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SC13512

ASSEMBLY OF THE UNION
Twenty-Fourth Ordinary Session
30 – 31 January 2015
Addis Ababa, ETHIOPIA

Assembly/AU/19(XXIV)Add.4
Original: French

ESTABLISHMENT OF THE AFRICAN CENTRE FOR INFORMATION
TECHNOLOGIES (ACIT) WITH HEADQUARTERS
IN N'DJAMENA, CHAD
(Item Proposed by the Republic of Chad)

PRESENTATION NOTE

Situated at the centre of the African continent, Chad occupies a geostrategic position. It is the hub of more than three international fibre optic backbones, offering unlimited broadband to information and communication technologies (ICTs) service operators, providers and users. In the sector, a legislative framework, to be followed shortly by a fiscal framework, has been reconstituted: an agency and a fund for ICTs development have been established; third and fourth generation (3G and 4G) mobile phone licenses have been granted to two of the country's operators and are functional.

The manifesto and recommendations emanating from the First Information and Communication Technologies (ICTS) Fair held from 9 to 12 September 2014 have triggered the popularization of ICTs in the country. It is in this environment, which is conducive to the development of ICTs, that a structuring project came into being, thus actualizing the vision of His Excellency Idriss Deby Itno, President of the Republic of Chad. It is a megaproject aimed at providing **Chadian and African Youth** with a platform of reference in Africa, ideal for research, innovation and development of ICT projects: **ACIT** (African Centre for Information Technologies).

The ultimate goal of the Centre is firstly to reduce the digital divide through the development of ICTs in Africa in general and particularly in Chad, and secondly, to mobilize the energies of a new generation of African investors interested in the megaproject.

ICT professionals, researchers, students, developers and providers of related products and services will thus have at their disposal all the advanced technology resources, tools and infrastructure required for them to flourish.

The ACIT will embody several departments of activity ranging from research to implementation, through training, TV and media production-broadcasting, distribution, as well as professional consultancy and application services. The activity departments will be as follows:

- Research/Innovation department : New and Renewable Energies applied to ICTs, Assembly Design adapted to the Continent's environmental conditions, Continuing Research in the area of occupational applications, Research and Innovation in Electronics (components), Research in Networks and Connectivity;
- Development/Production department: Different software, applications, utilities and systems, Geographic Information Systems;
- Studies/Administration department: ICT Project Studies and Design, Administrations Support in ICT Application and Management;
- Distribution/Sales department: Exhibition Halls, Showrooms (for demonstration of new products), Shops, Business Centres, Geodesy and Remote Sensing Systems, e-Learning Tools, Vocational Applications (Medicine, Agriculture, Livestock Production, Mobile Devices, Electronic Banking, e-Governance, etc.) ;

- Training department: Vocational Applications, Media Applications, e-Learning Applications and e-Governance Applications Training, and Distance Learning;
- Services/Communication department: Media Production and Broadcasting Centre (audio-visual), Call Centres;
- Audiovisual Production department: Platform for magazines and documentaries publishing, as well as for production of films and other audiovisual products;
- Digital Radio-Television department: Programmes production and broadcasting from the heart of Africa in three languages, namely - French, Arabic and English. The objective of this Africa oriented channel would be to project a positive image of an emerging Africa.

A widely publicized project tendering procedure should be envisaged to select, in all transparency, projects to benefit from ACIT support. The call for tenders should target individuals (ICT professionals, researchers, students, etc.), and legal entities (public as well as private institutions, organizations and companies) with ICT projects seeking technical, economic, financial, commercial and/or legal support.

In its operational phase, the ACIT would be run by a competent management team of people of different nationalities, subject to guidelines issued by a Board of Directors comprising national and international experts.

The ACIT should therefore be able to provide services and facilities in terms of physical reception and support services, through the establishment of an Incubator and an Accelerator, mainly to project developers in the ICT domain and to newly created enterprises in the sector.

To attain its objective, the ACIT should be backed by a robust multi-sectoral and multidisciplinary partnership network.

**PRESENTATION OF
THE ADMINISTRATIVE, TECHNICAL AND STRATEGIC VISION OF THE
AFRICAN CENTRE FOR INFORMATION TECHNOLOGIES
(CATI)**



**PRESENTATION OF
THE ADMINISTRATIVE, TECHNICAL AND STRATEGIC
VISION OF THE AFRICAN CENTRE FOR
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGIES
(CATI)**

**By H.E Idriss DEBY ITNO
President of the Republic, Head of State**

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FOREWORD



Our planet earth is confronted with unprecedented demographic pressure. In addition to this is the problem of natural resource scarcity and ecological imbalance triggered by climate change, thus placing us before difficulties and challenges the intensity of which seem far from abating despite interventions by our States and partners. Among these challenges I would mention the teacher/pupil ratio, library or book/ teacher and/or pupil ratio, laboratory/pupils ratio, doctors/ patients ratio, etc. According to the United Nations, the global population will hit the 7.2 billion mark in 2014, 1.12 billion or 16% of which will be Africans. These statistics show that Africa's population is very young. As a matter of fact, 41% of Africa's population is less than 15 years of age, and the median age in Africa stands at 20. The two countries with the youngest population in the world are in Africa, namely, Uganda and Niger where 49% of the population is less than 15 years old.

This is our Africa, a continent of hope, expectations and vitality. The bold and courageous youth of Africa need immediate solutions that are in line with the current technological, technical and scientific context to enable it to more effectively express itself. On this score, the Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) hold the promise of a global solution, if not a panacea. ICTs have consistently and manifestly demonstrated to us, with each passing day, its virtues and potentials. They have enormous and powerful capacity that enables them to quickly and efficiently impact on all dimensions of sustainable development. To seize these opportunities, appropriate infrastructure and human resources have to be put in place.

At individual, regional and international levels, efforts are being deployed through many crucial initiatives not only in the area of international and national transport but also in that of application and content; reason for which I note with satisfaction the progress achieved in the development of fixed and mobile broadband and in the contextualization of ICT management frameworks in Africa. In spite of this progress, a lot still remains to be done as observed in an African Development Bank report which indicated that about "87% of the population of Africa cannot still connect to the internet " and that, besides, the skills deficit and hence human capital shortage in the sector remains significant .

In Chad, the cradle of humanity, we are certainly not idle. Rather, in taking the bull by the horns, a raft of measures has been introduced and is being pursued, offering hope to Chadians. Specifically, more than three international fiber optic backbones will be connected in Chad to offer, by the end of the first quarter of 2015, broadband to operators, service providers and other ICT users. Other efforts are underway to facilitate access to universal telecommunication service. 3G and 4G licenses have been issued to the two leading mobile telephony operators of the country. Concurrent with these efforts, the energy problem being encountered will be a thing of the past in the next couple of days thanks to the support of our partners.

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We need to consider the efforts of each of our States and critically examine the concerns of Africa's youth, especially the bold and talented innovators and renovators who are idling away because of lack of direction and the needed support to enable them to blossom. Chad cannot afford to be inward looking and address only the concerns of its youth, because development in isolation and in a vacuum leads to nowhere. Moreover, African solidarity demands that we always share what we have, however little; more so because of all we have already achieved in Chad and what we still have in the pipeline. This is the reason why I have decided to share with all the youth of the entire continent this jewel of renaissance that I have the opportunity of presenting to the youth of Chad, namely, the African Centre for Information and Communication Technologies (CATI).

CATI's mission will be threefold, namely: incubator for the youth; catalyst for the success and fulfillment of the African youth; projecting in real time the real and true face of our dynamic continent. To enable CATI to successfully carry out all its missions, it will require appropriate legal and institutional framework, a shared vision, combining of efforts and pooling of resources for its governance.

H.E. Idriss DEBY ITNO
President of the Republic of Chad, Head of State

ACCRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

3G:	Third Generation mobile telephony network
4G:	Fourth Generation mobile telephony network
ADB:	African Development Bank
CATI:	African Centre for Information and Communication Technologies;
ECCAS:	Economic Community of Central African States
MMDS:	Multi-Media Distribution Systems
NEPAD:	New Partnership for Africa's Development
OIF:	International Organization of the Francophonie
RAPAF:	African Public Audio-Visual Network
SITIC:	International Information and Communication Technologies Fair
ICT:	Information and Communication Technologies
AU:	African Union
ATU:	African Telecommunications Union
ITU:	International Telecommunications Union

I. About CATI



The African Centre for Information and Communication Technologies (CATI) is a response to the genuine concerns of the African youth. The Centre will undertake several activities ranging from research to implementation of projects, training, radio and television production and broadcast (Pan-African), and on-line mass media. Support and

facilitation services (services distribution, consultancy services and professional applications) will also be available.

1.1. Vision of CATI

Did late **Nelson MADIBA MANDELA** not say that “a vision without action is just a dream; an action without vision just passes the time; a vision with action changes the world?”. In light of the context I described in the Foreword, I would like by 2016 to see:

CATI become a giant trihedron which accelerates the growth of Africa's digital economy, an incubator for the youth of the continent; a citadel of African information society, disseminating in real time the true images of a dynamic Africa.

Chad is well aware that it will not be able to realize this vision alone. There is room for any African who shares the vision. Consequently, all young bold Africans will have their place at CATI. To enable it fully discharge its mission, CATI will require appropriate legal and institutional personality and a shared and common vision for its governance. For this reason, I would like to entreat you all to give the issue deserved consideration commensurate with the expectations of our youth.

1.2. DEPARTMENTS OF CATI

These are as follows:

- ✎ **Research/Innovation:** New and renewable energies applied to ICTs, design of technologies suited to the continent's environmental conditions. Continuous research in the area of vocational applications, research and innovation in electronics (components), research in networks and connectivity ;
- ✎ **Development/Production :** Software, applications, various utilities and systems, geographic information systems ;
- ✎ **Studies/Administration :** ICT projects study and design, support from Governments in ICTs application and management;

- ✎ **Distribution/Sales** : Exhibition halls, Showroom (for the demonstration of new products), Shops, Business Center, geodesy and remote sensing systems, e-Learning tools, vocational applications (Medicine, Agriculture, Livestock rearing, Mobiles, electronic banking services, e-Governance, etc.) ;
- ✎ **Services/Communication**: Media production and distribution center (audio-visual), Call Centers. This department will form part of the services or facilities to be offered to project promoters, innovators and other users within CATI ;
- ✎ **Training** : Training in the field of vocational applications, media applications, e-Learning applications, e-Governance applications, Distance Learning Centre;
- ✎ **Pan-African Digital Television/Radio Station**: which will broadcast from the heart of Africa with content designed by Africans and for Africans. This department will actively contribute to the implementation of one of NEPAD programmes which promotes the generation of information from credible, verifiable and authentic sources backed by real positive images of an evolving and emergent Africa. The network will also support the “Smart Africa” programme;
- ✎ **Audio-visual production department** : In anticipating the volume of content required as from June 2015 with the switchover to digital terrestrial television (DTT) and to All Digital (AD), CATI will make it a point to provide modern technical and technological infrastructure to support multi-media operators (television, radio broadcasting, operators, television bouquets or channels distributors) in the production and distribution of multimedia content (broadcasting programmes, commercials, films, courses, etc).

II. MISSIONS OF CATI

To translate the vision defined earlier into reality, CATI will have to fulfill three major missions, namely: incubation, catalyst and projection of the true image of Africa in real time.

2.1. INCUBATION MISSION

CATI will have an ICT project incubator which will involve the following two (2) categories of natural and/or legal entities:

- ✎ Promoters of ICT based business projects creation;
- ✎ ICT businesses with development projects that require working with other groups.

The incubation method is based on physical hosting as well as support services provision. The main objective of physical hosting is to avoid isolation by promoting the values of sharing and exchange of ideas among project promoters within open spaces. The “incubated” will also gain from the proximity of CATI support teams to facilitate interaction. Physical hosting is entirely free and includes access to basic services such as the internet,

telephony and documents printing. In this way, project promoters could fully devote their time to the maturation of their future enterprises.

Support services involve a process of assistance towards preparation of Business Plans and mobilization of funding. The process will entail:

- ✎ Validation of the feasibility of the idea;
- ✎ Survey of the market potential;
- ✎ Assistance towards project creation in its various stages (market prospects, possible competition and entry barriers, protection of the project, commercial and marketing policy, communication strategy, financial dimensions);
- ✎ Assistance towards preparation of financing plan;
- ✎ Preparations for resource mobilization ;
- ✎ Identification and intermediation with potential financiers ;
- ✎ Assistance towards “installation in the premises”: identification of partners and sub-contractors, relations with research laboratories, enterprise promotion.

2.2. CATALYST MISSION

At the end of the incubation period, CATI will offer the newly created enterprise the possibility of joining in the catalyst mission up to the fifth year of its existence. The catalyst programme also comprises physical hosting and economic development support. Physical hosting is a space meant for enterprises that meet the eligibility criteria to receive close for a specific period (2 years renewable once). Also, regarding physical hosting, CATI will serve as home to the enterprises by offering modular spaces that fully customize the flow and fluidity of business activities through meeting the needs of enterprises. Modular spaces are designed to adapt to the demands of economic life and to address the increasing requirements of the enterprises.

To this end, CATI will also have to provide first class technological services and a broad vocational ecosystem for the development of an enterprise and its projects. On this score, all the enterprises of the Center will have to access an array of shared services so as to optimize their working environment: meeting rooms, Data Center, Auditorium, Conference Halls, business restaurants, cafeteria, digital production studio, etc. Finally, animation of the enterprises hosting environment should be a real factor that fosters development and interaction at the local, national and international level.

To ensure their development, newly created enterprises will require considerable amount of training which is expected to be one of the pillars of CATI ecosystem, and based on the triptych - Training, Research and Entrepreneurship. CATI will also host Training Centres and Schools that offer short or long duration, certificate and diploma-awarding courses suited to the needs of the digital economy. Thus, the proximity of businesses will not only make it possible to define or fine-tune specific training sessions or courses but also holds out the great advantage of providing skills to CATI enterprises. This training component should thus enable companies to go out there and “source” skilled manpower in a simple, efficient and intelligent manner.

Lastly, economic development support is a follow-up mechanism available to newly created enterprises that request expertise in the following areas: Business Plan, vocational consultancy, intermediation with public authorities, intermediation with advertisers, clients, service providers, etc. Innovation assistance, access to collective programmes within the framework of specific activities (fairs, economic missions, etc).

2.3. PROJECTION

Currently, Africa is undoubtedly the continent of hope for the entire planet earth. All the continents of our world are indeed bedevilled by various kinds of problems. Slums, beggars, sick people, mass revolts, strikes, abortion, illiteracy, crime, diversion of funds, corruption (corrupter and the corrupted) similarly exist in all the continents. Unfortunately, the Western media tend to focus perpetually on only the negative side of Africa while keeping a deafening silence on the dynamic of hope prevailing on the continent.

CATI, based in Chad, the crossroads of almost all of Africa's civilizations, is expected to project through Africans, from Africa, for Africans and for the whole world, true and real images of Africa through a Pan-African radio and television network which will broadcast in several major official African languages. CATI could also serve as an image bank and a production centre. Such facilities could be shared by African radio and television stations. On this score, ATU and RAPAF would be expected to provide assistance to enable all of Africa without exception and exclusion to benefit from the sharing of the facilities.

III. AFRICANIZATION OF CATI

Apart from political stability and social peace, the two basic prerequisites for the development achieved at great cost in Chad, several factors militate in favour of a strong Africanization of CATI.

3.1. THE GEO-STRATEGIC POSITION OF CHAD

Chad is virtually located at the heart of the continent and at the crossroads of great African civilizations and cultures notably: Arabophone, Anglophone, Bantu, Francophone, Christianity, Islam, etc. It naturally forms the intersection of the countries traversed by the Sahara and the Sahel. Thus, the country of Toumaï, the cradle of all humanity, is strategically positioned in Africa and therefore constitutes an ideal environment for the socio cultural interaction among the peoples of Africa.

3.2. Support and Wishes of Partners

SITIC and CATI had enjoyed support from several strategic, technical and financial partners such as ITU, OIF, ATU, RAPAF etc. In addition to these partners, there is a long list of major international ICT companies and telephony operators. All, without exception, have expressed a strong desire to see CATI completed and opened to Africa at large.

3.3. WISHES EXPRESSED BY AFRICANS WHO PARTICIPATED IN SITIC 2014

From 9 to 12 September 2014, Chad played host to the first International Information and Communication Technology Exhibition (SITIC). In attendance was a microcosm of the youth of the continent (nationals of over 36 countries). Also present were more than 6,000 individuals identified some as exhibitors and others as speakers. There were also official representatives of States (4 Heads of State, 8 Ministers, 40 Directors General of African Radio and Television Broadcasting Services, etc) and of major international institutions such as OIF, ITU, RAPAF, ECCAS, ATU, CEMAC and others.

All the afore-mentioned participants indicated through SITIC manifesto and recommendations that CATI should be internationalized (Africanization). Once again, this Pan-Africanist wish deserves appropriate response.

3.4. CHAD'S PROGRESS AND CONTRIBUTION

Bloodied and held back by 50 years of conflict and instability, Chad whilst taking note of its involuntary backwardness in the area of ICT has taken good measure of it. This is the reason why the country, taking advantage of the regained political stability and social peace, has resolutely been taking concrete sustainable development action by placing ICTs among the eight priorities of its 2013-2015 National Development Plan.

3.4.1. International communication link

The immediate outcome of the progress is that Chad is connected to Sat3 international submarine cable from Cameroon. Works are ongoing to connect the country to other Atlantic Ocean based sub-marine cables from Nigeria. The country is also to be connected to Indian Ocean and Red Sea based sub-marine cables from The Sudan, and to those based in the Mediterranean from Libya and/or Algeria via Niger.

All the works will be completed by the end of 2015. Their completion will make Chad one of the veritable hubs or information highways in Africa and in the world. This should be considered as an opportunity for the CEMAC sub-region and for the entire Africa to facilitate the linkage of the continent from the North to the South and from the East to the West.

3.4.2. Construction of CATI premises



Construction of an International Business Centre (IBC) is well under way in N'Djamena. It is at the heart of this giant complex that CATI is being built. It is an imposing 32 storey modern edifice which will be powered solely by new and renewable energy sources. The modern plant to power it is also under construction.

Here, I personally cut the sod for commencement of the construction of the CATI building.



3.4.3. Toumaï Award for Innovation



Chad instituted the Toumaï Award to encourage innovation in the field of ICT for sustainable development. In the margins of the SITIC 2014, I personally presented the awards to five talented African innovators/inventors including a Chadian. Among the first laureates were a Kenyan (Katherine Maogou), a young Burkinabè (Thierry Katienga), and a Ugandan (Brenda Katuege). Among the unsuccessful

candidates was a Cameroonian. The award will be sustained and presented at every SITIC. Here is yet another opportunity that has to be made available to all the youth of Africa.

IV. ORGANIZATION AND MODE OF OPERATION OF CATI

To respond to the various wishes expressed above, the vision of CATI will be actualized in two phases: preparatory and operational.

4.1. PREPARATORY PHASE

Specific directives have been issued to the Government and to the provisional national team managing this phase, to put in place all the requisite international structure.

4.1.1. STRATEGIC DIRECTIVES

To produce the impact expected by the youth of Africa, I have given the following directives to the Chadian Government. My current presentation and advocacy form part of the approach.

- ☞ **Directive 1** : Put in place internationally oriented organization and institutional framework;
- ☞ **Directive 2** : Develop the necessary multi-partner, inter State, multi-sector and multi-disciplinary relations;
- ☞ **Directive 3** : Define and offer support facilities (political, fiscal, customs, diplomatic, banking, technical and logistics) to young African innovators, renovators and entrepreneurs;

- ☞ **Directive 4** : Provide Africa and the entire world with Africa-wide information and communication infrastructure ;
- ☞ **Directive 5** : Provide state-of-the-art physical and applicative ICT infrastructure for communication, collaboration and interaction;
- ☞ **Directive 6** : Provide modern and appropriate framework to the global media to attain their various African targets;
- ☞ **Directive 7** : Take the necessary measures so that the first group of young and bold Africans could be rapidly identified and incubated so that they may give, if possible, their first impressions during the next SITIC.

Each of the five (5) directives needs to be translated into projects or programmes. To this end, the government will:

1. Continue with the promotion of CATI so as to mobilize as many of the required partners as possible;
2. Continue diligently with the construction and management of the building that will host CATI in collaboration with young Chadians and partners;
3. Pay particular attention in anticipating or addressing infrastructure related issues (security, ICT, energy, etc.);
4. Prepare and expeditiously invite tenders for the projects;
5. Accomplish all the missions.

The Prime Minister will see to the implementation of the directives by supporting the Ministry of Post, Information and Communication Technologies, the Ministry of Finance and Budget and all the other ministries that are directly or indirectly involved.

4.2. OPERATIONAL PHASE

Under the proposed operational structure, CATI will work under the authority of a directorate which will itself have a management answerable to a Board of Directors. Other details will be spelt out in the statutory documents and other texts that will be prepared.

WHAT IS EXPECTED FROM THE AFRICAN UNION

Based on the strong wishes expressed by the youth of Africa during SITIC held in N'Djamena from 9 to 12 September 2014, and considering the cooperation and the significant support from all the financial, technical and strategic partners (ITU, OIF, ECCAS, ATU, RAPAF, etc.), as well as African, Indian and European economic operators and, lastly, taking into consideration all the advantages offered by my country, the Chadian people and myself will be happy to see:

- CATI included among the initiatives recognized and supported by the African Union;
- the presentation of Toumaï Award to the best young talents of Africa in the field of ICT integrated into AU agenda and shared through its information network;

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**Assembly/AU/19(XXIV)Add.4
Annex 2**

**PROJECT CHARTER FOR THE AFRICAN CENTRE FOR
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGIES
(ACIT)**



PROJECT CHARTER FOR THE AFRICAN CENTRE FOR INFORMATION TECHNOLOGIES (ACIT)

**By H.E. Mr. Idriss DEBY ITNO
President of the Republic, Head of State**

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FOREWORD



Described a few years ago as the Continent without hope, Africa is now entering into a critical and enviable turning point in its history. It has become a continent of the future and hope. According to experts, «rich with abundant natural resources, Africa is in the process of positioning itself as the driving force of the global economy and the world's breadbasket, in the light of the dwindling resources of other continents¹». For the African Development Bank, Africa's agricultural, extractive and energy resources are the key to accelerating its economic growth². In addition to this natural resource potential, our dear Continent will soon gain demographic supremacy. This is a source of strength. In order to seize these opportunities, appropriate infrastructure and human resources are essential.

In terms of population, the United Nations announced that the world population would be 7.2 billion people in 2014, with 1.12 billion Africans, that is 16% of the world population. These statistics also show that Africa is very young, with 41% of the population below the age of 15 years and a median age of 20 years. The two youngest countries in the world demographically are in Africa, namely, Uganda and Niger, where 49% of the people are below the age of 15. Was it not stated in the Psalms of David that: «Like arrows in the hands of a warrior are children born in one's youth, blessed is the man whose quiver is full of them. They will not be put to shame when they contend with their opponents in court³ ».

Africa occupies a natural strategic position. It is placed in the middle of the Atlantic, Indian and Mediterranean Oceans, and at the centre of four (4) other continents (America, Europe, Asia and Oceania) of the world. And Chad, the country of the Toumaï, is at the heart of the African continent, and is therefore at the centre of the world. This strategic position is another major asset, in addition to the natural resource reserves and demographic strength mentioned above. This provides an opportunity to speed up the building of the African information society as well as Africa's digital, and therefore green, economy.

It is in this general context that Chad, the cradle of humanity, recognizing the immense virtues and faculties of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs), which would enable it to rapidly and effectively cover all aspects of sustainable development, proposes to sister African countries, the building on its soil of an African Centre for Information Technologies (ACIT).

The ACIT will have three (3) principal missions: youth incubator; accelerator of success and individual development for African youth, and an indicator to the world, in real time, of true images of our Africa on the move. In order to faithfully fulfil this mission, the ACIT will

¹ <http://www.aa.com.tr/fr/news/310412--afrique-continent-davenir>

² [African Economic Outlook, published by the AfDB in 2013](#)

³ Psalm of David, 127 : 4-5

require the appropriate legal and institutional personality, a shared vision, and joint efforts and resources to ensure its good governance.

N'Djamena, 12 November 2014

President of the Republic of Chad, Head of State

H.E. Mr. Idriss DEBY ITNO

ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ACIT:	African Centre for Information Technologies;
AD:	All Digital;
AfDB:	African Development Bank;
ATU:	African Telecommunications Union;
AU:	African Union
CAEMC:	Central Africa Economic and Monetary Community;
DTT:	Digital Terrestrial Television;
ECCAS:	Economic Community of Central African States;
3G:	Third generation mobile phone network;
4G:	Fourth generation mobile phone network;
ICTs:	Information and Communication Technologies;
ITU:	International Telecommunication Union;
MMDS:	MultiMedia Distribution Systems;
NEPAD:	New Partnership for Africa's Development;
OIF:	International Organisation of the Francophony;
NDP:	National Development Plan;
RAPAF:	Francophone Network of African Public Broadcasters;
SITIC:	International Information and Communication Technologies Fair.

I. CONTEXT AND JUSTIFICATION

1.1. General Context

Africa is faced with many socio-economic problems. These can be appreciated in various ways. However, there are some about which there can be little doubt, such as, among others: health, education, agriculture, livestock breeding, culture, peaceful coexistence, integration etc. Statistics show that the effects of these few problems clearly undermine the effectiveness of the daily responses of our States to the socio-political and economic needs of the people. Statistics also show that in sub-Saharan Africa, we have 15 doctors for 100 000 people; the situation is similar for the average number of pupils per class, and that of libraries or books per user (pupils and teachers) etc. According to the World Bank, 60 % of the total number of unemployed persons in Africa are young people⁴. It is against that backdrop that Information and Communication Technologies have proven to be one of the remedies and major factors for improvement. In its 2012 Annual Report, the ITU realized that with the increasing availability and affordability of ICTs, their economic and social impact is becoming gradually apparent. The ICT sector has become one of the principal drivers of economic development.

The same Report further states that in 2010, global exports in ICT goods represented 12% of total merchandise trade, 20% of the share being in developing countries. Concerning ICT related services, revenue from the telecommunications sector accounted for 1.5 billion dollars in 2010, that is 2.4% of the world's gross domestic product (GDP). This just goes to show how ICTs can boost economic growth and help to resolve the serious problem of unemployment among young people and women. In order to harness all the opportunities offered by ICTs in sustainable development, a minimum in terms of infrastructure, qualified human resources and strategic, technical and financial support measures are required. A number of African countries stand out in that area on an individual basis, although there are regional and international initiatives.

Chad is not lagging behind. Admittedly, it was among the last to be assessed by the ITU. However, after having regained social peace and political stability at a great cost, it is assessing its backwardness without complacency and initiating a mass movement to change the face of its ICT sector. Considering its geostrategic position and its adherence to various initiatives to that effect, it has opted to share, and through the ACIT and SITIC, reach out to all African youth.

1.2. Scope of ACIT

Beyond political stability and social peace, two basic prerequisites for any hard-won development in Chad, there are several factors in favour of the strong Africanization of the ACIT.

1.2.1. Geostrategic Position of Chad

Chad is located virtually at the centre of the African continent and at the crossroads of great African civilizations and cultures, namely: Arabic-speaking, English-speaking,

⁴ <http://www.un.org/africarenewal/fr/magazine/mai-2013/>

French-speaking, Bantu, Christian, Islamic, etc. It naturally forms a hub of countries of the Sahara and the Sahel. Indeed, the country of the Toumaï, the cradle of humanity, has a geostrategic position in Africa. It therefore constitutes an appropriate space for the intermingling of African peoples.

1.2.2. Partner 's Support and Expectations

The SITIC and ACIT will benefit from the contributions of several financial, technical and strategic partners like the ITU, OIF, ATU, RAPAF, etc., as well as a long list of major international ICT firms and telephone operators. All, without exception, expressed a strong desire to see the ACIT established and opening its doors to Africa as a whole.

1.2.3. Needs Expressed by Africans at SITIC 2014

The First International Information and Communication Technologies Fair (SITIC) was held in Chad from 9 to 12 September 2014. Virtually all African youth were there (citizens of over 36 countries). There were over 6 000 participants (exhibitors, speakers, innovators, national and international public and private media, etc.). Also in attendance were the official representatives of States (4 Heads of State, 8 Ministers, 40 Directors General of African Radio and Television Stations, etc.), as well as major international institutions (OIF, ITU, RAPAF, ECCAS, ATU, CAEMC, etc.).

All the aforementioned participants expressed hope for the internationalization (Africanization) of the ACIT through the SITIC Manifesto and recommendations. Once again, this pan-African aspiration deserves an appropriate response.

1.2.4. Progress and Contribution of Chad

Scarred and stunted by 50 years of conflict and instability, Chad, aware of its involuntary backwardness in the ICT domain, has correctly assessed the situation. Consequently, taking advantage of the re-established political stability and social peace, the country is vigorously and rigorously undertaking concrete actions towards sustainable development, while making ICTs one of the eight priorities in its National Development Plan (NDP) 2013-2015.

1.2.4.1. International Telecommunications Services

As immediate results of the progress, Chad is connected to the Sat3 international submarine cable from Cameroon; further work is underway to connect the country to other Atlantic submarine cables from Nigeria. Similarly, connections will be made to Indian Ocean and Red Sea submarine cables from the Sudan, and Mediterranean cables from Libya and/or Algeria via Niger.

All the work could be completed before the end of 2015. The completion will enable Chad to become a real hub of information highways in Africa and in the world. This should be considered as an opportunity for the CAEMC sub-region and the whole of Africa to promote its North-South and East-West networks.

1.2.4.2. Construction of ACIT Building



An International Business Centre (IBC) is under construction in N'Djamena. The ACIT is being built at the heart of this huge complex. It is an imposing, ultra-modern 32-storey building, which will be powered solely by new and renewable energy sources. The modern power plant is also under construction.

Here, I was personally launching construction work of the ACIT building.



1.2.4.3. Toumaï Innovation Prize



Chad established the Toumaï Innovation Prize to encourage innovations in the ICT domain for sustainable development. In the margins of SITIC 2014, the first edition of the Prize was presented to four young talented African innovators/creators, only one of whom was a Chadian. Among the Prize winners was a Kenyan (Katherine Maogou); a Burkinabe (Thierry Katienga),

and a Ugandan (Brenda Katuege). The Prize will be made permanent and awarded at every SITIC. That is yet another opportunity to enable all African youth to benefit.

II. OVERVIEW OF THE ACIT



The African Centre for Information Technologies (ACIT) is a response to a genuine concern of African youth. It will include several activity axes ranging from research to project implementation, through training, production and dissemination (Pan-African Broadcasting Station and online mass media). Support and facilitation (distribution of services,

consultancy and business applications) will also be available.

2.1. Vision of the ACIT

The late **Madiba Nelson Mandela** said: «Vision without action is merely a dream. Action without vision just passes the time. Vision with action can change the world». In view of the situations described in the Foreword, Chad would like to see by 2016,

ACIT: a huge trihedron which accelerates Africa's digital economy, an incubator for its youth, and a citadel of the African information society, disseminating in real time true images of an Africa on the move.

Chad cannot aspire to achieve this vision on its own. There is room for every African who shares the vision. Therefore, any bold young African will have their place in the ACIT. In order to faithfully fulfill the mission, the ACIT will require the appropriate legal and institutional personality, and a shared vision for its governance.

2.2. Missions of the ACIT

To translate this vision into reality, the ACIT should fulfil three principal missions: incubator, accelerator, and real time indicator of true images of Africa.

2.2.1. Mission as an Incubator

The ACIT will have an Incubator of ICT projects, and the two (2) categories of individuals and/or legal entities concerned shall be:

- ✍ Persons with ICT business start-up projects;
- ✍ ICT businesses with development projects for which working in project mode is necessary.

The incubation method is based on physical reception as well as provision of support services. The main objective is to prevent isolation by conveying a value of sharing and exchange of ideas between project initiators within open spaces. The «Incubated» will also benefit from the proximity of ACIT support teams in order to foster interaction. The physical reception is completely free of charge, and includes basic services such as internet access, telephony and document printing. Project initiators will therefore be able to focus fully on the development of their future business.

Support services cover a process of assistance for drafting Business Plans and the organization of financial roundtables. The process is as follows:

- ✎ Validation of the feasibility of the concept;
- ✎ Verification of market potential;
- ✎ Assistance in the development of the different phases of the project (market prospects, possible competition and entry barriers, protection of project, marketing and commercial policy, communication strategy, financial aspects);
- ✎ Assistance in the drafting of a financing plan;
- ✎ Preparation of a financial roundtable;
- ✎ Identification of and intermediation with potential donors;
- ✎ Assistance in «local integration»: search for partnerships, sub-contractors, relations with research laboratories, corporate promotion.

2.2.2.Mission as an Accelerator

At the end of the incubation period, for up to their fifth year in operation, the ACIT will offer newly established companies the integration of the Accelerator, a programme which also includes physical reception and support for economic development. The physical reception is a space intended for companies that meet the eligibility criteria, so as to assist them closely for a specific timeframe (2 years, renewable once). Therefore, for the physical reception, the ACIT should serve as a place for accommodating companies by offering modular spaces that completely individualize the flows of each company by meeting their needs. The modular spaces are designed to adapt to the requirements of economic life and meet the growth needs of companies.

In order to achieve this, the ACIT should also provide advanced technological facilities and a substantial business ecosystem for the development of a company and its projects. For that purpose, all the companies at the Centre should have access to a significant number of shared services in order to optimize their working environment: meeting rooms, Data Center, Auditorium, conference halls, company canteen, cafeteria, digital design studio, etc. Lastly, the organization of the place for hosting businesses should be a tangible factor of the assistance for development and exchange at local, national and international levels.

For their development, the newly established companies have significant training needs which should be one of the pillars of the ACIT ecosystem and based on the triptych: Training – Research – Entrepreneurship. The ACIT

should therefore welcome Training Centres and Schools that offer short or long degree, qualifying or certification training courses in occupations or skills in line with the needs of the digital economy. The proximity of businesses will make it possible not only to determine or refine specific training sessions or courses, but will also have the major advantage of being the provider of skills for ACIT companies. The Training Axis should enable companies to «source» simply, effectively and intelligently.

In conclusion, support for economic development is a follow-up offered to newly established companies wishing to benefit from expertise in the following areas: business plan, business expertise, intermediation with the government, intermediation with advertisers, principals, service providers, etc., innovation aid, access to collective programmes within the framework of specific actions (fairs, economic missions, etc.).

2.2.3. Mission as an Indicator

At the moment, Africa is undoubtedly the Continent of hope for the whole world. In fact, all continents of the world are experiencing some form of difficulties. Slums, beggars, the sick, popular uprisings, strikes, abortion, illiteracy, crime, hijackings, corruption (the corrupters and the corrupted) exist in all continents. Unfortunately, western media only present the negative aspects of Africa all day long, while ignoring the dynamics of hope.

The ACIT, which is located in Chad, the crossroads of virtually all African civilizations, has a duty to present, by Africans, from Africa, and for Africans and the world as a whole, true images of Africa, through a pan-African broadcasting station that will transmit in several of the major official African languages. Furthermore, it could play the role of image databank, that is, a production centre. The facilities could be shared by African broadcasting stations. In that respect, the hand of fellowship of the ATU and the RAPAF would be expected, to make it possible for Africa as a whole, without exception or exclusion, to benefit from it.

2.3. Purpose and Objectives

The ultimate goal of the ACIT is to bridge the digital divide through the development of ICTs in Africa in general, and Chad in particular. This megaproject is under study and is geared towards making Chad an ICT centre in Africa, due to its geostrategic position.

Firstly, through the Project, Chad intends to provide an ideal reference platform for ICT users in Africa for research, innovation, development,

services, distribution and training. Thanks to the platform, ICT professionals, researchers, students, developers and providers of related products and services will have all the state of the art technology resources, tools and infrastructure for their development. The ACIT will include several activity axes ranging from research to realization, through training, TV and media production-broadcasting, and distribution, not forgetting services, consultancy and business applications.

2.4. Deliverables

At the end of its preparatory phase, the ACIT should deliver the following eight (8) operational axes:

- ✍ **Research/Innovation Axis:** New and Renewable Energies applied to ICTs, Assembly Design adapted to the Continent's environmental conditions, Continuing Research in the area of business applications, Research and Innovation in Electronics (components), Research in Networks and Connectivity;
- ✍ **Development/Production Axis:** different software, applications, utilities and systems, Geographic Information Systems;
- ✍ **Studies/Administration Axis:** ICT Project Studies and Design, Support of Administrations in ICT Application and Management;
- ✍ **Distribution/Sales Axis:** Showrooms (for demonstrations of new products), Shops, Business Centres, Geodesy and Remote Sensing Systems, e-Learning Tools, Business Applications (Medicine, Agriculture, Livestock Breeding, Mobile Devices, Electronic Banking, e-Governance, etc.);
- ✍ **Services/Communication Axis:** Media Production and Broadcasting Centre (audiovisual), Call Center. This axis will be part of services or facilities provided to project initiators, innovators and other ICT users within the ACIT;
- ✍ **Training Axis:** Training programmes in Business Applications, Media Applications, e-Learning, e-Governance Applications, and Distance Learning Centre;
- ✍ **Pan-African Digital Broadcasting Station Axis:** The station will broadcast from the heart of Africa. Programmes will be designed by and for Africans and the world at large. This axis will contribute

actively to the implementation of NEPAD programmes, which promote the production of information from credible, verifiable and verified sources, backed by real and positive images of a developing Africa on the move, and that of a «Smart Africa»;

- ✍ **Audiovisual Production Axis:** By providing for the level of content needs that will be expressed from June 2015 with the switchover to digital terrestrial television (DTT) and All Digital (AD), the ACIT should provide modern technological and technical infrastructure to support multimedia operators (television, broadcasting, Multichannel Multipoint Distribution Systems - MMDS) in the production and distribution of multimedia contents (programmes, ads, short films and feature films, etc.).

III. CATEGORIES AND ROLES OF STAKEHOLDERS

3.1. Project Initiators

3.1.1. Chadian State

The Chadian State could set up a Project Coordination Team responsible, in synergy with the highest authorities of the Republic, particularly the Presidency, for monitoring and control. However, in order to ensure that the State effectively fulfils its role and missions with regard to the development of the Project, a Project Management Unit will be established that will serve as the nucleus of the ACIT management structure when it is operational. The rules governing the organization and operation of the Project Management Unit will be clearly defined and it will be responsible for:

- ✍ Identification, at national, regional and international levels, of the different partners described above, as well as donors likely to contribute to funding feasibility studies and the construction of the ACIT;
- ✍ Preparing funding applications;
- ✍ The proposed establishment of an ACIT Development Fund financed through various contributions (Public, Private, Donors) ;
- ✍ Proposing incentives (full or partial exemption from taxes and duties, preferential prices, facilities) that could generate the interest of partners needed by the ACIT and ICT Project Initiators;
- ✍ Study and proposal of a model Business Plan for the management of the Centre;
- ✍ Preparation and organization of a Donors' Roundtable;
- ✍ Preparation and organization of a Digital Economic Forum;

- ✍ Supervision of various feasibility studies on the ACIT.

3.1.2. African Union

Chad earnestly hopes to have the African Union as a co-promoter of the ACIT. The AU is expected to ensure pan-African legal personality for the ACIT, as well as the mobilization of States and strategic, technical and financial partners.

3.2. Target Beneficiaries

The intended target is all bold, enterprising African youth with new ideas and an innovative approach. This refers to any individual or legal entity with ICT business start-up projects, and ICT businesses with development projects for which working in project mode is necessary. For this category, the referral and the invitation are done through a Call for Projects which should be in the form of a leaflet that can guide future candidates. The target beneficiaries will also be invited to the ACIT and Digital Economy Development Forum.

3.3. Categories of Partners

Three (3) categories of stakeholders for the development of the ACIT have been identified:

- ✍ ACIT Partners: Consultancy firms specializing in innovation strategy and management, assisting companies in financial management, venture capital firms (SCR), financial institutions, law firms specializing in Corporate Law, Intellectual Property Rights, Social Law, Schools and Training Centres, Research and Development Centres and Laboratories. For the second category, a targeted approach should be used with proposals for incentives that could attract their adherence.
- ✍ Donors: bilateral and multilateral financing organizations. For this third category, the approach should also be targeted with requests elaborated in keeping with the objectives and programmes of the organizations. They will attend a Roundtable chaired by the Head of State or the Prime Minister, at which they are expected to make pledges.
- ✍ Promoters: the Chadian States, the AU and African States.

IV. IMPLEMENTATION MECHANISM

In order to meet the aspirations expressed in the above points, the realization of the vision of the ACIT will involve two phases: preparatory and operational.

4.1. Project Phases

4.1.1. Preparatory Phase

Specific guidelines shall be given to the Chadian Government and the Provisional National Team managing this phase, to establish all the requisite international structures.

4.1.2. Operational Phase

The desired management structure for the ACIT should be placed under the authority of a Directorate General, which in turn shall be under the authority of a Board of Directors. The two structures shall be composed of national and international experts. Further details shall be set out in the statutory documents and other texts to be elaborated.

4.1.3. Monitoring and Evaluation

Internal auditing, monitoring-evaluation and audits shall be integrated ACIT management tools.

4.2. Roadmap

MAJOR STAGES	ACTORS	DATES
Studies and construction of ACIT building	Chad and partners	2012-2016
Launching of communication process	SITIC Mission of ACIT	2012-2015
Establishment of Provisional National Team	Chad	Sept-Dec 2014
Africanization of ACIT	Chad and AU	Jan 2015
Establishment of Provisional International Team	Chad and AU	Jan-March 2015
Mobilization of partners	Chad and AU	Sept 2014 -
Launching of Africa-wide Call for Projects		
Selection of best innovative projects		
ACIT and Digital Economy Forum		
First Donors' Roundtable		
High-Level Meeting with Technical Partners		
Modality for establishment of Radio and TV Station		
Installation of ICT support services		
Installation of Audiovisual production structure		
Official inauguration and launching of ACIT		

V. DRAFT BUDGET

5.1. Expenditure

N°	Headings	Number	Unit Cost (CFA)	Total Cost (CFA)
1	Studies and construction of building	1	62 500 000 000	62 500 000 000
2	Study for each axis	8	45 000 000	360 000 000
3	Functioning of Provisional Teams	Flat rate	Flat rate	1 500 000 000
4	Meetings			500 000 000
5	Contingencies			500 000 000
TOTAL				65 360 000 000

The present budget is fixed at: **sixty-five billion three hundred and sixty million CFA Francs**

With this budget, the ACIT building should be completed, strategic, technical and financial partners mobilized, and eight (8) studies for each axis carried out to provide bankable projects and roundtables of donors or financial partners.

5.2. Recovery

N°	Headings	Number	Unit Cost	Percentage
1	Chad			
2	AU			
3	ITU			
4	OIF			
5	Others			
TOTAL				

VI. ASSUMPTIONS AND CONSTRAINTS

The following elements could jeopardize the success of the ACIT:

- Delay in or rejection of the Africanization of the ACIT;
- Economic crisis;
- Inaction by partners;

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2015

Establishment of the African Centre for Information Technologies (ACIT) with headquarters in N'djamena, Chad (Item proposed by The Republic of Chad)

African Union

African Union

<http://archives.au.int/handle/123456789/903>

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