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**EXTRAORDINARY CONFERENCE OF AFRICAN
UNION MINISTERS IN CHARGE OF COMMUNICATION
AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGIES**

**2- 5 November 2009
Johannesburg, SOUTH AFRICA**

Ext/CITMC/Exp/ Rpt.(I)

**REPORT OF THE EXPERTS SESSION OF THE
EXTRAORDINARY CONFERENCE OF AFRICAN UNION
MINISTERS IN CHARGE OF COMMUNICATION AND
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGIES (CITMC)**

INTRODUCTION

1. The theme of the January 2010 Assembly of Heads of State and Government has been dedicated to "Information and Communication Technologies in Africa: Challenges and Prospects for Development". The Heads of State and Government will have an opportunity to consider Information and Communication Technologies for Africa's socio-economic development and provide the political will necessary to accelerate the development of ICTs in the Continent. In view of this Assembly, the African Union Commission organized an Extraordinary Session of the Conference of African Union Ministers in charge of Communication and Information Technologies (CITMC) to consider recommendations on critical issues pertaining to ICTs. The meeting took place in Johannesburg, Republic of South Africa, from 02 to 05 November 2009.

2. Attendance

The list of participants is attached.

AGENDA ITEM 1: OPENING SESSION

3. The Master of Ceremonies of the Opening Session, Dr. Keith Shongwe, Deputy Director General, International Affairs and Trade, Department of Communications of South Africa requested Ms Mamodupi Mohlala, the Director General of the Department of Communications of South Africa, Mrs. Vera Brenda Ngosi, the Director of Human Resources, Science and Technology, and Engineer Solomon Ekyor Ingba the Chairperson of the CITMC Expert Group to address the meeting.

a) REMARKS BY MS MAMODUPI MOHLALA, THE DIRECTOR GENERAL, DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATIONS, REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

4. Ms. Mamodupi Mohlala welcomed the participants to South Africa and wished them a pleasant stay and a successful meeting.

5. She highlighted that the hosting of this crucial Extraordinary CITMC meeting is a clear manifestation of the commitment of the Republic of South Africa as country to support the use of ICTs for Africa's development.

6. She noted the critical role of the CITMC as a Specialized Technical Committee of the African Union in guiding the Continent to benefit from the use of ICTs and called upon Member States and Experts to draft concrete recommendations to be considered by Ministers and be submitted to the January 2010 Session of the Assembly on Information and Communications Technologies in Africa.

7. Finally, she expressed the willingness of sharing South African's guidelines on ICTs during the deliberations.

b) REMARKS BY THE DIRECTOR OF HUMAN RESOURCES, SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY, MRS. VERA BRENDA NGOSI

8. Mrs. Vera Brenda Ngosi welcomed the participants to the CITMC Extraordinary Session and noted that this session was organized as a direct response to implement the African Union January 2009 Assembly Decision that devoted the January 2010 Assembly theme to **"Information and Communications Technologies in Africa: Challenges and Prospects for Development"**.

9. She noted that this decision provided the ICT community in Africa with an opportunity and platform to harness ICTs for the socio-economic development of the Continent, and to bridge the digital divide among African countries and with the rest of the world by formulating concrete recommendations on critical issues pertaining to ICTs that will accelerate the development of the ICT industry and the use of ICTs as a catalytic tool for development.

10. She further stated that the Agenda for the Experts Meeting focused on key challenges and prospects, on the need to create an Enabling Environment for ICT Growth, Development of an ICT Infrastructure, ensure Africa's visibility and participation in the Economics of the Internet and finally build Africa's capacities and promote Research and Development in ICTs.

11. She thanked the people and the Government of the Republic of South Africa for hosting this conference, as well as their warm hospitality and the excellent facilities provided for the meeting.

12. She also thanked the Development Partners, particularly the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) that provided both technical and financial support towards this meeting.

13. In conclusion, she noted that by joining hands together, Africa can build its knowledge society.

c) OPENING STATEMENT BY ENG. SOLOMON EKYOR INGBA, THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE CITMC EXPERT GROUP

14. Mr. Eng. Ekyor Ingba, in his opening remarks, underscored the need for Africa to take bold steps towards ensuring that the continent benefits from the Information Society by encouraging Member States to implement CIT programmes.

15. He expressed dismay that financing has been the major obstacle in the implementation process of the African Regional Action Plan on the Knowledge

Economy (ARAPKE) flagship projects, since only three of the eleven flagship projects are under resource mobilization and implementation.

16. He called on the CITMC Experts and the Development Partners to seriously engage in fruitful deliberations in order to come up with clear recommendations for consideration by the Ministerial Session, that will subsequently be presented to the Heads of State and Government for endorsement at the January 2010 Session of the Assembly on the theme “Information and Communications Technologies in Africa”.

AGENDA ITEM 2: ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA AND WORK PROGRAMME

17. The adopted agenda and work programme are attached.

AGENDA ITEM 3: DEVELOPMENT OF CIT INFRASTRUCTURE

18. The African Union Commission (AUC) provided an overview on the Telecommunication, ICT, Postal and Broadcasting Sectors with focus on recent projects and initiatives on infrastructures development.

19. The presentation further outlined key issues, challenges and opportunities and recommendations for action.

20. After the presentation, the meeting welcomed the issue paper and provided comments on the following:

1. the need for statistics on economic benefits arising from the information society;
2. Infrastructure security and services ;
3. infrastructure sharing, and roaming;
4. local content and open access to infrastructure;
5. the role of the postal sector for ICT diffusion and rural areas development;
6. the transformation and development of postal financial services;
7. the need for an Intra-African and triangular cooperation;
8. the importance of human capital;
9. the use of ICT to modernize the African economy and the need to develop e-applications;
10. the cost of infrastructure and ICT access for SME and African people;
11. the strengthening of African institutions including the AUC.

AGENDA ITEM 4: AFRICA IN THE ECONOMICS OF THE INTERNET

21. The AUC highlighted the four layer model of the internet economy and the gaps that need to be filled in order to promote a knowledge economy in Africa.

22. The presentation further provided statistics on the ICT industry and world internet usage which demonstrated that Africa lags behind.

23. The lack of codification of African Languages to Unicode, which hinders the development of local content on the internet was also noted.

24. The presenter further observed that Africa is the only continent paying for internet transit fees and called for an African Union policy to address this situation that is costing Africa billions of dollars which in turn continues to restrict the increase of internet users in Africa.

25. In response to the presentation, the meeting stressed the need for Africa to promote internet connectivity in order to take advantage of the global market.

26. It was also noted that lack of a legal framework is impeding the development of ICT in Africa and recommended that an ICT legal framework convention be submitted to the Assembly for consideration.

AGENDA ITEM 5: ENABLING ENVIRONMENT FOR GROWTH

27. The AUC highlighted ICT as a powerful tool for socio-economic development and the role of the Information Society in shaping the present and future world.

28. The presenter classified the ICT status in Africa into three levels: National, Regional and Continental and outlined challenges in the sector such as content creation and copyright infringement; the transition from analogue to digital broadcasting; poor quality of postal services; convergence and spectrum management.

29. It was highlighted that the main objectives behind any government intervention in ICT should be to achieve lower prices, better quality and greater choices of ICT services across the Continent. Government intervention was therefore required to promote investment in the ICT sector, consider policy frameworks which increase competition and ensure reduction of cost to communicate, address regulation of mobile termination rates and interconnection charges, and address issues of convergence and spectrum management.

30. The presenter recommended that attention should be focused more on the setting of mobile termination rates in line with best practice, use of Universal Service Access Fund as a means to promote and encourage investment, especially in rural and under-served areas, integration of ICTs in the Postal sector and utilization of the expanded network and development of e-applications and services to support more development in the ICT sector.

31. The presenter further made the following proposals:

1. Galvanize political will at the highest level of African governments and provide demonstrable support towards this cause such as establishment of an ICT unit in every Government Department/Ministry and ensure that all government services are provided electronically by a certain targeted date;
2. Maintain a well funded ICT policy department as well as an impartial and effective regulator;

3. Policy-makers should ensure that their national ICT policies give due recognition to regional integration and in turn regulators should be mandated to include a regional integration perspective in every ICT licence they issue, particularly for infrastructure licences;
4. Adopt the concept of an Open Access Network as a continental policy directive that will guide all regional ICT infrastructure projects; Open Access in this respect is defined as the availability of bandwidth to all authorised service providers/licensed operators on a non-discriminatory basis;
5. Take into consideration the various dimensions of legal framework, Accessibility, Availability and Affordability;
6. Adopt a review mechanism that will provide a regular and comparative report on the indices for every African country on specific ICT indicators;
7. Propose year 2012 as an Africa-wide switch over date for the transition from analogue to digital broadcasting;
8. Create a legal environment with global vision to facilitate implementation of the various initiatives and develop an African model cyber-law.

AGENDA ITEM 6: CAPACITY BUILDING, RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

32. The AUC underscored that ICT Capacity Building and R&D in Africa are critical for the development and utilisation of ICTs and require the creation of holistic and deliberate policy environment, building and/or strengthening of institutional capacities and development of human capital.

33. Although many African countries have developed ICT policies, few of them are implementing these policies and an even fewer number of countries have policies on ICT capacity building and R&D.

34. The presenter also noted that Africa spends relatively little resources on ICT R&D and that many institutions in Africa have significant challenges that limit their abilities to provide quality R&D.

35. The presenter highlighted the challenges and opportunities of ICT Capacity Building and R&D in Africa. Among the main challenges were inadequate infrastructure and public investment; lack of coordination and fragmentation of capacity building initiatives; exorbitant costs associated with Internet which is often unreliable, with poor connectivity; shortage of trained instructors, loose protection of Intellectual Property rights and limited access to credit and financial resources.

36. He highlighted that these challenges could be addressed by improving the policy environment, increasing fiscal support for ICT development in Africa, providing appropriate infrastructure to ICT education and R&D institutions, developing capacity

building and R&D strategies in the regions and international community among others.

37. The presenter said that opportunities in ICT R&D in Africa include increased access to high-speed Internet connections, increased use of online training, increased investments, and an improved policy and legal environment.

38. The presenter pointed out that the policy environment should be improved, development partners should better coordinate their assistance programmes, and that ICT capacity building and R&D should be looked at holistically and systematically as part of the larger effort to bring about science and technology development in Africa.

CONCLUSIONS OF THE GROUP DISCUSSIONS

39. In order to focus and crystallize the discussions that emanated from the thematic presentations into concrete recommendations, the Chair of the Experts Session requested the meeting to form Discussion Groups on each sub-theme and the following are the conclusions from the discussions:

I. CIT Infrastructure Development

- a) Promote the development and implementation of harmonized regional and continental policies and conducive regulatory frameworks for affordable and reliable broadband infrastructure development and encourage private sector investment;
- b) Promote the increase of telecommunications and ICT infrastructure to offer reliable and affordable access to African populations;
- c) Include CIT in the national development priority plans and reaffirm the importance of the postal sector as an important distribution platform for ICT diffusion;
- d) Promote universal access to reach the “unreachable”, develop innovative approaches for the creation and management of universal access/service funds, and allocate public resources;
- e) Strengthen trans-border cooperation in the field of frequencies coordination and regional network deployment;
- f) Encourage coastal connected countries to facilitate access to submarine cables for African land linked countries and promote the installation of land based cable infrastructure;
- g) Promote the use and sharing of other sectors infrastructure: energy (pipelines, electrical grids), transport (road, railway...), as well as infrastructure sharing among telecommunications/ICT operators;

- h) Build interconnected and secured regional Internet Exchange Points (IXPs);
- i) Promote the development of transformative applications across all socio-economic activities and promote the development and use of open source software through south-south cooperation;
- j) Support regional and continental CIT initiatives;
- k) Encourage the development of an African postal sector master plan;
- l) Promote the acceleration of the implementation of the CIT policy and regulatory framework, including e-signature, certification, and data protection;
- m) Promote the development of postal financial services including e-transactions;
- n) Promote the development of a common African standard for postal addressing and numbering system;
- o) Set up an African Coordination Committee for the transition from Analogue to Digital Terrestrial Broadcasting and promote the development of African Content;
- p) Promote public-private partnerships and other multi-stakeholders partnerships;
- q) Promote the development of domestic finance by providing support to local entrepreneurs and investors;
- r) Deepen regional capital markets for increased mobilization of resources and regional financial integration;
- s) Set up special investment instruments such as CIT infrastructure bonds;
- t) Improve the investment climate, and create incentives for investments;
- u) Promote Africa as an investment destination for the benefit of the African peoples;

II. Africa in the Economics of the Internet

- a) The African Union Commission and the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa will jointly develop a convention on cyber legislation based on the Continent's needs, which adheres to the legal and regulatory requirements on electronic transactions, cyber security, and personal data protection. It is recommended that AU Member States adopt this convention by 2012.

- b) Considering that Country Code Top Level Domains are critical national resources; their technical and administrative operations should be managed based on international standards to foster trust and encourage the use of African Domain Names rather than Generic Top-Level Domain Names (gTLDs) in order to bring financial, economic and socio-cultural benefits to Africa.
- c) Work with the World Intellectual Property Organization and Continental Intellectual Property Organizations to protect African geographic and heritage names, traditional knowledge, and traditional cultural expressions which are recognized as economic assets in the information society.
- d) Promote massive penetration and use of ICTs in local communities using African languages by implementing a codification programme to fit into IT international standards, and encourage the development of African content-based applications and give them their rightful place in the information society.
- e) Put in place all institutional arrangements and mechanisms for Africa to be at par with other continents (Europe, Americas, Asia-Pacific, etc) on the Internet and facilitate the setting up of national and regional exchange points to stimulate the development of the Digital Economy in Africa.
- f) Adopt a converged and coherent strategy for education policy from the bottom to the top, by taking into account ICT as a discipline in itself and as an enabler for learning other disciplines and encourage the use of existing regional organizations to guarantee that Africa will not lack skilled resources.
- g) Develop an enabling environment for African Digital and Creative Industries (Music, Movies, ccTLDs, Intellectual Properties Rights, etc) for the socio-economic growth of Africa to enhance job and wealth creation so that Africa can take advantage of the global market.
- h) Build a strong and efficient Public-Private Partnership to achieve economic and sustainable growth in Africa and ensure a feasible and an implementable action plan.
- i) Establish dot Africa as a continental Top-Level Domain for use by organizations, businesses and individuals with guidance from African Internet Agencies.

III. Enabling Environment for ICT Growth in Africa

- a) Encourage the adoption of the AU reference framework/guideline for harmonisation of ICT policies and regulators in Africa and adoption of e-legislation which includes cyber-laws, intellectual property laws, e-signature laws, etc. to encourage regional integration.

- b) There is a need to galvanise political will at the highest level of African governments to recognise the significant impact the ICT sector has on the economic development of African countries as well as acknowledge the critical input it has into other sectors such as banking etc.
- c) Policy-makers and regulators should ensure that their national ICT policies and regulations give due recognition to regional and continental integration, particularly infrastructure licensing.
- d) Undertake further analysis to achieve a commonly accepted definition of Open Access.
- e) African Governments should create a continental ICT Infrastructure Fund to support regional infrastructure projects.
- f) Create a common legal environment, and appropriate institutional and regulatory framework that will assist Member States to adhere to a global vision and implementation of various initiatives, taking into account the converged ICT space, Accessibility, Availability and Affordability.
- g) Establish a review mechanism that will ensure the collection of performance indicators needed for policy formulation and peer review evaluation.
- h) Propose year 2012 as an Africa-wide switch over date for the transition from analogue to digital broadcasting.

IV. ICT Capacity Building and Research & Development

- a) Integrate ICT into National Education Systems:
 - Produce a critical skilled mass;
 - Incremental growth whereby all primary and secondary schools should have access to and use of ICTs.
- b) Human Resource Development:
 - Increase in production of ICT skilled personnel;
 - Further urge the African Union Commission to create policies that will encourage Member States to explore opportunities in emerging technologies in order to reach the rural and the marginalised communities using new technologies.
- c) Invest in Research & Development:
 - ICT R&D to be addressed within the context of Science, Technology & Innovation Programmes and Member States should be urged to reaffirm the investment of 1% of GDP to Science and Technology.

- d) Promote the Development and Use of African Content:
- Increase local content in broadcasting and Internet;
 - Increase development of content relevant to Africa for the Internet;
 - Exchange of content amongst African States to ensure economic development.

AGENDA ITEM 7: BRIEFING ON OTHER PREPARATORY ACTIVITIES FOR THE JANUARY 2010 ASSEMBLY

40. The Commission presented an overview of other preparatory activities as follows:

a) Exhibition

41. An exhibition on Information and Communication Technologies in Africa will be jointly organized by the African Union Commission (AUC) and the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) in parallel with the January 2010 Assembly from 29 January to 02 February 2010. African Union Member States are urged to participate fully, particularly since participation is free of charge.

42. The objectives of the exhibition are:

- To showcase innovative ICT projects in AU Member States;
- To encourage African policy-makers to invest in new Technologies for socio-economic development and
- To demonstrate the potential investment return in Technology and Innovation, particularly in ICTs.

b) ICT Film Documentary

43. As part of the efforts to seize the opportunity of the upcoming AU 2010 January Assembly to convince the Heads of State and Government of the key role of ICTs in the socio-economic development of Africa, the African Union Commission plans to film selected ICT projects in selected Member States of the African Union. The documentary will also include short interviews on ICT with the Presidents of those Member States. The film documentary will be shown during the Assembly and dispatched to Member States for TV broadcasting.

44. The objectives of the film documentary are:

- To showcase the importance of ICT as a tool to accelerate the socio-economic development and integration of the Continent;
- To enable the targeted audience to have a glance at the role of ICT in the development of the African Community;
- To increase public awareness on the ICT programmes of the African Union.

c) Internet Governance (IG) Forum Workshop

45. The AUC will be organizing jointly with the Ministry of Communication and Information Technology in Egypt a workshop on Internet Governance Issues from 12 to 13 November 2009. This workshop will be followed by a Ministerial Round Table for the African Ministers participating in the 4th Internet Governance Forum on 14 November 2009.

46. The main topics of the workshop will be:

- Managing critical Internet resources;
- Security, openness and privacy;
- Access and diversity;
- Challenges in IG (Public versus Private);
- IG and Socio-Economic Development.

AGENDA ITEM 8: ANY OTHER BUSINESS

47. The Egyptian delegation briefed the session on the upcoming 4th Internet Governance Forum stated for 14 November 2009.

AGENDA ITEM 9: CLOSING SESSION

48. The closing statements were given by Mr. Themba Phiri, Acting Deputy Director General of the Department of Communications of South Africa, Mrs. Vera Brenda Ngosi, the Director of Human Resources, Science and Technology, and Engineer Solomon Ekyor Ingba, the Chairperson of CITMC Expert Group. The effort made by the Experts was acknowledged and a vote of thanks was give to South Africa, the host country.

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**Johannesburg, SOUTH AFRICA
2-5 November 2009**

**WORK PROGRAMME OF
THE EXPERTS SESSION**

2 - 4 NOVEMBER 2009

WORK PROGRAMME OF THE EXPERT SESSION

DAY ONE 2nd of November

TIME	ACTIVITY
8:30- 9:00	Arrival and Registration
<i>OPENING SESSION</i>	
9:00- 9:30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcome remarks by the Director General, Department of Communication (Host Country) • Remarks by the Director of Human Resources, Science and Technology, African Union Commission. • Remarks by the Chair of the CITs Ministerial conference expert group
9:30 - 9:45	Adoption of Agenda and Work programme
9:45 - 10:15	TEA/COFFEE BREAK
10:15 - 10:45	Presentations of the sub-theme on “ICT Infrastructure Development”
10:45 - 11:30	Discussion on “ICT Infrastructure Development”
11:30 - 12:15	Presentations of the sub-theme on “The Enabling Environment for Growth”
12:15 - 13:00	Discussion on “The Enabling Environment for Growth”
13:00 - 14:15	LUNCH BREAK
14:15 - 14:45	Presentations of the sub-theme on “Africa in the Economics of the Internet”
14:45 - 15:30	Discussion on “Africa in the Economics of the Internet”
15:30 - 16:00	TEA/COFFEE BREAK
16:00 - 16:30	Presentations of the sub-theme on “Capacity Building, Research and Development”
16:30 - 17:15	Discussion on “Capacity Building, Research and Development”
<i>END of DAY ONE</i>	
<i>Welcome Dinner hosted by Altech 18:30 to 21:00</i>	

**WORK PROGRAMME OF THE
EXPERT SESSION
DAY TWO**

3rd of November

TIME	ACTIVITY
9:00 - 9:45	Briefing on other preparatory activities for the 2010 summit
9:45 - 11:00	General discussion on the expected results of the AU-2010 Summit.
11:00 - 11:30	TEA/COFFEE BREAK
11:30 - 12:30	Cont. of General discussion on the expected results of the AU-2010 Summit.
12:30 - 12:45	Consideration of the draft Ministerial agenda and work programme
12:45 - 13:00	Any other business
13:00 - 14:45	LUNCH BREAK
<i>Report Writing</i>	
<i>END OF DAY TWO</i>	
<i>Dinner hosted by SENTECH 18:30 to 21:00</i>	

WORK PROGRAMME OF THE EXPERT SESSION

DAY THREE

4th of November

TIME	ACTIVITY
09: 00 - 11:00	Consideration and adoption of the Expert report
11:00 - 11:30	TEA/COFFEE BREAK
<i>Closing session</i>	
11:30 - 12:30	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Statement by the Director of Human Resource Science and Technology.• Statement by the Host country.• Closing Remarks by the Chair of the CITs Ministerial conference expert
12:30 - 14: 30	Lunch by Ericson
<i>END OF DAY THREE and the EXPERT SESSION</i>	
<i>Finalizing the report</i>	
<i>Handing out the final report to the Experts by 17:00</i>	
<i>Welcome Dinner hosted by MULTICHOICE from 18:30 to 21:30</i>	

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**2 - 5 November 2009
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**WORK PROGRAMME OF
THE MINISTERIAL SESSION**

5 NOVEMBER 2009

WORK PROGRAMME OF THE MINISTERIAL SESSION

TIME	ACTIVITY
8:30 - 9:00	Arrival and Registration
<i>OPENING SESSION</i>	
9:00 - 10:00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • African Union Anthem. • Republic of South Africa Anthem. • Welcoming by Premier of Gauteng Province • Remarks by the Commissioner of Human Resource Science and Technology. • Welcome Address by the Host country, H.E. Minister of Communication, Republic of South Africa. • Opening remarks by H.E. Minister of State, Federal Ministry of Information and Communication of Nigeria and Chair of the CITs Ministerial Conference.
10:00 - 10:15	Group Photo
10:15 - 10:45	TEA/COFFEE BREAK
10:45 - 10:50	Adoption of Agenda and Work Programme
10:50 - 11:20	Presentation of the Experts Report and Recommendations
11:20 - 12:50	Discussions
12:50 - 13:10	Any Other Business
13:10 - 15:00	LUNCH BREAK
<i>REPORT WRITING</i>	
15:00 - 15:30	Consideration and Adoption of the Ministerial Conference Report and Recommendations to the 2010 Summit on ICT.
<i>CLOSING SESSION</i>	
15:30 - 16:00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Statement by the Commissioner of Human Resource Science and Technology. • Closing Remarks by the Chair of the CITs Ministerial Conference. • Vote of Thanks H.E. Minister of Information, Communications and Technology of the Kingdom of Swaziland • Closing by Host country.
<i>GALA Dinner hosted by Telkom</i>	



LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

EXTRA-ORDINARY SESSION OF THE COMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE

2 - 5 November, 2009
Johannesburg, SOUTH AFRICA

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