

African Declaration on Internet Governance
(unofficial translation)

We, Ministers in charge of Information and Communication Technologies of African countries, gathered in Algiers on February 13th, 2017.

Guided by the Constitutive Act of the African Union and the Vision of the African Union expressed in its Agenda 2063;

Aware of the Internet potential to promote sustainable human development, to build inclusive knowledge societies and improve the free information, ideas and opinions' flow around the globe;

Considering,

- the African Union Convention on cyber security and protection of personal data, adopted at the 23rd session of the Summit of the Heads of States and Governments of the African Union held on June 27th, 2014,
- the Decision on Information and Communication Technologies in Africa: challenges and perspectives (2010),
- the Declarations of Oliver Tambo in Johannesburg on November 5th, 2009, in Abidjan on February 22nd, 2012 and Addis Ababa on June 22nd, 2012, relating to Information and Communication Technologies' field,
- the Conclusions of the Ministerial Meeting of the Extraordinary Session of the AU Specialized Technical Committee (STC) on Communications and ICT (CICT), held in Bamako on September 16th, 2016;

Subscribing to the UNESCO and ITU recommendations advocating for an open, transparent and inclusive strategy of internet governance based on the principles of openness, including freedom of expression, the respect of private life, universal access and technical interoperability;

Reasserting the commitments taken by our respective States as regards the Declaration of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) adopted in Geneva in December 2003 and the Agenda of Tunis in November 2005;

Regarding the WSIS internet governance model based on multitaskholder, involving governments, civil society, private sector and technical community;

Highlighting with satisfaction the African Union's efforts, together with the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) and the civil society organizations, to reinforce the African countries' participation in the global internet governance and the talks on public policies, all of which led to the establishment of the African Internet Governance Forum;

Welcoming the African integration projects in terms of Information and Communication Technologies initiated by some countries, supported by development partners including the African Development Bank, mainly the Trans-Saharan optic fiber backbone, and similar projects;

Noticing with concern the imbalance between African telecommunication operators and global internet players, and considering the focus of electronic communication services

providers in the developed countries which impacts negatively on the African countries' economy;

ARE COMMITTED TO :

- Work together to establish a global, transparent and inclusive framework of internet governance based on openness principles, including the freedom of expression, the respect and protection of private life, universal access and technical interoperability, the ethics and respect of cultural and linguistic diversity in the cyberspace;
- Developing an accessible and affordable internet, safe and reliable, so that internet remains a stable, resilient and trustworthy space, bearing a message of peace and promoting the peaceful use of internet;
- Promoting coordination between the bodies dealing with internet governance in our States;
- Making the necessary efforts to partake actively in the implementation of this evolution of the global internet governance;
- Implementing a Charter of internet use with the objective of Protecting internet users, including against the propaganda of terrorist groups and violent extremism and ensuring the respect and protection of Human Rights on line;
- Establishing the necessary mechanisms for the protection of children on internet and advocating for making internet contribute to fight social scourges and violence against women, girls and disadvantaged groups ;
- Protecting the internet as a public space, by giving priority to the public interest in case of conflict between the public interest and private interests;
- Ensuring, to all, the right for using internet in a manner that respects privacy, without prejudice to the necessary limitations prescribed by the requirements of public safety, the fight against cybercrime, violent extremism and terrorism;
- Drafting a common strategy to allow the continent to make economic benefits from internet;
- Establishing, on the national and regional levels, models and mechanisms to protect the users and promote a fair competition among internet ecosystems ;
- Establishing a regulatory framework to help telecom operators to manage their transition to extended access to internet via the development of connectivity infrastructures and the facilitation of ICT infrastructures sharing;
- Promoting local contents development and also strengthening the technical capacity and users' capacity to manage, develop and consume these contents.
- Fostering the African Digital Identity by encouraging local content and multilingualism, and innovation, technology training and African startups mainly in favor of the youth;

REQUEST THAT :

The States participate in the different forums on Internet Governance, and their role shall be more than consultative in the management of internet resources in order to improve equity, efficiency and competitiveness.

INVITE, THROUGH THIS DECLARATION:

- The major ICT players to invest in the infrastructures from which they benefit in the African countries;
- The providers of electronic communication services to engage in dialogue with African countries for a fair sharing of internet benefits;

EXPRESS our gratitude to His Excellency, Mr. Abdelaziz BOUTEFLIKA, President of the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria, for his strong commitment in favor of Africa, and to the Algerian people for their warm host.

Established in Algiers, on February 13th, 2017.