable technologies and that they meet the deadline set at the international level.
- h) Pan African e-Network for Tele Medicine and Tele Education project (Doc- 007/ PAeN/ Eng Rev1)**

56. The Pan-African e-Network project is an initiative of the Government of India, with the main objective of establishing a Pan-African telecommunications network by satellite and fibre optics to provide Tele-medicine and Tele-education and diplomatic communications (VVIP) services to the 53 Member States of the African Union.

57. At the level of the African continent, the network is made up of a Hub Earth Station based in Dakar, Senegal, linked via Satellite with:

- 53 VSAT stations installed in 53 National Hospitals (one hospital in each Member State) for Tele-Medicine,
- 53 VSAT Stations installed in 53 Universities (one university in each Member State) for Tele-Education;
- 5 VSAT stations installed in 5 African Universities called Regional Leading Universities
- 5 VSAT Stations installed in 5 African Hospitals called Regional Super Specialty Hospitals contributing to providing Tele-Education and Tele-Medicine services, respectively.

58. In India, the Network include one (1) Data Centre (Delhi) linked to 6 Indian Hospitals and 6 Indian Universities to provide the Network's Tele-Medicine and Tele-Education services, respectively.

59. India offered to fund the project with an estimated budget of US\$ 125 million, to be used for the supply and installation of equipment and software, leasing of the satellite bandwidth and submarine fibre-optic cable, as well as for the operation and maintenance of the network for a period of five (5) years. In addition, India will be responsible for building the capacity of participating Member States and the payment of fees to the Indian hospitals providing medical consultations and to the Indian universities that offering courses to 10,000 students, 500 doctors and 1,000 nurses.

60. The Network, under first phase, was inaugurated on 26 February 2009 by Honorable Pranab Mukherjee, External Affairs Minister, Government of India and his 11 counterpart Ministers of countries for which the network has been fully implemented.

61. As at 30 June 2010:

- 47 Member States that is 88% of the Member States of the Union, had signed the agreement to participate in the project. Six countries are yet to sign the agreement;
- In Africa, implementation had been completed in 33 countries and the Satellite HUB Earth Station in Dakar has been operational since April 2008;
- In India, the Data Centre, at TCIL Bhawan, New Dew Delhi, India, is fully integrated in the network, and 11 Super Specialty Hospitals and 5 Indian Universities had already been commissioned and integrated in the Network;
- Tele-Education Services and Tele-Medicine Services had started.

i) The e-Post project (Doc-008/ e-POST/ Eng Rev1)

62. One of the priority activities of the Action Plan for the Development of the Postal Sector in Africa is the use of ICT to modernize and develop the Postal Sector.

63. The e-Post project consists of installation of terminals in each post office in Africa. The overall goal of the project is to develop e-services to ensure wide use of e-application at regional and continental levels.

64. The key stakeholders of this project are: (i) the Pan African Postal Union (PAPU), (ii) the Regional African Satellite Communication Organization (RASCOM), (iii) the African Telecommunication Union (ATU), (iv) the International Telecommunications Union (ITU), and (v) the African Union Commission (AUC).

65. A feasibility study has been undertaken and the report considered by the key stakeholders of the project and a representative of the European Union. Implementation of the project will start with a pilot project. A working group has been set up to specify the conditions and criteria for participation in the pilot project.

j) NEPAD e-Schools initiative (Doc-009/ e-School/ Eng Rev1)

66. The presentation made by NPCA highlighted the fact that the NEPAD e-Schools Initiative is a continental priority aimed at ensuring that African youth graduate from African schools with skills that enable them to participate effectively in the Global Information Society in the and Knowledge Economy.

67. It was also pointed out that the NEPAD e-Schools Initiative was adopted by the NEPAD Heads of State and Government Implementation Committee (HSGIC) as a top priority NEPAD project at its meeting held in Abuja on 9 March, 2003. Regarding the horizon time and implementation, participants were informed as follows:

- The NEPAD e-Schools Initiative would, over a ten-year period, cover all African primary and secondary schools (estimated at over 600,000);
- Implementation of the initiative would take place in a phased approach with the first phase targeting 10,000 teachers and an estimated 400,000 pupils in African schools. At the end of the first phase of the project (2010-2015), each participant country would have the capacity to implement the large-scale rollout of NEPAD e-Schools and have an efficient organization for integration of ICT in schools in line with NEPAD values;
- A Continental Coordinating Body (CCB) with membership drawn from government ministries (Education and ICT) from the target countries was constituted in 2006. The CCB held two meetings, one in 2006 and the other in 2008. A comprehensive business plan for the Initiative was prepared.

68. The project is complex and its implementation poses many challenges, and hence many activities in this regard need to be properly coordinated,

Comments and Recommendations on Pan African e-Network, e-Post and NEPAD e-Schools

Comments

69. Following the presentation, participants made the following comments:

- i) Issues were raised on the expansion of the network;
- ii) The importance of setting up the Assembly of Signatory Members participating in the project and the transfer of skills and competencies;
- iii) Planning of remaining activities related to the implementation of the PAeN;
- iv) Need for awareness campaign on the maximization of investment and resources utilization in ICT Sector as well as the building of confidence in the use of ICT by other sectors;
- v) Burkina Faso, as a Chairman of the ESMT (École Supérieure Multinationale des Télécommunications) Board of Directors supports the connection of ESMT and other Centres of Excellence to the PAeN;
- vi) Need for reporting system for the Ministers with measurable objectives and their impact, with timelines and each stakeholder responsibility;
- vii) Develop e-Post project in order to reach rural population and contribute to universal access;
- viii) Need for the support of the Member States for the e-Post project;
- ix) Optimize the use of the resources in the implementation of the e-post project;
- x) Availability of the ECA to participate in the implementation of the e-Post project;
- xi) Vital need for the availability of energy in the rural and remote areas so as to support the development of ICT;
- xii) It is most appropriate to implement NEPAD e-Schools at the national level. The NEPAD agency should build capacity and support countries to establish national implementing agencies to set up and maintain the schools; •
- xiii) Internet connection of e-Schools should be carried out in countries using the most feasible and cost-effective solution for each school. Appropriate national structures and mechanisms are required to manage the networks so that schools can concentrate on teaching and learning activities.

- xiv) For real progress to happen, we need clear targets for national implementation of NEPAD e-Schools, and countries are encouraged to provide NEPAD with accurate progress data which should regularly be reported at continental meetings;
- xv) A collaborative network is needed towards the exchange of best practices, content and teachers to fast track the implementation of ICT in African educational systems and build on success stories;
- xvi) African research and action are needed to provide appropriate energy solutions for rural and remote areas schools.

Recommendations

70. The Honourable Ministers are invited to:

- i) Take note of the progress made in the implementation of the e-post project
- ii) Request the Working Group to accelerate the implementation of the e-post project.
- iii) Urge the RECs and Member States to strongly support the project, and, the AUC to work together with African financial institutions and development partners to ensure successful implementation of the project that will contribute to bridging of the digital divide.
- iv) Note the progress achieved in the implementation of the Pan African e-Network and the urgent need to ensure that the countries support the implementation and the operationalization of the network;
- v) Note the progress achieved in the implementation of the NEPAD e-Schools Initiative
- vi) Urge Member States to participate and collaborate with the private sector, development partners in community fundraising efforts and to prioritize e-Schools in their national plans in order to raise the resources necessary for implementation;
- vii) Urge Member States to commence business planning for the implementation of e-Schools and to set up appropriate national structures to manage the implementation and request the NEPAD Planning and Coordinating Agency (NPCA) to provide strong support for these processes.

- viii) Request the NPCA in consultation with Member States to set clear and comprehensive targets for the implementation of NEPAD e-Schools, including targets for connecting schools to the Internet.
- ix) Urge Member States to regularly provide the NPCA with timely data on progress towards the achievement of the targets and request the NPCA to regularly present progress reports to appropriate African continental meetings.
- x) Request the NPCA to set up a collaborative network to support the implementation of ICT in African educational systems.
- xi) Request the African Union Commission to prioritize and facilitate African research and development (R&D) towards the provision of cost-effective energy solutions for rural and remote schools.
- xii) Urge Member States participating in the project to widely use the Tele Education and Tele Education services of the Pan African e-Network which has now entered its operational phase;
- xiii) Request the AUC to implement the connexion of the ESMT and other Centres of Excellence to the PAeN.

PART 2: African Regional Action Plan for the Knowledge Economy

71. Following the adoption of the African Regional Action Plan on the Knowledge Economy (ARAPKE) framework, the Second Ordinary Session of the African Union Conference of Ministers in charge of Communication and Information Technologies (CITMC) requested the African Union Commission and the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa to mobilize resources to accelerate the implementation of the selected ARAPKE flagship projects.

72. Executive Council Decision EX.CL/Dec./434 (XIII) further endorsed the eleven (11) flagship projects of the African Regional Action Plan on the Knowledge Economy (ARAPKE).

73. The African ICT Leadership Programme, the African Internet Exchange System and Harnessing Information and Knowledge for Youth Development are part of the 11 flagship projects.

a) African ICT Leadership Programme (Doc-010/Leadership ICT/Eng Rev1)

74. The overarching goal of this project is to develop a group of future leaders by building and strengthening their strategic capacities on ICTs' role in the development of inclusive and sustainable Knowledge Societies in Africa.

75. The expected results are: (i) well-developed curriculum and Capacity Building Model for building the capacity of African leaders on ICT, Education, S&T and Knowledge Society issues, (ii) a multi-stakeholder knowledge exchange platform that brings together private, public and civil society to create Knowledge Partnerships,

and (iii) the capacities of 150 selected African leaders built and appropriate model(s) for long- term capacity building, identified.

76. Regarding implementation, the Government of Finland has committed 3 million Euros to fund a pilot program of the Africa Leadership ICT Program (ALICT) covering East and Southern Africa regions. With the additional new funding, the program would be replicated and implemented in other regions.

b) African Internet Exchange System (Doc-011/AXIS/ Eng Rev1)

77. The Heads of State and Government of the African Union, meeting in the 14th Ordinary Session of their Assembly on 31 January 2010 undertook to strengthen national programs and regional cooperation for the development and interconnection of broadband infrastructures and for the deployment of Regional Internet Exchange Points.

78. The African Internet Exchange System project aims to support and facilitate the establishment of an African internet infrastructure through introduction of policy and regulatory reform, capacity building, technical assistance for ISP Associations and Internet Exchange Points in Africa.

79. Africa is currently paying fees to overseas carriers for transit of “local” (continental) traffic. This is both a costly and an inefficient way of handling inter-country exchange of Internet traffic.

80. The objectives of the project are, among others, to support the establishment of Internet exchange points (IXP) in Member States, Regional Internet Hubs and Continental Internet Carriers.

81. Following intensive consultations between the AUC and the Lead Financier (Luxemburg Development Bank), the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Luxemburg, and the Project Financing Group (PFG) have formally approved the project fiche with a budget of US\$ 6,676,400. Upon the signing of the financing agreement, a project steering committee would be set up for the project implementation.

c) Harnessing Information and Knowledge for Youth Development: (Doc-012/Knowledge-Youth/ Eng Rev1)

82. As recognized in the WSIS Declaration, “Young people are the future workforce and leading creators and earliest adopters of ICTs”. The project aims to empower young Africans, provide them with the opportunity to develop and use their skills in the marketplace and serve the needs of various stakeholder groups.

83. The expected results are: (i) an African Youth ICT for Development Network with institutional capacity for innovation and entrepreneurship, established; (ii) African youth connected to existing African Living Lab environments, and AYIN’s beneficiaries’ skills in innovation and entrepreneurship, improved ;(iii) five (5) regional community projects implemented from the Youth Incubation Fund; (iii) Youth Training and Information Centres (YTIC) established, Community Information Centres (CIC) created, and existing training centres for youth e-skill development, supported.

84. Regarding implementation status, the Ministry of Communications and Information Technology, Egypt, has expressed interest to lead implementation of the project on Harnessing Information and Knowledge for Youth Development, Entrepreneurship and Innovation.

Recommendations on African ICT Leadership, African Internet Exchange and Information and Knowledge for Youth Development

85. The Honourable CIT Ministers are invited to:

- i) Call for the speedy implementation of the pilot program and request the African Union Commission to continue mobilizing additional resources towards implementation of the Africa Leadership ICT Program (ALICT) in other regions.
- ii) Commend the African Union Commission and the Luxemburg Development Bank for their efforts in mobilizing resources towards implementing the African Internet Exchange System Project;
- iii) Welcome the offer by the Arab Republic of Egypt to lead implementation of the ARAPKE project on Harnessing Information and Knowledge for Youth Development, Entrepreneurship and Innovation.
- iv) Request the AUC in cooperation with relevant stakeholders to encourage the renewal of the IGF as a multistakeholder forum and support the candidacy of Kenya as the 2011 host.

PART 3: Action Plan for the Development of Postal Services in Africa

a) Implementation of the Action Plan for the Development of the Postal Sector (Doc-T 013/ Postal Action Plan/ Eng Rev1)

86. The Second Session of the CIT Ministerial Conference held in Cairo in 2008, adopted an Action Plan for the development of the Postal Sector in Africa.

87. The Action Plan defined the following major objectives: (i) implement in-depth reform of the Postal Sector in Africa; (ii) develop the Public Postal service (iii) improve and develop the postal network and quality of service, (iv) include postal sector improvement in national development plans; (v) adopt a flexible long-term sectoral policy to make room for necessary adjustments; (iv) elaborate and adopt a legislative and regulatory framework which has binding force, (vi) establish a well-defined universal service obligation and the application of its funding mechanism.

88. Regarding implementation of in-depth reform of the Postal Sector in Africa including the development of the Public Postal service, a number of activities have been carried out, including the annual survey, the setting up of sub-regional steering committees for the implementation of the Action Plan for the development of the postal sector in Africa and sensitization of the RECs to take the postal sector as part

of their priority. Some activities are ongoing and would be implemented within the three-year duration of the Plan of Action.

89. As regards improvement and development of the postal network and quality of service, the implementation of related have been integrated in the 2009-2012 joint Regional Development Plan (RDP) elaborated by the UPU, PAPU and AUC. In addition, the related project on road transportation of mail in the RECs in collaboration with these RECs is ongoing.

Comments and Recommendations on the Action Plan for the Development of the Postal Sector

Comments

90. Following the presentation, participants made the following comments:

- i) Welcome the status of implementation of the action plan of the development of the postal sector;
- ii) Regret the lack of participation in the collection of information on the status of implementation of ongoing reforms and projects of the postal sector;
- iii) Request Member States to recognise the Postal Sector as an important channel to achieve ICT inclusion of all sectors of the population and therefore include the sector in their programs and strategies for Universal Access.
- iv) Encourage the provision of postal experts within the RECs.

Recommendations

91. The CIT Ministers are invited to:

- i) Request the Member States and the RECs to speed up the implementation of the Declaration of the 14th Assembly of the Heads of State and Government of the African Union on the development of CIT and the implementation of the action plan for postal sector development;
- ii) Encourage the RECs to appoint permanent postal expert in their institutions to represent the interests of the postal sector and give chance to an effective implementation of the Action Plan for the development of the postal sector;
- iii) Request the Member States to include the postal sector in their programs and strategies for universal access.

PART 4: Governance of the CIT Ministerial Conference

d) Governance of the CIT Ministerial Conference (Doc-014/ CITMC Governance/ Eng Rev1)

92. It is recalled that at its last session held in Cairo (CITMC-2, May 2008), the Conference decided as follows in regard to its governance:

- The African Union Conference of Ministers in charge of Communication and Information Technologies (CITMC) is the highest coordination body for all ICT issues/activities in the continent. Therefore, all Decisions emanating from other fora in Africa should be communicated to the Bureau and the Conference of Ministers in charge of Communications and Information Technologies;
- The CITMC should be adapted, simplified and rationalized according to existing African Union rules of procedure and practices, which stipulate that:
 - ✓ The Bureau is composed of five members as representing the five African regions (a Chair, three Vice Chairs and a Rapporteur) and African Union Commissioner will be an ex-officio member;
 - ✓ The Steering Committee will consist of:
 - ❖ One representative of each Minister-member of the Bureau;
 - ❖ One additional representative, from each of the five African regions, who are not members of the Bureau;
 - ❖ One representative of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) and one representative of the African Development Bank (AfDB);
 - ❖ One representative of the Department of infrastructure and Energy and one representative of the Department of Human Resources, Science and Technology, as ex-officio members.
 - ✓ RECs to be invited to all meetings of the Steering Committee;
 - ✓ The Bureau may act on behalf of the CITMC to implement its decisions and conduct the necessary consultations with Member States in the respective regions, various sectors of the civil society, the RECs and with relevant implementing agencies.

93. Following the integration of the NEPAD in the AUC structure, the integration of e-Africa Commission in the NPCA, the Resolution EAC/02/10_Doc.05 of the 2nd Annual Ministerial Commission meeting of the NEPAD e-Africa Commission held in Dakar on the 8th of June 2010 requested that “The governance structure for ICT in the NPCA and AUC be harmonized by merging the Ministerial Conference and the Executive Committee of the NEPAD e-Africa Commission within the African Union CITMC” structures.

94. With this new change, it is important that the NPCA become ex-officio member of the Bureau and Steering Committee of the CITMC.

Comments and Recommendations on the Governance of the CIT Ministerial Conference

Comments

95. Following the presentation, participants made the following comments:

- i) Congratulate the AUC for incorporating all aspects of ICT sector including telecommunications/ICT, postal and broadcasting in the AUC CITMC programme;
- ii) Welcomed the new Governance of the CITMC so as to accommodate NPCA;
- iii) Noted the low level of coordination among stakeholders in Africa, and the overlapping of initiatives and programs;
- iv) Noted the vital need for exchange of vital information and consultations among Member States, RECs and partners of the African Union;
- v) Noted the need for participation of senior representation of partners especially those under the AU umbrella in the CITMC meetings.

Recommendations

96. The Honourable CIT Ministers are invited to:

- i) Welcome the resolution to harmonize and merge the Ministerial Conference and the Executive Committee of the NEPAD e-Africa Commission with the African Union CIT Ministerial Conference (CITMC), and include the NPCA Chief Executive Officer as an ex-officio member of the Bureau of the Conference;
- ii) Request the AUC to prepare rules of procedure for the Bureau and the steering committee for submission not later than their first meeting in 2011, for consideration;
- iii) Request the African Union in cooperation with the Bureau and the steering committee of the CITMC to organize yearly coordination meeting of all African stakeholders and partners of African Union for exchange of information on activities carried out in the continent in the sector of Communications and Information Technologies sector.

VII. IMPLEMENTATION STATUS OF VARIOUS PROJECTS AND INITIATIVES, NEW PROJECTS AND NEW INITIATIVES, INTERNATIONAL EVENTS,.

PART 1: Partnerships

a) EU-Africa Partnership on Infrastructure/ICT Sector (Doc-015/ EU Africa Partnership/ Eng Rev1)

97. The partnership provides support towards physical Infrastructure investment and institutional development measures and capacity building, and undertakes measures in support of the political and regulatory frameworks at national level. This partnership is guided by the desire to ensure coherence between continental and regional level investments and national strategies for infrastructure development.

98. To support the implementation of the partnership, the EU-Africa Infrastructure Trust Fund (the Trust Fund) was launched in 2007. It encourages the financing of infrastructure programs which facilitate interconnectivity and regional integration in the African continent.

99. As a way to accelerate the implementation of this partnership, a provision of 10 million Euros was granted through the Port-Moresby agreement signed between ACP countries and the EC.

100. The Technical Assistance provided by Egis Bceom International started its activities in February 2010.

101. In pursuance of the implementation of the preparatory actions, the ICT sector benefits from a selected project entitled "Support for the development of African ICT Broadband Backbone and Related Policy Objectives, and a System of Interconnected Regional Database for Infrastructure with an indicative budget of Euro 950,000"..

102. This project has four major components: (i) a feasibility study of selected missing links on the African ICT broadband backbone and identification and further preparation of priority sections; (ii) development of harmonized guidelines on Open Access and related services and strategies; (iii) a study on the implementation of harmonized continental public resource and services (numbering, IP, DNS and emergency numbers); and (iv) support to development of a system providing interconnected regional databases for infrastructure, comprising VPN and a database; and support to the dialogue process.

b) EU-Africa Partnership Number 8 on Science, Information Society and Space/Information Society (Doc-016/ Partnership 8/ Eng Rev 1).

103. The adoption by the EU and African Heads of State and Government, of the Lisbon Joint Strategy and its first Action Plan (2008-2010) with eight thematic partnerships, offered a new platform for cooperation between the two continents. The EU-Africa Joint Strategy is a long-term policy framework that will be implemented by successive Action Plans. The 8th thematic partnership is the Africa-EU Strategic Partnership on Science, Information Society and Space.

104. The objective of the Information Society component in regard to the 8th Partnership is to support the development of an inclusive information society in Africa with a view to bridging the digital divide, and enhance the use of ICTs as key enablers for poverty reduction, growth and socio-economic development.

105. To foster the implementation of this component of the 8th Partnership on Information Society, the EU and AUC through their relevant Directorates identified six key priority projects within the ARAPKE framework in the context of the World Summit on the Information Society, as endorsed by AU Executive Council Decision EX.CL/Dec. 258(VIII). These priority projects are included in the Book of Lighthouse Projects.

106. With respect to implementation, all the ICT lighthouse projects have received substantial financial support and some Member States have taken the lead to avail resources and champion some of them.

107. However, the absence of a financial instrument dedicated to the P8 negatively impacted on the process of implementation of this partnership.

c) Open Access (Doc-017/Open Access/ Eng Rev1)

108. The issue of Open Access is of vital importance, for access to fiber optic cables, namely, submarine cables in the context of latest market developments with increased number of infrastructure projects (national and regional backbones, submarine cables, etc.).

109. Although the issue is part of the Reference Framework adopted in 2008 in Cairo, the Extraordinary CITMC Session held in Johannesburg on 5 November 2009 directed the AUC through the Oliver Tambo Declaration to develop a common definition, understanding and guidelines on Open Access, in coordination with relevant stakeholders.

110. As a first step towards implementation of the above decision, the AUC initiated a project within the framework of EU-Africa Partnership projects. The HIPSSA project has submitted a background paper on one related activity in West Africa regarding the access to submarine cables to contribute to the discussion at pan-African level. The OECD Development Centre has prepared at the request of the AUC a document presenting an analysis of best practices on open access. This document was builded on the work of NEPAD, World Bank, ITU, WTO, OECD (STI) and the Internet Society.

111. As a way forward, the AUC will consolidate the contributions of these two partners and include them in the report to be prepared within the framework of the EU-Africa Partnership on Infrastructure/ICT Sector.

Recommendations on EU-Africa Partnership on Infrastructure, EU-Africa Partnership No.8 and Open Access

112. The Honourable CIT Ministers are invited to:

- i) Take note of the status of implementation of the EU-Africa Partnership on Infrastructure;
- ii) Request Member States to integrate the ICT sector in their respective National Indicative Programs (NIP);
- iii) Call upon its Member States, NEPAD, the RECs, the ITU, the OECD Development Centre and other stakeholders to join in the Joint Expert Group on 8th Partnership (JEG8) so as to allow for broader participation in the proposition and implementation of projects, particularly in future successive Action Plans of the partnership, and ensure successful implementation of the existing initiatives;
- iv) Note the progress report and the way forward on the report on Open Access;
- v) Request the African Union to develop common definition, understanding and guidelines on Open Access and submit them for consideration at the next CITMC;
- vi) Request the AUC to organize regional and continental workshops to disseminate these guidelines in collaboration with national regulators. The OECD Development Centre and the ITU through the HIPSSA project are invited to participate in the dissemination events as experts.

PART 2: Studies

a) Study on DotAfrica (Doc-019/ Dot Africa/ Eng Rev1)

113. The Extraordinary Session of the CITMC held in Johannesburg acknowledged the benefits of the DotAfrica domain name to Africa and adopted a resolution to "Establish DotAfrica as a continental Top-Level Domain for use by organizations, businesses and individuals with guidance from African Internet agencies".

114. DotAfrica is that specific Internet namespace for Africa which is likely to be applied for operation during the next round of the new Gtlds which ICANN¹ will be launching in the near future. The introduction of the DotAfrica will create an attractive regional home for the Pan-African Internet community. As the first sponsored registry to be operating from Africa and, therefore, serving the specific needs of its communities, it will echo ongoing operation and the successes of other community TLDs such as DotEu (Dot.Europa) and Dot.Asia that have created a new Internet identity for their users and businesses which seek more regional presence without being confined within the limits of one country.

115. In view of the needs expressed by the African community at large, and in order to fast track the launch and operation of DotAfrica, the African Union has made a first assessment of the implementation of this DNS and come up with the following conclusions: (i) it is needful to recall that, from the onset, the Dot.Africa was claimed

¹ ICANN: the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (www.ican.org)

by non-African companies during ICANN first gTLD round in 2000 and few African professionals strongly opposed that bid; and (ii); as of 2002, a concept paper had been developed for possible operation of DotAfrica by Africans for Africa 2. While other proposals might since have been developed, the concept note largely draws on the initial proposal which was both community-grown and is intended to serve the African community as a not-for-profit set up.

116. The DotAfrica entity will be established under the aegis of the AUC and the structure and modalities will be defined by a feasibility study.

b) African Space Agency –ASA/AfriSpace (Doc-020/ASA/ Eng Rev1)

117. For many decades, space technologies have not only been real tools for policy development for many countries but also have provided commercial opportunity and strategic advantages for the tiny minority of countries controlling them. The area of Communications and Information Technologies and broadcasting are among the well known beneficiaries of space applications. However, space applications are nowadays playing a major role in other areas such as meteorology, navigation, weather forecasting, natural resource management and environmental monitoring, disaster prevention and management, health, education, agriculture, peace and security.

118. Due to the diversity of the areas covered, space applications are crucial in achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

119. At country level, some African nations have established specialized national structures for space applications, thus indicating their will to operate space for development. These include Algeria, Egypt, Kenya, Morocco, Nigeria, South Africa and Tunisia.

120. Space technologies are complex and expensive, and have high financial risk. Moreover, geographical and/or population size are often decisive factors for effective and efficient implementation of some space applications. Therefore, a common continental approach will allow for the sharing of risks and costs, and ensure the availability of skilled and sufficient human resources. It will also ensure a critical size of geographical area and population required in terms of the plan of action for some space applications.

121. This determination on the part of Africa to exploit the tremendous potential of space technology for development was first demonstrated by the implementation of the RASCOM project. It has since 2004 been reinforced in the African Union Strategic Plan 2004-2007 which, under the regional integration objective, adopted a priority action calling for the "Assessment of RASCOM and other projects to launch satellites in Africa with a view to create an African Space Agency".

122. The purpose of the African Space Agency (ASA) will be to provide for and to promote, for exclusively peaceful purposes, cooperation among African States in

² Cf. www.dotafrica.org

space research and technology and their space applications, with a view to their use for scientific purposes and for operational space applications systems.

123. The specific objectives of ASA are the above objectives by: (i) elaborating and implementing a long-term African space policy; (ii) recommending space objectives to Member States; (iii) elaborating and implementing activities and programmes in the space field; (iv) coordinating the African space programme (v) managing and coordinating the use of space resources for Africa, orbital slots and frequencies.

c) Presentation of ECA on Space Policy and applications

124. UNECA made a presentation on spatial data as a contribution to the study on the African Spatial Agency and related applications being developed for the continent and recommendations of the UNSPIDER Workshop on disaster management and Emergency Response for Africa.

125. He discussed the use made of space-based technology for the benefit of the continent, especially for food security, water supply, natural resources management, climate change, security and emergency, health planning and e-Services for rural development. In this context, he briefed participants on the Spatial Data Infrastructure initiative, the African Geodetic Reference Frame (AFREF) Project, the Mapping Africa for Africa (MAfA) Initiative and the Second Administrative Level Boundary (SALB) programme.

126. He further presented the work on database development for:

- The Programme for Infrastructure Development in Africa (PIDA);
- The Central Africa Database;
- The African fiber optic connectivity data base;
- The e-Services Delivery Clearinghouse.

127. He concluded by discussing the peaceful use of space-based technology, awareness raising and capacity building as well as African participation in the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOS).

Comments and Recommendations on Dot. Africa, African Space Agency and Space Policy

Comments

128. Following the presentations, participants made the following comments:

- i) Space applications concern several public and private players. Thus, there is a need for consultation at the national level.
- ii) Terrestrial observation satellites are indispensable tools for Africa in resource management, and should be used for peaceful purposes;
- iii) Countries have taken the initiative to pool their resources for management of resources and the effects of disasters and environment;

- iv) Creation of ASA is a good idea which needs in-depth study;
- v) The ASA study should involve all Member States through the relevant players in the States, regions and specialized organisations and institutions and be conducted as an inclusive process. Appropriate governance should be put in place in this regard.

Recommendations

129. The Honourable CIT Ministers are invited to:

- i) Mandate the African Union Commission to implement the DotAfrica project on behalf of Member States in cooperation and partnership with relevant stakeholders and institutions;
- ii) Call upon Member States to provide the AUC with appropriate formal mandates, where necessary, to implement DotAfrica project ;
- iii) Request the African Union Commission in consultation with the CITMC Bureau to set up a structure for implementation of DotAfrica;
- iv) Request the AUC to develop a communication plan for DotAfrica and ensure continuous presence at ICANN's statutory meetings;
- v) Direct that the DotAfrica Project team appointed to work under the auspices of the AUC;
- vi) Invite the African Union Commission in cooperation with RECs, specialized institutions and concerned partners, especially the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) and the International Telecommunications Union (ITU) to:
 - Undertake awareness raising campaigns for policy makers;
 - Promote the use of African Regional Centres of Excellence to build the capacity of Member States;
 - Provide appropriate input to African members of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOS), in order to better take into account Africa's concerns and needs, especially on Disaster Management, Emergency Response and peaceful use of satellite imagery;
 - To conduct and finalize the study on an African Space Agency taking into account existing initiatives, and develop an African Space Policy.
- vii) Note the role of space technology in the economic development of the continent and the need for African countries to collaborate at continental level in order for the continent to benefit from maximum space technological development;

viii) Note the increasing interest of African countries in acquiring space technology and, hence, the extensive development in this field in Africa, particularly in the six leading space countries in Africa;

PART 3: Upcoming events

a) Conclusions of the World Telecommunications Development Conference (WTDC-10) and Africa preparation to forthcoming ITU PP-10: (Doc-018/WTDC/ Eng Rev1)

130. The 5th WTDC-10 took place in Hyderabad, India, from 24 May to 4 June, 2010 at the kind invitation of the Government of India. The objective of the Conference was to identify priorities for telecommunications and ICTs development taking into account the contributions made by Member States and Sector Members.

131. Prior to the Conference, Africa held two regional preparatory meetings to prepare African Common Proposals for the conference.

132. The Conference adopted the Hyderabad Action Plan (HAP) which outlined the goals and strategies for the global development of telecommunications and ICT over the next four years. The roll out of the next-generation networks (NGN) and increased access to broadband services, wireless technologies and the internet were recognized as catalysts to achieving broader development goals.

133. The Conference also came up with Hyderabad Declaration which states that: "Broad access to telecommunications and ICTs is essential for the world's collective economic, social and cultural development, and the building of a global Information Society.

134. The Hyderabad Action Plan consists of a comprehensive package that will promote equitable and sustainable development of telecommunication and ICT networks and services worldwide. The five programs discussed and identified during the regional meetings are: (i) Information and communication infrastructure and technology development; (ii) Cyber security, ICT applications and IP-based network-related issues; (iii) Enabling environment; (iv) Capacity-building and digital inclusion; (v) Least developed countries, countries in special need, emergency telecommunications and adaptation to climate change

135. All the programs and initiatives identified by the African Group were adopted at the conference.

136. The meeting also agreed to support African candidatures for ITU elective positions during the upcoming ITU Plenipotentiary Conference (PP-10) in October, 2010.

Comments and Recommendations on Conclusions of WDTC-10 and preparation to ITU PP-10:

Comments

137. Following the presentations, participants made the following comments:

- i) Burkina Faso on behalf of the participants welcomes the decision of the 17th Ordinary Session of the AU Executive Council to support the candidature of Dr. Hamadoun Touré and Mr Brahim Sanou, respectively for the position of Secretary General of the ITU and Director of the BDT-ITU for the upcoming PP-10;
- ii) The ATU plenipotentiary conference is due to be held in Brazzaville Congo from 23-25 September 2010 to, among other things, consider the Strategic Plan 2010-2014 and conclude the African common proposals to the ITU plenipotentiary conference (PP-10);
- iii) Note with concern the clashing of key African events: ATU plenipotentiary conference and UPU Strategic Conference;
- iv) Note Africa candidatures to ITU Council and other structures.

Recommendations

138. The Honourable CIT Ministers are invited to:

- i) Attend and participate in the ATU plenipotentiary conference;
- ii) Ensure the implementation of the AU Executive Council Decision on the African Candidatures for the PP-10;
- iii) Hold coordination meetings with other regional and international organizations to lobby for its issues before and during PP-10, in Mexico, to be chaired by Mali and facilitated by ATU.

b) Forthcoming Universal Postal Union Strategic Conference

139. A workshop organized by the PAPU to assess the state of implementation of the Nairobi Postal Strategy and Africa's contribution to the upcoming 2010 UPU Strategy Conference to be held from 22 to 24 September 2010 in Nairobi.

140. The workshop made a number of key proposals to enrich the global strategy on the development of the postal network and ensure that Africa's interests are effectively presented.

141. The participants also highlighted Africa's key concerns regarding the terminal dues and quality of service and Extra-territorial Offices of Exchange and requested the AUC to make at the Strategic Conference a comprehensive statement on the strategic issues.

Recommendations on the Forthcoming Universal Postal Union Strategic Conference

142. The Honourable CIT Ministers are invited to call on Member States to:

- i) Welcome and support the initiative;
- ii) Participate fully in the Conference; and
- iii) Devise a common position on the key issues

PART 4: Centres of Excellence

a) African Centre of Excellence for ICT (ACEICT)

143. The objectives of this Centre are as follows:

- Create a training-research-development excellence hub in digital applications, services and usage;
- Meet the needs expressed by Governments and enterprises to modernize in order to remain competitive;
- Welcome the AfDB and Tunisia effort for the creation of the ACEICT
- Provide competences with a view to creating high value-added innovative activities in e-Services: e-Commerce, e-Finance, e-Health, e-Learning, e-Governance, etc.;
- Offer a space for communication, experience sharing and development of best practices.

Recommendations

144. The Honourable CIT Ministers are invited to:

- i) Note the results of the study on the creation of an African Centre of Excellence for ICT and its importance for the promotion and development of the ICT sector at the continental level;
- ii) Support the creation of the ACEICT and invite Member States as well as national, regional and international institutions to actively cooperate with this Centre.

GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS RELATED TO CHAPTERS VI AND VII ABOVE

145. The Honourable CIT Ministers are invited to:

- i. Urge member states to insure the timely provision of relevant data and information to properly monitor and evaluate the progress of the ongoing programs and projects;
- ii. Urge the AUC to periodically updated member states about the status of data and information requested and needed by AUC in order to properly update, verify, and validate the status and progress of programs and projects.