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### Meetings of the Assembly of users of Pan African e-Network (PAeN) for Telemedicine and Tele-Education (PAeN) and the Bureau of the Specialized Technical Committee on Communication & Information & Communication Technologies (STC-CICT)

**Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 26- 28 April 2016:** Back-to-back meetings of the Assembly of users of Pan African e-Network and the Bureau of the Specialized Technical Committee on Communication and Information and Communication Technologies took place on 26 – 28 April 2016 to identify, coordinate, ensure appropriation and plan activities to be undertaken with the involved stakeholders in order to implement the decisions and declarations, notably those related to the Communications and Information & Communication Technologies (CICT) sectors with special emphasis on the sustainability of the Pan Africa e- Network.

The Assembly of users of PAeN held its first meeting on 26 – 27 April 2016 to deliberate on new governance structures of the PAeN and set-up the managing and operating entities for the PAeN after its transfer from the Indian government to the African Parties. The meeting concluded with the adoption of the necessary governance and management structures of the network with the implementation of the transfer to be carried out following a transitional period to allow for a smooth handover.



At the opening ceremony of the Bureau meeting on 28 April 2016, **Dr. Elham M.A. Ibrahim** Commissioner for Infrastructure and Energy of the African Union highlighted that the ICT sector contributes to the foundation of the physical integration of Africa,

provides support and acts as an engine of economic growth, economic development and poverty reduction. H.E. added that the two major outcomes of the first meeting of the STC-CICT are the Addis Ababa declaration and the election of the Bureau for the two coming years.



In his opening remarks the **Honorable Minister Mr Choguel Kokala Maïga**, Minister of Digital Economy, Information and Communications of the Republic of Mali, the Chairperson of the Bureau of the STC-CICT thanked and welcomed the participants and declared that participating in this meeting is a strong signal of our commitment to implement the Addis Ababa 2015 declaration. The Honorable Minister acknowledged the impact that ICTs have on social economic development of African nations, fast-tracking the region into an information society and enabling African people to create access, utilize and share information and knowledge. He stressed that this would lead to greater productivity, increased competitiveness and sustainable economic growth, which are preconditions for poverty reduction.

In his opening statement **Honorable Dr Siyabonga Cwele**, Minister Telecommunications and Postal Services of South Africa, Rapporteur of the Bureau, thanked the Chair and the AU Commissioner for convening the Bureau, citing that South Africa was honoured to join the August gathering, recognising the importance of the meeting in supporting the vision of our forefathers of a united and prosperous Africa. The Minister stated that ICTs are central to the vision of a developed Africa, as well as in achieving the sustainable development goals (SDGs) and our own Agenda 2063.

The meeting of the Bureau discussed the report of the first STC-CICT held 31 August-04 September 2015, the adoption of the report and recommendations of the Assembly of users of the Pan African e-Network (PAeN), the Action Plan for implementing declarations and decisions on communications and information and communication technologies (CICT) adopted by African Union Organs; as well as considered the AU draft declaration on internet governance.

The objectives of the Bureau meeting is to monitor and report to the ministers of the STC-CICT and other Organs of the African Union and make recommendations to provide direction to the various decisions and declarations already taken as well as

avoid duplication of effort and decision on the same issue by the next STCs and Assemblies.

**HE/BH/**

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