

AFRICAN UNION

الاتحاد الأفريقي



UNION AFRICAINE

UNIÃO AFRICANA

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**EXECUTIVE COUNCIL
Thirteenth Ordinary Session
24 – 28 June 2008
Sharm El-Sheikh, EGYPT**

EX.CL/434(XIII)

**REPORT ON THE CONFERENCE OF MINISTERS OF
TELECOMMUNICATIONS AND POSTS**

INTRODUCTION

1. The Second Ordinary Session of the African Union Conference of Ministers in charge of Communication and Information Technologies (CIT) was held on 14 May 2008 in Cairo, Arab Republic of Egypt. The conference was preceded by a preparatory meeting of experts, which took place from 11 to 13 May 2008 at the same venue.

2. In attendance were Ministers in charge Telecommunications/ICT and Posts, and Experts from thirty four (34) African Union Member States as well as representatives of Regional Economic Communities (RECs), specialised institutions and regional & International partner organisations.

3. A new Bureau of the African Union Conference of Ministers in charge of Communication and Information Technologies was elected for a two-year period (2008 – 2010) to replace the one that had held office from 2006 to 2008. The current Bureau which presided over the proceedings of the Cairo session of the conference has the following membership:

Chairman : Nigeria (Western Africa)

1st Vice-Chairman: Kenya (Eastern Africa)

2nd Vice-Chairman: Zambia (Southern Africa)

3rd Vice-Chairman: Chad (Central Africa)

Rapporteur: Egypt (North Africa)

Issues Discussed

4. The Ministers considered and made a number of recommendations on the various key issues and challenges currently facing Telecommunications/ICT and Postal sectors in Africa. The main topics of the conference were as follows hereunder:

- The Reference framework for the harmonization of telecommunications/ICT policies and regulations in Africa;
- Strategies, policies and regulations for the development of postal services in Africa ;
- African Regional Action Plan on the Knowledge Economy (ARAPKE)

Outcome

5. At the end of their deliberations, the Ministers adopted a Declaration named “2008 Cairo Declaration” in which, they have endorsed the following:

- The reference framework for the harmonization of Telecommunications/ICT policies and regulations in Africa;
- The strategic orientation and action plan for the development of postal services in Africa;
- The eleven ARAPKE flagship projects

6. The Executive Council is invited to note the enclosed Report of the 2nd Session of the Conference of African Ministers of Communications and Information Technologies and endorse the attached documents as adopted by the Ministers at the Conference.

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**SECOND ORDINARY SESSION OF
THE AFRICAN UNION CONFERENCE OF
MINISTERS IN CHARGE OF COMMUNICATION
AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGIES
CAIRO, EGYPT**

AU/CIT/MIN/Rpt.(II)

**REPORT OF THE MINISTER'S SESSION
14 MAY 2008**

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The 2nd Ordinary Session of the African Union Ministers in charge of Communication and Information Technologies was held from 11 to 14 May 2008, in the conference Centre of the Fairmont Towers Hotel, Cairo, Arab Republic of Egypt. The experts' meeting held from 11 to 13 of May 2008 preceded the Ministerial Conference. The Ministers deliberated on the report of the Expert session and other Agenda items.

II. PARTICIPATION

2. The following Member States took part in the meeting: Algeria, Angola, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Congo, Democratic Republic of Congo, Djibouti, Egypt, Ethiopia, The Gambia, Guinea Bissau, Kenya, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Mozambique, Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Tanzania, Tunisia, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe,

III. OPENING CEREMONY

Statement by Mr. Briosia E. Gala, Special Adviser for Africa, European Commission,

3. H.E. Mr. Briosia E. Gala expressed his gratitude and the privilege to address the African Ministers in their Conference. He highlighted the ongoing EU-Africa Partnership on Infrastructure, the Partnership on the Information Society, Science and Space Technologies and about the role of the private sector in the EU's development aid.

4. H.E. Mr. Briosia E. Gala recall that the European Commission initiated, at the end of 2006, a joint dialogue platform with the African Union Commission to discuss with business what is needed to develop the private sector and launched the EU-Africa Business Forum, which has met since in Accra, in Ghana in June 2007.

5. The Joint EU-Africa Strategy and the EU-Africa Partnership on Science, Information Society and Space Technologies has been approved by the Heads of State during the EU-Africa Summit in Lisbon. A Joint Action Plan is currently on the table calls for concrete actions to be launched in the period 2008-2010, and results to be reviewed during the next EU-Africa Summit planned for 2010.

Through the EU-AU Task Force, a prolific collaboration has led to the identification of 5 priority projects that are in direct support to ARAPKE and that are to be considered as early deliverables for the Joint Action Plan.

6. H.E assured that the EU will prepare itself from its side. And urge that the African Union Member states do the same so that in the near future both Partners can sit together and come to a more significant contribution to the general objectives of ARAPKE.

Statement by Mr. Hamadoun TOURE, Secretary General, International Telecommunication Union,

7. Mr. H. TOURE thanks Egypt for the warm hospitality and highlighted that Egypt is a good example of continuing development of ICT in Africa.

8. He also pointed out that the African continent harbors enormous potential for development of Telecommunication and ICT sector. For proof of this is the exponential growth of mobile telephony.

9. Mr. H. TOURE has esteemed that our role is to transform this potential into a competitive industry and a lever for development and is to that end, that some key initiatives was launched such as, the African Regional Action Plan on the Knowledge Economy (ARAPKE), the Connect Africa Summit.

10. He recall that Telecommunication and ICT issues which have been discussed in the experts session are already reflected in the priorities assigned to the Telecommunication Development Bureau (BDT) International Telecommunication Union (ITU). Therefore, Mr. H. TOURE committed himself that ITU will accompany the African Union in giving effect to the outcomes of the meeting.

Statement by H.E. Dr. Elham Mahmoud Ahmed Ibrahim, Commissioner for Infrastructure and Energy of the African Union Commission,

11. H.E Dr. Elham A. Ibrahim, started her speech by conveying the appreciations of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission to Arab Republic of Egypt and expressed the commission gratitude for the hospitality and the remarkable organizations of the conference.

12. She highlighted the importance of creating the enabling environment for the Telecommunication, ICT and Postal sector in order to create the African Information Society in light of the globalization context the world witnessing. She also underscored the challenges facing Africa and the need for better cooperation plans and to have win-win partnerships with the various development organizations.

13. Dr. Elham draw the attention to the condition of ICT Infrastructure in Africa as sighted in the international reports and statistics. Also on the need for more work to overcome the constraints and shortages in the connectivity between and among the African countries. She appreciated the various initiatives on Telecommunication, ICT and Postal at the National, Continental and International level and highlighted the strategic plans of the AUC with regards to bridging the digital divide and creates the African information society.

14. Dr. Elham recalled the first ordinary session of the CIT Ministerial Conference, its outcomes and the progress made and further stated the objectives of this second ordinary session and she valued highly the results and outcomes of its deliberations.

15. The Commissioner, Dr. Elham concluded her speech by reassuring the meeting on the determinations of the AUC to implement all the recommendations and decisions resulted from the conference.

Statement by H. E. Dr Tarek Kamel, Minister of Communication and Information Technology of the Arab Republic of Egypt

16. H. E. Dr Tarek Kamel, welcome all ministers and delegates to the Second African Union conference of ministers in charge of communication and information technologies and to Cairo who hosting for the third time the ITU Telecom Africa 2008.

17. He recalled that the African Union has successfully partnered with ITU and other leading organization to hold the Connect Africa Summit in Kigali on October 2007 and has also successfully collaborated with the European Union to create the EU-Africa partnership on Science, Information Society and Space. He further recalled that since it was launched in Cairo on April 2006, the ministerial Conference on CIT in Africa has been exploring the best way to kick-start. To that end, Egypt efforts have been directed towards supporting collective collaboration in implementing the Cairo Declaration adopted in 2006.

18. He highlighted some of the main activities that have been taken place such as the submission of the recommendation of the 1st Conference of Ministers in charge of CIT to 7th African Union Summit in Banjul in July 2006, the two meeting holed by the Steering Committee, the setting up of the ARAPKE working which meet two time.

19. After giving the trends of ICT at international and African levels, H.E Dr Tarek concluded his speech by expressing the commitments of Egypt to support all regional efforts to promote ICT in Africa.

IV. PROCEDURAL MATTERS

Election of Conference Bureau and Steering Committee

20. The Ministerial meeting elected the following Members to the Bureau and Steering Committee of CIT:

Western Africa

- **Federal Republic of Nigeria**, Member of the Bureau and the **Chair** of the African Union Conference of Ministers in charge of Communication and Information Technologies
- **Republic of Mali** Member of the Steering Committee

Eastern Africa:

- **Republic of Kenya** Member of the Bureau and **First Vice Chair**
- **Republic of Uganda**, Member of the Steering Committee

Southern Africa:

- **Republic of Zambia**, Member of the Bureau and the **Second Vice Chair**
- **Republic of South Africa** Member of the Steering Committee

Central Africa:

- **Republic of Chad** Member of the Bureau and **Third Vice Chair**
- **Republic of Democratic Republic of Congo** Member of the Steering Committee

Northern Africa

- **Arab Republic of Egypt** Member of the Bureau **Rapporteur of the Bureau**
- **Tunisian Republic** Member of the Steering Committee

Adoption of Agenda and Work Programme

21. The meeting adopted the following agenda:

Opening Ceremony

Procedural Matters

Working Sessions

- Consideration of the report of the Experts session
- Consideration and adoption of the Declaration
- Date and venue of the next CIT Ministerial Conference
- Any other business
- Consideration and adoption of the Ministerial session report

Closing ceremony

V. CONSIDERATION OF THE REPORT OF THE EXPERTS SESSION

22. The Chairperson of the Experts Meeting Ms. Samia Moussa, Deputy Director of International Relations at the Ministry of Communications and Information Technology in the Arab Republic of Egypt, presented the experts meeting report and highlighted the following items considered by the experts:

- Report of the steering committee of the African Union Conference of Ministers in charge of communication and information technologies;
- The African Union Commission (AUC) brief on the various activities, programmes and events that have been organized or attended by the commission at the Regional, Continental and International levels;
- The study on the reference framework for the harmonization of policies and regulations in the Telecommunications/ICT sector in Africa;
- The Study on strategies, policies and regulations for the development of postal services in Africa;
- Progress report on the African Regional Action Plan on Knowledge Economy;
- Briefing on other ICT Initiatives that included:
 - ITU report on the conclusions of the October 2007 "Connect Africa" Summit in Kigali (Rwanda) and the status of their implementation;

- GSM Association presentation;
- Digital Solidarity Fund (DSF) presentation on the 1% digital solidarity principle;
- Intel Presentation on Broadband Connectivity;
- The African Network of the Global Alliance for ICT and Development (GAID); and
- ICANN presentation on its transformation phases
- Presentation on Internet Governance Forum

23. The report highlighted the following key points and recommendations:

- The need to improve national Telecommunications /ICT policies of the AU Member States and to align it with those proposed by AUC in the reference framework.
- The necessity for Member States and RECs to improve their national postal policy and to align it with those proposed by AUC and the urgency for establishing an autonomous regulator that takes into account postal services
- The need to mobilize resources to accelerate the implementation of the selected ARAPKE flagship projects considering that priority should be given to infrastructure and capacity building.
- Selection of three ARAPKE flagship projects to be implemented under the EU-Africa partnership.
- The need to establish CIT fund to foster the implementation of the ARAPKE flagship projects.

24. At the end of their discussions, the Ministers adopted the expert report

VI. CONSIDERATION AND ADOPTION OF THE DECLARATION

25. The Ministers adopted the Declaration entitle “**2008 Cairo Declaration**” with incorporation of amendments coming from their discussion.

VII. DATE AND VENUE OF THE NEXT CIT MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE

26. The Ministers have decided that the meeting to be held on May 2010 in Abuja.

VIII. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

27. Ghana delegation invited the participant to attend the following event organized by the Government of Ghana and ITU:

Forum on Telecommunications Development:	26 – 28 May 2008, Accra
Africa Preparatory meeting of the WTSA 2008:	29 - 30 May 2008, Accra

IX. CLOSING SESSION

28. At the closing, a vote of thanks for Egyptian Authorities was read by a delegate. The Commissioner of Infrastructure and Energy and the Chair thanked then participants for the outcomes of the meeting.

EX.CL/434 (XIII)
ANNEX I

2008 CAIRO DECLARATION

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**SECOND ORDINARY SESSION OF
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CAIRO, EGYPT
11-14 MAY, 2008**

AU/CIT/MIN/DECL. (II)

2008 CAIRO DECLARATION

2008, CAIRO DECLARATION

PREAMBLE

WE, African Ministers in charge of Communication and Information Technologies meeting on 14 May 2008 in Cairo, the Arab Republic of Egypt; at the second ordinary session of the African Union Conference of Ministers in charge of Communication and Information Technologies.

Guided by Articles 3, 13, 14 and 15 of the Constitutive Act of the African Union (AU) adopted in Lome, Togo, in 2000, on the Specialized Technical Committees and their roles and procedures to ensure the coordination and harmonization of projects and programmes of the Union;

Recalling the decisions of the Heads of State and Government of the African Union at the 2002 Assembly in Durban, Republic of South Africa, on the adoption of NEPAD as an AU programme;

Recalling Decision EX.CL/Dec.238 (VIII) of the 8th Ordinary Session of the Executive Council in Khartoum, Republic of Sudan, in January 2006, inviting all Member States and international organizations to support and contribute to the Digital Solidarity Fund (DSF);

Recalling also Decision EX.CL/Dec.291 (IX) of the 10th ordinary session of the AU Executive Council in Banjul, the Republic of the Gambia, July 2006 calling on Member States to implement all the commitments made in the Declaration and in particular the African Regional Action Plan on Knowledge Economy (ARAPKE);

Considering the importance and role of Telecommunication infrastructures and services, ICTs and postal systems in Africa's political, economic and social development as well as its integration process, which role can secure for the Continent greater participation in globalization;

Realizing the need for Africa to develop policies and regulations in the areas of Telecommunications/ICTs and postal systems, capable of contributing to economic development and accelerating regional integration process;

Considering that building the Information and Knowledge Society is a lever for economic and social development, as has been recognized by the World Summit on Information Society, held in two phases (Geneva 2003 and Tunis in 2005);

Taking note of the report of the senior officials and experts' meeting held from 11-13 May 2008 in Cairo, Arab Republic of Egypt.

COMMITMENTS

We hereby undertake to:

Establish mechanisms to accelerate and monitor the implementation of the African Regional Action Plan on Knowledge Economy;

Work together to make Telecommunication/ICT and postal services priority instruments for Africa's economic and social development so as to achieve sustainable development and reduce poverty;

Popularize the usage of ICTs and highlight their role in the transformation of the African society into a knowledge-base society;

Harmonize the Telecommunication/ICT and postal Policies at regional and continental levels to ensure the integration of African Union Member states.

Promote and facilitate greater appropriation of ICTs by women and youths through the development of national and regional strategies and other capacity building interventions;

Decide as follows:

i. GOVERNANCE

1. The African Union Conference of Ministers in charge of Communication and Information Technologies is the highest coordination body for all ICT issues/activities in the continent. Therefore all Decisions emanating from other fora in Africa should be communicated to the Bureau and the Conference of Ministers in charge of Communications and Information Technologies.
2. The African Union Conference of Ministers in charge of Communication and Information Technologies should be adapted, simplified, and rationalized according to the existing African Union rules of procedure and practice, which stipulate that:
 - (a) The Bureau is composed of five members as representatives of the five African regions (a Chair, three Vice Chairs and a Rapporteur) and African Union Commissioner will be an ex-officio member;
 - (b) The Steering Committee will consist of:

- One representative of each Minister-member of the Bureau.
- One additional representative, from each of the five African regions, who are not members of the Bureau.
- One representative from the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) and one representative from the African Development Bank (AfDB).
- One representative from the Department of infrastructure and Energy and one representative from the Department of Human Resources, Science and Technology, as ex-officio members.

(c) RECs to be invited to all meetings of the Steering Committee

3. The Bureau may act on behalf of the Communication and Information Technologies Ministerial Conference to implement its decisions and conduct the necessary consultations with Member States in the respective regions, various sectors of the civil society, RECs and relevant implementing agencies;
4. The Bureau of the Conference of Ministers of Communication and Information Technologies, in coordination with the African Union Commission, is charged with convening a stakeholder's meeting to establish a cluster of implementing agencies and to mainstream and harmonize the existing programmes and projects in the Telecommunication and ICT sector in Africa with a view of eliminating duplication and optimizing the use of resources.

i. TELECOMMUNICATIONS /ICT POLICIES

1. Call upon Member States and RECs to improve their national Telecommunications/ICT policies and strategies, taking into account the reference framework proposed by the African Union Commission;
2. Request the African Union Commission, with the support of Member States of the African Union and RECs, to identify appropriate mechanisms for compiling and maintaining up-to-date reliable set of statistics with regard to the development of the ICT in Africa;

3. Invite Member States of the African Union, development partners and the African private sector to identify mechanisms that can facilitate sharing of experience and best practices.

ii. POLICIES AND REGULATIONS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF POSTAL SERVICES

1. Request Member States and RECs to improve their national postal policies taking into account the strategic orientation and the action plan proposed in the study conducted by the African Union Commission and to establish an independent regulator for post
2. Call upon Member States to review and Strengthen the Pan African Postal Union (PAPU) in terms of financial and human resources with the support of the African Union Commission.
3. Call upon Member States to adopt modern structures policies, regulations and to encourage private sector investments in the postal sector by promoting Public/Private Partnership.

iii. ARAPKE

1. Request the African Union Commission and the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa to work closely in mobilizing resources to accelerate the implementation of the selected ARAPKE flagship projects, considering that priority should be given to infrastructure development and capacity building;
2. Commend the efforts made by the African Union Commission under the EU-Africa partnership with regard to the selection and implementation of the three ARAPKE flagship projects;
3. Request the African Union Commission to invite Member States to furnish the Commission with a list of new projects which will be submitted to the ARAPKE working group for the selection process of the 2nd phase of the ARAPKE flagship projects.
4. Call upon the AUC and ITU to identify the mechanisms that will lead to the implementation of ARAPKE flagship projects pursuant to the commitments made at the Connect Africa Summit, Kigali, October 2007.
5. Invite the African Union Commission to submit an official proposal to the African Development Bank (AfDB) seeking support to establish Communication and Information Technologies funds before 2010 to foster the implementation of the ARAPKE.

ENDORSEMENT**We hereby endorse:**

1. The Reference Framework for the harmonization of Telecommunications/ICT policies and regulations in Africa attached to this Declaration;
2. The strategic orientation and action plan for the development of postal services in Africa attached to this Declaration;
3. The eleven ARAPKE flagship projects.

We Appreciate the role of African institutions, the United Nations agencies, International and African development partners and the private sector in supporting the African Union efforts to develop the African knowledge base society.

We Adhere to the institutionalization of the Pan African Forum for the sharing of best practices in ICTs in order to encourage the greater popularization on the continent.

We Request that this Declaration be submitted at the next Assembly of the African Union to the Heads of States and Governments which will take place in Sharm El Sheikh, Egypt from 30th June to 1st July 2008.

We Express our gratitude to **H.E. President HOSNI MUBARAK** and the People of the Arab Republic of Egypt for the warm hospitality and excellent organization of this conference.

Done in Cairo, this 14 day of May 2008

EX.CL/434 (XIII)
ANNEX II

**REFERENCE FRAMEWORK FOR HARMONISATION
OF TELECOMMUNICATION, INFORMATION AND
COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES POLICIES AND
REGULATION IN AFRICA**

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AU/CIT/EXP/ANNEX I (II)

**REFERENCE FRAMEWORK FOR HARMONISATION
OF TELECOMMUNICATION, INFORMATION AND
COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES POLICIES
AND REGULATION IN AFRICA**

1. REFERENCE FRAMEWORK FOR HARMONIZATION OF TELECOMMUNICATION AND ICT POLICIES AND REGULATION IN AFRICA

To address the challenges identified in the study, it is proposed to implement a reference framework for the harmonization of policy and regulation for the Telecommunications/ICT sector, taking into account on one hand the vision and mission of the African Union and the following guiding principles on the other hand.

1.1. Guiding Principles

The referential policy and regulatory framework will comply with the following principles:

- Solidarity between African Member States and peoples;
- Cooperation between the AUC, RECs; and other African organizations;
- Partnerships between and amongst African peoples;
- Link to Poverty Reduction Strategy Programmes (PRSP), Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and other continental development goals, such as African Regional Action Plan on the Knowledge Economy (ARAPKE);
- Goals of Connect Africa Summit (Kigali, October 2007).
- Principles of the World Summit on Information Society (WSIS);
- Finance viability, technical feasibility and political acceptability;

a. Solidarity

The solidarity principle rises from the Constitutive Act of the African Union and aim at realizing a greater unity and solidarity between the African countries and peoples ". This solidarity implies, in addition to African cardinal values, resource sharing heritage of our history which will allow Africans to enter together in modernity.

b. Cooperation

Cooperation between the African Union Commission and the other continental organizations namely the Regional Economic Communities (RECs) involved in the development and the integration of the continent is an important element of the Constitutive Act.

At regional level, the principle of cooperation, as contained in the community objectives enshrined in the Treaty, will allow for expansion and sharing RECs initiatives.

c. Partnership between stakeholders of African Telecommunication/ICT sector

A reference policy and regulatory framework must take into account interests of all stakeholders and the key actors of African Telecommunication/ICT Sector, namely,

Governments, regulators, development partners, operators, service providers, the private sector, and most importantly, the consumers.

d. Link to PRSP, MDGs, goals of WSIS and other continental development objectives (ARAPKE, Connect Africa Summit)

The reference framework for the harmonization of policies of Telecommunications and ICT is developed in a context marked by the adoption of commitments in favor of the development subscribed on a world level and regional, such as MDGs , ARAPKE , WSIS objectives and goals of the Connect Africa Summit. Then, the content of the reference framework for the harmonization of policies should facilitating the achievement of the objectives and goals of these various commitments.

e. Financial viability, technical feasibility and political acceptability

The reference policy and regulatory practices framework must be for Member States and Regional Economic Communities and politically acceptable in order to guarantee its successful implementation. In terms of financial implication and technical feasibility it should not be a source of supplementary problems. On the contrary it must be a value added contribution to efforts that are already being undertaken at the national, regional and international levels in terms of measures taken to support the development of the Telecommunication/ICT infrastructures.

1.2. Broad Objectives

The following broad objectives have been identified and are considered the main challenges facing Africa. These broad objectives are enumerated here under;

- i. Establish **harmonized policy, legal and regulatory frameworks** at the regional and continental levels to create an enabling environment that will attract investment and foster the sustainable development of competitive African Telecommunication/ICT regional markets, infrastructures, and to increase access;
- ii. Develop **integrated infrastructures and access networks** as the cornerstone of the e-access, with efficient cross-border interconnectivity to provide increased access to Telecommunication/ICT services for the greatest number of populations in Africa, including the improvement of connectivity of the African continent with the other continents.
- iii. Support the development of industrialization and research on sciences and technology related to Telecommunication/ICT.
- iv. Develop African **human resource and increase awareness** to ensure active participation of Africa in the global information and knowledge-based economy;
- v. Develop relevant and valuable **applications** to encourage the deployment and utilization of Telecommunication/ICT across all socio-economic sectors in Africa in order to improve efficiency and productivity;

- vi. Promote and develop African **content** to increase global presence of African values, cultures, languages and indigenous knowledge;
- vii. Mobilize financial resources by strengthening **regional cooperation** and **multi stakeholder partnerships** and promotion of **public and private partnerships**.

1.3. Strategy to Achieve Objectives:

A. Establishment of harmonized policy and regulatory framework

1. Engage the highest level authorities to enhance the political will to foster the development and harmonization of the Telecommunication/ICT sector.
2. Develop harmonized regional and continental e-strategies.
3. Develop regulatory guidelines at regional and continental levels.
4. Establish mechanisms to encourage and strengthen stakeholder participation in the harmonization process

B. Development of Integrated Infrastructures and Access Networks

1. Promote regional and intra-continental connectivity.
2. Promote open access to infrastructure
3. Promote infrastructure sharing.
4. Promote digital broadcast infrastructures/networks.
5. Promote infrastructure/networks convergence, in particular migration to IP/NGN networks;
6. Promote appropriate and innovative technologies that can improve universal access/service and affordability.
7. Implement technologies/networks that complies to internationally accepted and widely spread standards, taking into account regional interconnectivity and interoperability.
8. Promote African participation in the development of standards at the regional and international levels.

C. Support to Industrialization, Research and Development

1. Encourage developed software and hardware in Africa;.
2. Encourage research & development and industrialization of African to develop Telecommunication/ICT systems.
3. Establish regional common research centres.

D. Development of Human Resources and Increase of Awareness

1. Promote attitudinal change and confidence for the adoption of Telecommunication/ICT in the economy as a mode of life.
2. Increase Telecommunication/ICT awareness among political leaders and policy makers at the highest level.
3. Increase the pool of African professionals in all areas of Telecommunication/ICT competencies; encourage their mobility and their retention within Africa.

4. Develop mass e-literacy and promote wide usage of Telecommunication/ICT.
5. Establish and develop centres of excellence and Telecommunication/ICT research institutions, and promote effective cooperation among them,
6. Establish and develop institutions for capacity building for Telecommunication/ICT at various levels, particularly for regulators and policy makers.

E. Development of Telecommunication/ICT applications

1. Encourage the deployment and utilization of Telecommunication/ICT across all socio-economic sectors in Africa; especially in the following priority areas, namely, e-Government, e-Education, e-Commerce, e-Health, e-Culture.
2. Build confidence in the development and use of Telecommunication/ICT applications, taking into consideration better management of the cyberspace, from the producer as well as from the consumer point of view.
3. Promote the development and use of open source software, and build applications on such platforms.

F. Development of African Content

1. Preserve the African heritage in digital format, and its relevant Intellectual property rights.
2. Encourage the creation of African content in diverse languages.
3. Promote global presence of the African heritage, cultures, and indigenous knowledge;

G. Mobilization of Financial Resources

1. Raise political awareness to consider Telecommunication/ICT as a priority sector in social economic development.
2. Allocate public resources for Telecommunication/ICT development.
3. Promote public private partnerships and other multi-stakeholders partnerships.
4. Create incentives for foreign investments and coordinate its usage,
5. Promote the development of domestic finance by providing support to local entrepreneurs and investors.
6. Develop innovative approaches for the creation and management of universal access/service funds.
7. Increase awareness, mobilization, coordination and efficiency on regional, continental and international initiatives and projects of Telecommunication/ICT development

1.4. Programme of Action

The programme of action is attached.

1.5. Priority Programmes

Among the various activities of the programme of action, it is proposed that the following activities (Table I) constitute a priority programme to be carrying out at national, regional and continental level.

Table 1: Priority programme		
Continental level	Regional level	National level
1. Development and adoption of policy and regulatory Guidelines.	1. Development and adoption of policy and regulatory regional Guidelines;	1. Formulation, adoption and implementation of national Telecommunication/ICT policies taking into account inputs from stakeholders (including consumers);
2. Supporting deployment of regional and continental broadband infrastructures/networks and promoting their interconnection;	2. Promoting interconnection of national networks;	2. Creating an enabling environment taking into account the convergence of technologies, networks and services;
3. Promoting development and interconnection of governmental Telecommunication/ICT networks;	3. Initiating and supporting fora for sharing of knowledge, resources and experience among Telecommunication/ICT-development stakeholders;	3. Deployment of Telecommunication/ICT broadband (backbone and access) infrastructures;

4. Initiating and supporting fora for sharing of knowledge, resources and experience among Telecommunication/ICT development stakeholders;	4. Providing expertise to Governments aimed at translating Regional Policy and Regulatory Guidelines into national frameworks.	4. Formulation, adoption and implementation of national e-strategies.
5. Providing expertise to RECs/Governments aimed at translating continental Policy and Regulatory Guidelines into regional/national frameworks.	5. Measuring and monitoring the development of growth of Telecommunication/ICT industry	5. Continuation of the deployment of public Telecommunication/ICT access points in rural and remote areas;
6. Measuring and monitoring the development of growth of Telecommunication/ICT industry.		6. Building Telecommunication/ICT skills and high-level institutions;
		7. Measuring and monitoring the development of growth of Telecommunication/ICT industry

1.6. Priority Studies

To support and speed up the implementation of the programme of action and in particular the priority program, the studies hereafter are proposed.

Table 2: Studies identified		
Field of Study	Study	Deliverables
A. Policy Guidelines	<p>Develop model of policy guidelines for the continent on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Liberalization & Privatization. ▪ Creation of effective Regulatory Body. ▪ Competition ▪ Convergence. ▪ Universal access/service. ▪ Digital Migration. ▪ Process of Consensus building in international foras. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Comparative analysis of Country and Regional Policies. ▪ Model Policy. ▪ Harmonization methodology. ▪ Consensus building mechanism. ▪ Digital migration strategy.
B. Model Legislation and Regulatory framework	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develop model Telecom/ICT Bill of Law ▪ Develop model Telecom/ICT Regulations. ▪ Assess the need for a Continent-wide Regulatory Body. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Comparative analysis of Countries and Regional Telecom Act. ▪ Model Telecommunication/ICT Bill. ▪ Model Regulatory Institutional structure. ▪ Model Telecom/ICT Regulations. ▪ Model License ▪ Recommendation on the creation of a continental Telecommunication/ICT Regulatory Body/Regulators Association.
C. Infrastructure Master Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Development of Telecommunication/ICT Infrastructure Master Plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Analysis of current National and Regional Telecommunication/ICT infrastructure and missing links.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ National Regional and Continental Master plans.
D. Capacity Building	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Assess the existing institutional capacity ▪ Assess professional human resource capacities and skill ▪ Develop continental policy and implement strategy on capacity building. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Database of existing Capacity Building Institutions and assessment of their capabilities. ▪ GAP analysis comparing the actual use of resources with the potential resources, including the expertise of the African Diaspora. ▪ African Human Resource Capacity Building Policy and Implementation Plan.
E. Mobilization of Financial resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Identify potential sources of funds ▪ Establish Coordination mechanism for Pulling of resources and common projects including PPP. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Mechanism for pulling of resources for common projects. ▪ Incentives for raising domestic and foreign investment.

2. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE REFERENCE FRAMEWORK

The proposed reference policy and regulation framework will provide a catalytic platform that is aimed at creating a harmonized regional and continental policy and regulatory environment. The implementation requires appropriate institutional framework and mobilization of sufficient resources. Therefore, it is proposed that the African Union Commission, in coordination with the Bureau of the Conference of Ministers of CIT, shall:

- Supervise and coordinate the implementation of the policy and regulatory framework.
- Mobilize financial resources to support implementation activities of the reference framework.
- Organize continental meetings on Telecommunication/ICT Policy and Regulations.
- Provide a model of guidelines as indicated in the study
- Establish an African expert Telecommunication/ICT Group
- Participate in the priorities study identified above.
- Identify a Commissioner who shall serve as the focal point

Attachment – Programme of Action

BROAD OBJECTIVE	STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE	ACTION ITEMS
A. Establishment of Harmonized Policy and Regulatory Framework	1. Engage Political Authorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish ICT commission/body at the very high level of political leadership at national and continental level. • Assign a focal-point – endowed with adequate authority and resources - to enhance regional and intra-continental cooperation.
	2. Telecommunication/ICT Policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and implement e-strategies with the participation of all stakeholders • Develop and implement cyberspace policy and legislations.
	3. Develop Regulatory Guidelines at Regional and Continental Level.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and Adopt regional guidelines on Telecommunications and ICT development and regulation, namely: Interconnection, Spectrum, Licensing, Tariffs, Universal Access /Service, Dispute Resolution, Standards and Type Approval, Consumer and environmental Issues • Develop and adopt guidelines on: cyber security, domain name management, electronic signature, etc. • Promote the adoption of fair and sustainable competition policies and guidelines at country/regional and continental level • Promote regional/continental licensing mechanisms to establish regional/continental operators' networks and service providers.
	4. Establish mechanisms to encourage and strengthen stakeholder participation in the harmonization process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish regular fora of ICT stakeholders at national, regional and continental levels on specific issues of interest. • Strengthen the coordination of spectrum management, frequency planning, numbering and other scarce resources. • Strengthen regional coordination for the development of a common African positions in international fora; • Strengthen collaboration with African Institutions (ATU, Afrinic, AUB ...) and regulators in charge of Telecommunications, ICT and broadcasting policies.

BROAD OBJECTIVE	STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE	ACTION ITEMS
B. Deployment of Integrated Broadband Infrastructure and Access Networks	1. Promote regional and intra-continental interconnectivity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and implement, regional and continental infrastructure master plans taking into account convergence of technologies; • Establish and Support broadband infrastructure projects that promote regional integration. • Establish and enhance regional and continental Internet exchange points IXPs, and their interconnection • Modernize existing infrastructure, and Integrate and complement new infrastructure projects with existing infrastructures • Establish or strengthen regional and continental indicators on infrastructure and access to monitor ICT progress,
	2. Promote Open access to infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish Model High Level Policy and Regulatory Framework for regional/continental Telecom/ICT Broad Band Infrastructure network based on open access non-discriminatory Principles. • Promote and foster the portability at national/regional/continental level
	3. Promote infrastructure sharing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure close collaboration and coordination with basic utilities infrastructure networks such as electricity, water pipe lines and transport networks in the rollout of Telecommunications/ICT infrastructures including broadcasting; • Encourage infrastructure and site sharing among Telecommunication/ICT Operators.
	4. Promote digital broadcast infrastructures/networks.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Modernize the existing broadcasting infrastructures/networks, through acceleration of migration from analogue to digital broadcasting systems. • Digitize broadcasting and media production facilities.

BROAD OBJECTIVE	STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE	ACTION ITEMS
	5. Promote infrastructure/services convergence, in particular migration to IP/NGN networks.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote implementation of converged infrastructures based on IP/Next Generation Networks (NGN).
	6. Promote appropriate and innovative technologies that can improve universal access/service and affordability.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adopt technologically neutral approach as an incentive to support universal access/service and its affordability
	7. Promote technologies that comply with internationally accepted and widely spread standards, taking into account regional interconnectivity and interoperability.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish African Technology Watch Forum to track the development of technologies to provide advice on policies that can enhance Telecom/CT connectivity in Africa, and monitor conformance to standards to assure universality and interoperability of networks.
	8. Promote African participation in the development of standards at the regional and international levels.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage the effective coordination and participation of African Experts in International Standardization Bodies, particularly memberships in working groups Establish regional and continental working groups on standardization.
C. Encourage Industrialization and R&D	1. Promote local development of software and hardware	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create incentives for local assembly of ICT equipment Create repair and maintenance centres for Telecom/ICT

BROAD OBJECTIVE	STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE	ACTION ITEMS
	2. Promote research & development and technology transfer.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create repair and maintenance centers for telecommunications and ICT
D. Development of Human Resources and Increase Awareness	1. Promote attitudinal change and confidence for the adoption of Telecom/ICT in the economy as a mode of life:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement public campaigns to promote attitudinal change for the adoption of Telecom/ICT in the economy as a mode of life; • Increase commitment to the development of enabling policy environment legal and regulatory frameworks for the knowledge-based economy; • Increase commitment for the financing levels of Telecom/CT capacity-building programs, materials, tools, educational funding, and specialized training initiatives, especially for regulators and other public sector employees and organizations;
	2. Increase Telecom/ICT awareness among political leadership and policy makers at the highest level:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement high level awareness and/or training program for political leaders at the highest level to enable them provide effective leadership in Telecommunication/ICT development; • Implement high level training program for Telecommunications/ICT policymakers and regulators;
	3. Increase the pool of African Telecom/ICT professionals in all areas and competencies, encourage their mobility and their retention within Africa:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop an African human resource development policy for the Telecom/ICT sector; • Identify training needs and activate coordination between the Ministries concerned with capacity building to harmonize educational needs on Telecom/ICT;

BROAD OBJECTIVE	STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE	ACTION ITEMS
	4. Develop mass e-literacy and promote wide Telecom/ICT usage:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create regional database of training and ICT educational and research institutions, as well as ICT experts; and disseminate and promote this information for better utilization of available resources. • Develop Telecom/ICT skills for civil servants through intensive end users training schemes; • Introduce Telecom/ICT curricula in schools and universities with special attention to the education of youth, the disabled, girls and women; • Promote Telecom/ICT initiatives with gender perspective; and promote ICT usage for disadvantaged groups, especially between the girl child and women. • Encourage the usage of ICT by establishing community access centers through public existing facilities such as post offices, schools, libraries, etc. and to increase access to education and learning. • Develop databases at the national, regional and continental levels to monitor the implementation of Telecom/ICT policies, legislation and regulation
	5. Establish and develop Telecom/ICT centers of excellence research and research institutions, and promote effective cooperation among them,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthen existing centers of excellence and other high level ICT-related training institutions to provide for the deficit of professionals and to produce professionals in the development, application and diffusion of Telecom/ICT systems;

BROAD OBJECTIVE	STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE	ACTION ITEMS
	6. Establish and develop Telecom/ICT institutions for capacity building at various levels, particularly for regulators and policy makers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review efficiency of available facilities and create training networks to increase the training capacities; • Support key research institutions, universities and other educational institutions through cheaper and faster internet access and partnerships with more advanced counterparts; • Increase research capacity in Telecom/ICT policies, legislation and regulation, including research on Internet governance policies; • Establish research institution at the national, regional and continental levels to provide expertise in the development of Telecom/ICT policies, legislation and regulation; • Identify and establish a network of African capacity building institutions that offer Telecom/ICT- related curricula to maximize the utilization of available resources.
E. Development of Telecom/ICT Applications	1. Encourage the deployment and utilization of Telecommunications/ICT across all socio-economic sectors in Africa ;	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve access of rural communities to Telecom/ICT services and e-applications to assist in development; • Develop e-government applications to allow easy access to all government services; • Develop e-Health and Telemedicine initiatives and applications to improve access to health services, in particular in rural areas; • Develop e-environment awareness programs to protect the continent environment from misuse (e.g. harmful chemicals and nuclear waste disposals), and to preserve natural resources. • Provide access to public information and to the cultural, historic, scientific and educational heritage of Africa, including its preservation on digital media.

BROAD OBJECTIVE	STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE	ACTION ITEMS
	2. Build confidence in the development and use of ICT applications, taking into account better management of the cyberspace, from the producer as well as from the consumer points of view.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adopt policy on electronic transactions by adopting policies including issues related to privacy, data protection, authentication, intellectual property, copyright, computer crime and security. • Establish consumers associations to defend consumers' rights.
	3. Promote the development and use of open source software, and build applications on such platforms.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop user-friendly and affordable software platforms, browsers and interactive applications, and diverse, locally produced multimedia content. • Promote the development and use of open-source and free software.
F. Development of African Content	1. Preserve the African heritage in a digital format, and its relevant Intellectual property right.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop content and access for e-learning to reduce illiteracy and create equal opportunity for education, taking into consideration cultural heritage of Africa;
	2. Encourage the creation of African content in diverse languages.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop content relevant to the needs of the developing world, including material in indigenous languages, information accessible to non-literate audiences

BROAD OBJECTIVE	STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE	ACTION ITEMS
	3. Promote global presence of the African heritage cultures, and indigenous knowledge;	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote and develop specific African content to preserve and increase global presence of the African values, cultures, languages and indigenous knowledge; Promote awareness of producers by regional distribution channels for their production
G. Mobilisation of Financial Resources	2. Raise political awareness to consider ICT as a priority sector in social economic development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Correlate the direct and indirect benefit factors of the Telecom/ICT sector to the national GDP to encourage governments to promote the Telecom/ICT sector
	3. Allocate public resources for Telecom/ICT development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advice governments to contribute in investments directed to Telecom/ICT enhancement in Backbones and Rural Areas.
	4. Promote public private partnerships and other multi-stakeholders partnerships.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with development finance institutions and donor governments, in the continent or internationally, to mobilize sustainable financing, especially through multilateral processes, with a view to securing grant and concessional finance to mitigate medium-term risks; Promote the participation in the Digital Solidarity Fund. Promotion of PPP on national and regional basis.
	5. Create incentives for foreign investments and coordinate its usage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop financial and infrastructure risk management plans. Address key issues such as: incentives for investors: e.g. low interest rates, risk guaranties, risk reduction and mitigation, financing risky and less profitable projects; financing strategic infrastructures like regional IXPs, submarine cable projects, ... etc; Awareness and mobilization of African Diaspora to finance regional Telecom/ICT projects.

BROAD OBJECTIVE	STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE	ACTION ITEMS
	6. Promote the development of domestic finance by providing support to local entrepreneurs and investors.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote micro-financing mechanisms to incorporate small, medium and domestic investor in the Telecom/ICT development process. • Establish Telecom/ICT business incubators.
	7. Develop innovative approaches for the creation and management of universal access/service funds.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct studies and implement pilot projects.
	8. Increase awareness, mobilization, coordination and efficiency on regional continental and international initiatives and projects for Telecom/ICT development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set sound procedures to mobilize and coordinate the use of domestic and foreign direct resources for regional Telecommunications and infrastructures projects;

EX.CL/434(XIII)
ANNEX III

PLAN OF ACTION

FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF
THE POSTAL SECTOR IN AFRICA

AFRICAN UNION

الاتحاد الأفريقي



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**SECOND ORDINARY SESSION OF
THE AFRICAN UNION CONFERENCE
OF MINISTERS IN CHARGE OF COMMUNICATION
AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGIES
CAIRO, EGYPT
11-14 MAY, 2008**

AU/CIT/EXP/PL.AC (II)

PLAN OF ACTION

**FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF
THE POSTAL SECTOR IN AFRICA**

**PLAN OF ACTION FOR
THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE POSTAL SECTOR IN AFRICA**

Harmonisation of postal policies and regulations and strategies for the strengthening of the postal sector in Africa

PLAN OF ACTIONS

Phase	Area	Action	Period	
			Within	Target
1	Postal Policy	Adopt or modify existing policy on postal services to embody the objectives strategies and actions set in the model policy	2 years	2010
2	Postal Legislation	Enact or amend postal legislation to incorporate the principles and strategies of the policy, using the Model Postal Bill as a guideline	2 years	2011
3	Postal Regulations	Establish an autonomous Postal Regulator Authority or strengthen the existing regulator using the model regulations as a guideline. This may be included within the Information and Communications Regulator	1 year	2011

Objectives	Actions
Implement an in-depth reform of the postal sector in Africa	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Include the improvement of the postal sector in national development plans. ▪ Adopt a flexible long-term sectoral policy to make room for necessary adjustments. ▪ Elaborate and adopt a legislative and regulatory framework which has binding force. ▪ Guarantee administrative and financial autonomy as well as viability for the public postal operator. ▪ Separate postal Enterprise management from Government while maintaining the controls provided by law. ▪ Establish a management structure for the postal enterprise comprising quantitative performance indicators, objective measurable targets of performance and structural responsibilities. • Establish a well-defined universal service obligation and the application of its funding mechanism. • Ensure recapitalization of the public postal operator while taking measures to guarantee its capacity to maintain a medium and long-term funding plan. • Set up an autonomous regulatory authority or strengthen the existing one. • Commit to gradual liberalization and competition, based on an appropriate legislative and regulatory policy. ▪ Ensure that appropriate national information and communication technology infrastructure are put in place at the Post to ensure efficiency in service provisions and digital cost reduction.

Objectives	Actions
Development of the Public Postal Service	a)Management
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To ensure the support and participation of workers in the form and management of the Enterprise ▪ To introduce commercial objectives and practices in management and utilization ▪ To prepare a general plan that will include visionary Declaration and statement of the enterprises's mission and which will define to the expected results and the means to attain them ▪ To put in place an organizational structure based on a commercial approach (according to product, domain, function etc.) ▪ To prepare a contract plan between the postal service and the Government, which among other things would provide a statement of the objectives of the financial performance and utilization ▪ Insofar as the law permits, to establish alliances, partnerships and or create co-enterprises with other public or private postal operators or with partners, who are specialized in ICT
	b) Human resources and training
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ At the national level, to set up a permanent, short-term effective and inexpensive training system for personnel ▪ To adapt teaching material in regional schools to knowledge of commercial modern management ▪ To adopt e-learning to ensure instruction in several key elements ▪ To consolidate training structures for existing postal directors and managers in each region of the African Union in collaboration with national or regional university institutes
Review and Strengthen the Pan African Postal Union (PAPU)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Appropriate structure to effectively address the challenges that face the post on the Continent ▪ Capacity Building ▪ Research

Objectives	Actions
Improvement and development of the postal network and quality of service	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To ensure development and modernization of networks and services• To increase postal services in rural areas by using information and communication technology• To significantly improve organization of delivery and distribution of mail to attain UPU international standards• To make optimal use of existing inter-regional road routes to deliver mail to improve the quality of service and reduce costs• To improve and modernize addressing system so as to promote and develop home mail delivery
Utilisation of modern information and communication technique (ICT)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To set up and develop track and trace techniques of all sorts, especially parcels• To consider profitability and implement programmes of:<ul style="list-style-type: none">- information- e-commerce- introduction and development of an effective service of e-money orders for African populations and migrants, who contribute to the national economy.

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Report on the conference of ministers of telecommunications and posts

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