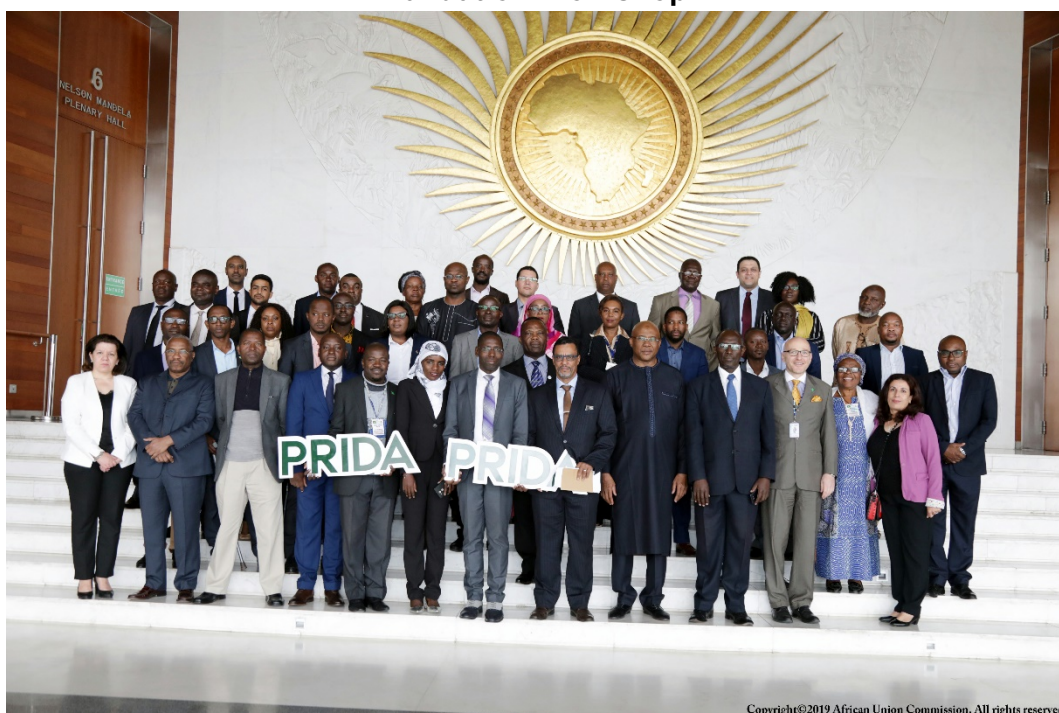


**Press Release****Policy and Regulation Initiative for Digital Africa (PRIDA) - Digital Platform Validation Workshop**Copyright©2019 African Union Commission. All rights reserved.

**Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 9 December 2019:** A two-day workshop to discuss and validate the Prototype of the Policy and Regulation Initiative for Digital Africa (PRIDA) Digital platform, which aims to serve as a secured online space for African Experts and Policy makers to undertake consultations and exchange of best practices on digital policy issues that engage African nations at international level organized by the African Union Commission (AUC) Department of Infrastructure and Energy.

Digital Platform Validation Workshop brought together more than Sixty (60) participants, including PRIDA focal points and experts from over fifty (38) African Countries as well as representatives from the Regional Economic Communities (RECs), Regional Association of Regulators and the African Telecommunication Union (ATU) in addition to the Internet Governance conveners representing Africa five sub regions as well as the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) - Regional Office for Africa.

The workshop presented an opportunity for open discussions and consultations among African experts to gather feedback and contributions on the proposed Prototype and modules of the PRIDA online platform in order to agree on the final design before starting its implementation and operationalization.

During the workshop experts discussed the importance of the online platforms in the global digital policy development and digital cooperation as the tools for sharing best practices, learning, communicating and more importantly building common positions. Experts agreed on the best and speedy way for African policy makers to work towards

the creation the ecosystems and related regulatory frameworks to support the operationalization of the PRIDA Digital Platform.

On behalf of the AU Commission Mr. Moctar Yedaly, Head of Information the Society Division, welcomed the participants to the meeting and thanked them for the commitment to support the implementation of PRIDA project as a continental initiative that aims at achieving the appropriate and efficient regulatory response that facilitates the development of safe and secured African cyber space and a consolidated continental digital market. He emphasized the critical role of such continental online platform to connect experts, to enhance Digital Cooperation, and to provide continuous trainings and updates on emerging digital issues to AU Member States and Regional Organisations.

Mr. Yedaly further emphasized the importance of PRIDA digital platform to develop Africa Common positions on Internet Governance, Digital Cooperation and relevant digital policy matters.

In his opening remarks, Mr. Andrew Rugege - Regional Director for Africa - International Telecommunication Union, recalled the importance of Radio spectrum as the cornerstone for enhancing Broadband connectivity in Africa, He underlined the potential of PRIDA project to achieve efficient and harmonized spectrum utilization across the continent.

"PRIDA" stands for "Policy and Regulation Initiative for Digital Africa". It is a joint initiative of the African Union (AU), the European Union (EU) and the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) that aims at enabling the African continent to reap the benefits of digitalisation, by addressing various dimensions of broadband demand and supply in Africa and by building the capacities of African stakeholders in the Internet Governance space.

The PRIDA digital platform aims to become a continental virtual space that serves as one space for all national, regional and continental related ICT Policies, Legislations and Regulations. It will be the tool to support harmonisation of these policies and regulation as well as a mechanism to collect ICT & Internet data to undertake statistics to monitor and evaluate the progress to truly reflect African countries realities with regard to broadband penetration and preparedness to digitalisation.

The three years initiative (2018 - 2022) is supported by the EU-funded Pan African Programme, with a specific envelope of 7.5 Mo€, and a contribution to the African Union Budget to the level of up to 1 Mo€ per year.

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