

## 1. DRAFT DECLARATION ON INTERNET GOVERNANCE

2. We, the Heads of State and Government of the African Union, meeting in our <session number, venue, date TBC> ;
3. Re-affirming the commitments made during the Geneva and Tunis World Summits on the Information Society of a shared vision of Internet Governance (IG) culminating in the adoption of a Declaration of Principles and a working definition of IG.
4. Acknowledging that Africa's voice in global Internet Governance is critical to the stable development of the global economy that is intertwined with Africa's economy and needs to be significantly elevated.
5. Emphasizing that the internet is a critical enabler for development and a vibrant force, which generates economic, social, and cultural development, and recalling Human Rights Council resolution 26/13 in this regard.
6. Noting with concern the on-going revelations of mass surveillance and violations of the right to privacy in the digital environment and reaffirming the commitments made in UN General Assembly resolutions 68/167 and 69/166 to respect and protect the right to privacy, including in the context of digital communication.
7. Noting with concern that less than 20% of Africans are online, that the majority of those not connected are women and the rural poor, and that the average cost of fixed line and mobile internet exceeds 50% of average per capita income.
8. Noting that in March 2014, the United States Government announced its intention to relinquish its oversight of the Internet Assigned Names Authority (IANA), to a global Internet community which led to a process to further assess and enhance the Accountability of the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN);
9. Reaffirming our commitment to the security, stability and scalability of Africa's Internet infrastructure and the security and privacy of citizens online through the AU Convention on Cybersecurity and Personal Data Protection;
10. Reaffirming the commitment of member states to fundamental freedoms, especially the right to freedom of expression and access to information (on and offline), and human and peoples' rights enunciated within the framework of the African Union and United Nations charters; and recognizing that these rights must be upheld online as well as offline;
11. Noting with appreciation the efforts of the AU in collaboration with the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) and civil society organizations to strengthen African participation in global Internet governance and related public policy discussions, which led to the creation of the African Internet Governance Forum;
12. Acknowledging the need for localizing Internet Governance discussions and related public policy matters to enable, develop and support local Internet/Digital economy.
13. Aware that the mandate of the Internet Governance Forum (IGF) will be reviewed by the UN General Assembly in December 2015; and noting the multiplication of IGF-type

initiatives and that the IGF is one of the most effective and successful outcomes of the WSIS.

14. Recognizing that multi-stakeholder processes have become an essential and unique approach to engagement in addressing Internet and other policy development processed and tackling complex issues.
15. Mindful that Internet Governance principles should exemplify and uphold the basic tenets of an open, neutral, resilient, inter-operable Internet which have led to its remarkable success today, and that they should also form the foundation for any future engagements of all stakeholders in national, regional and international Internet-related policy making efforts.

#### **16. On Internet Governance Principles**

17. We reaffirm that Internet Governance is a means for making the Internet accessible to all in a secure and stable manner and promoting cultural and linguistic diversity through content that is accessible to all.
18. We invite all stakeholders to harness the potential of ICTs to help in achieving the internationally agreed development goals, including the Sustainable Development Goals.
19. We recognize the importance of maintaining an open Internet based on open standards development processes, as key enablers for an inclusive knowledge and information societies.
20. We remain committed to facilitating a resilient, universal and interoperable Internet that is accessible to all and will strive to ensure universal and affordable Internet access for all African women, men, girls and boys.
21. We uphold the spirit of multi-stakeholder Internet Governance in the Tunis Agenda and commit to advance multi-stakeholder approaches that are open, participative on equal footing, inclusive, transparent, collaborative, consensus-driven, and that respect cultural, gender and linguistic diversity and which promote accountability and full participation of governments, the private sector, civil society, and the technical community and users. We further recognize that the roles and responsibilities of the different stakeholders can vary depending on the issue under consideration.
22. We ask the Regional Economic Communities, regional organizations and regional offices of ECA to play a leading role in and facilitate national and regional IGFs in their respective regions.
23. We ask the AU Commission to reach out to all stakeholders and provide a framework to ensure the active participation of governments, private sector, civil society, and the technical community on a shared footing to Internet public policy and Governance related process/discussion for decision-making.

#### **24. On Africa's Participation in Internet Governance**

25. We ask the AU Commission, the NEPAD Agency and ECA to develop a framework for coordination and participation of member states, Specialized Institutions and Regional

Economic Communities (RECs) in Internet Governance discussions and related public policy processes, including but not limited to those taking place at the UN, AU, ITU, ICANN, IETF, HRC, AFRINIC, ISOC, AfTLD, IGF, Africa IGF, regional and national IGFs.

26. We ask member states, Specialized Institutions and Regional Economic Communities (RECs) to develop in cooperation with NEPAD and AUC mechanisms and channels that allow global debate on Internet Governance to be translated and interpreted into local context and encourage active and open sub-regional and local contributions from all stake holders.
27. We further ask the AU Commission and NEPAD Agency to develop coordination mechanisms with relevant continental institutions in the ICT/Internet space such as AFRINIC, AfNOG, AfREN, AfrISPA.
28. We encourage Member States to support and encourage the participation of all stakeholders in national and Regional IGFs (e.g. the West African IGF and the East African IGF) which form the foundation stones of the African IGF.

## **29. On development of Africa's Internet Economy**

30. We acknowledge that development of the Internet is central to Africa's development agenda and we reaffirm that an open and safe Internet is essential to maintaining permission-less innovation on the Internet. We therefore commit to ensuring legal and regulatory environments that will enable growth of Africa's Internet economy through innovative applications and services.
31. We commit to promoting the use of country code Top-Level Domains (ccTLDs) as elements of national and continental branding and to ensure that ccTLD registries are operated as public-benefit institutions that can create, nurture and support local critical infrastructure and a local community able to attract investments. .
32. We commit to continue promoting the adoption of IPv6 and to lead by example through its adoption and deployment of IPv6 by ccTLD registries, as well as public departments and agencies' network infrastructures.
33. We commit to an effective regional and international cooperation in combating cybercrimes while promoting personal data protection and respecting human rights within appropriate legal frameworks. In so doing, we will 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,
34. We ask the AU Commission and NEPAD Agency to undertake a policy gap analysis to determine areas that need strengthening or development of new policies in line with stimulating the growth of Africa's Internet economy.
35. We ask the AU Commission to work collaboratively with relevant institutions to reach agreements with ccTLD registries operated by private individuals or operated by entities outside of national jurisdiction to transfer the registries and enable them to operate as public benefit bodies.

36. We ask the AU Commission to create a Clearing House for best practices in the management of ccTLD registries in Africa, and to encourage and facilitate the sharing of lessons learned by Member States in securing national ownership of the operation of their ccTLD registries.
37. We ask the AU Commission to work with Member States, ICANN, and other partners and stakeholders to ensure that Africa's meager participation in the current round of the introduction of new generic top-level domain names (gTLDs) are addressed effectively and promptly, and that such dismal participation does not occur in future rounds which should be held only after the deficiencies of the current round have been addressed/rectified.
38. We ask the AU Commission to work with Member States, the private sector, and other partners to ensure that Africa develops a robust infrastructure to enable it effectively participate in the global Internet (particularly DNS) industry, and ensure that Africans are custodians of their data and information.
39. We ask the AU Commission to work with relevant stakeholders to develop a common African Program of Action on Internet Governance, which will ensure that the rights of Africans on the Internet are promoted and upheld, and that African concerns are recognized in the global Internet governance regime.

#### **40. On the IANA Stewardship Transition**

41. We ask the African Union Commission, working through member states respective GAC representatives and other African stakeholders, to undertake a consultation with member states on the review of the draft proposal from the IANA Stewardship Transition Coordination Group (ICG) as well as ICANN Accountability Cross Community Working Group (CCWG – Stream-2) and to prepare consolidated submissions on the two proposals. This will ensure a common African position is socialized more broadly/globally.

#### **42. On the Internet Governance Forum**

43. We support the Internet Governance Forum as a place for non-binding dialogue and discussions that help shape Internet public policy and support a renewed mandate of the IGF for at least 5 years beyond 2015.
44. We call upon the UN to renew the mandate of the IGF while increasing the resources of its Secretariat, and to allow its proceedings to evolve in order to produce best practice documents that can be used as a referral for public policy decisions, in line with the recommendations of the report of the UN Commission for Science and Technology for Development Working Group on Improvements to the IGF.
45. We call upon the AU Commission and ECA to create an Africa Internet Development & Governance Observatory and put in place mechanisms to track and follow-up on recommendations from the regional and global IGFs and to provide periodic reports to member states.

## 46. On Global Internet Governance

47. We acknowledge the various (multi-stakeholder) institutions that have contributed to the Internet's global growth and while advocating for their continued role as the core of the global Internet governance ecosystem, we note with concern that many of these institutions are not global in their operations and processes. We therefore urge the international community to transform these institutions into more inclusive global institutions that represent all citizens of the world, taking into account the concerns and needs of Africa and other developing regions. We affirm our commitment to work with these organizations and with all partners to ensure these institutions become more global in nature.

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