

AFRICAN UNION



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UNIÃO AFRICANA

**AFRICAN UNION SPECIALIZED TECHNICAL
COMMITTEE ON COMMUNICATION AND ICT
ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA,
20-24 NOVEMBER 2017**

AU/CCICT-2/EXP/Rpt. (2)

REPORT OF EXPERTS' SESSION

20-22 NOVEMBER 2017

REPORT OF EXPERTS' SESSION

INTRODUCTION

1. The meeting of the experts of the Second Ordinary Session of the African Union Specialized Technical Committee (STC) on Communication and ICT (CCICT) was held at the African Union Headquarters' in Addis Ababa, Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, from 20-22 November 2017.

ATTENDANCE

2. The following Member States took part in the meeting: Algeria, Angola, Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Central Africa Republic, Congo, Cote D'Ivoire, Djibouti, Egypt, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Ghana, Guinea, Kenya, Lesotho, Libya, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Niger, Rwanda, Saharawi Arab Democratic Republic, Senegal, South Africa, Sudan, Tanzania, Tunisia and Zimbabwe.

3. The following Regional Economic Communities (RECs) were also in attendance: COMESA, ECOWAS, EAC and SADC.

4. The following African and International Organizations and Agencies also took part: United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, NEPAD Planning and Coordinating Agency (NPCA), African Telecommunication Union (ATU), Pan African Postal Union (PAPU), the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), the Regional African Satellite Communication Organization (RASCOM).

5. The following organizations and regional institutions were also present: Internet Society (ISOC), and African Network Information Center (AFRINIC),.

6. The list of participants is attached as Annex I.

ABSENT WITH APOLOGY

7. The Republic of Seychelles communicated apologies for not being able to attend.

PLENARY SESSION I

I. OPENING CEREMONY

8. At the opening ceremony, the following remarks and speeches were made:

Welcome Remarks by Ms Leslie Richer, Director of Information and Communication, AUC

9. Ms Leslie Richer, Director of Information and Communication, African Union Commission welcomed participants to the Second Ordinary Session of the African Union Specialized Technical Committee on Communication & Information Technologies and noted that ICTs remain a key contributor in transforming Africa's economies and lives of the continent's citizenry.

10. She further highlighted the key initiatives that have been implemented successfully since the last Specialized Technical Committee (STC) on Communication and ICT and called upon Member States to continue to support implementation of continental Communication and ICT.

11. She concluded by acknowledging and welcoming the growing support from various media partners who recognize that for Agenda 2063 to achieve its intended outcomes and to position the African Union as a people centred union, we must ensure relevancy by reaching out to the people of this great continent.

Remarks by Mrs Mariko Assa Simbara, ICT Technical Advisor to Minister of Digital Economy and Communication, Republic of Mali

12. Mrs Mariko Assa Simbara, representing Mali as Chair of the Bureau, highlighted the main achievements during the two-year mandate, where African experts remained engaged with the African Union Commission in developing strategies and action plans for the implementation of projects and programs.

13. She further highlighted a number of meetings held such as the first regular meeting of the Bureau of the (STC-CICT), organization of the first extraordinary session of the African Union Specialized Technical Committee on Communication and ICT (STC-CICT) and the meeting of the Supervisory Committee of the Pan-African Network for Tele education and Tele medicine (PAeN)

14. In conclusion, she thanked all the African experts for contributing towards the development of the sector in Africa during the mandate of the bureau

II. PROCEDURAL MATTERS

15. An update on the format of the meeting was presented

16. The meeting adopted the agenda and the work programme with amendments and is attached as **Annex II**.

III. ELECTION OF CCICT-2 BUREAU

17. Based on the principle of rotation and geographical representation, the meeting elected the following Members to the Bureau of the CCICT-2 for final consideration by the Honourable Ministers:

EASTERN AFRICA	
Ethiopia	Chair of the Bureau
CENTRAL AFRICA	
Congo	1 st Vice Chair of the Bureau
NORTHERN AFRICA	
Tunisia	2 nd Vice Chair of the Bureau
SOUTHERN AFRICA	
South Africa	3 rd Vice Chair of the Bureau
WESTERN AFRICA	
Ghana	Rapporteur of the Bureau

IV. REPORT OF THE OUTGOING BUREAU OF THE AU STC ON COMMUNICATION AND ICT

18. The out-going Chairperson presented a report on the work of the bureau
19. The outgoing Bureau of the Specialized Technical Committee on Communication and Information Communication Technologies (Bureau-CICT) held an Ordinary Meeting on 28 April 2016 at AUC Headquarters, Addis Ababa. The report of the Bureau is attached as Annex 1a
20. The Bureau and the AUC organized an extraordinary session of the STC CICT on Internet Governance as stipulated by the rules of procedures. The outcomes of the extraordinary session are the report of the ministers and the final declaration on Internet Governance attached as Annex 1 b and Annex 1 c respectively. However the documents were not adopted due to lack of a quorum.
21. The meeting noted the need to strengthen the implementation monitoring mechanisms between the Bureau and the Commission
22. The Experts meeting noted the important meetings held during the mandate of the outgoing Bureau such as the SMART Africa Summit and the Editor's forum.
23. **The Honourable Ministers are invited to:**
 - i. **Take note of the report of the Bureau;**
 - ii. **Request Member States to support the AUC to implement AU decisions related to Communication and ICT;**
 - iii. **Call upon Member States and the Bureau to attend international fora and meetings notably those related to key issues on Internet governance.**

PLENARY SESSION II

V. AFRICAN UNION COMMISSION REPORT

24. Mr Cheikh BEDDA, Director for Infrastructure and Energy presented the African Union Commission's activity report.
25. In his presentation, he outlined the implementation status of programs and projects in response to AU decisions relevant to the sector and outlined the challenges encountered.
26. He further highlighted the strategy for unlocking Rural and Remote Areas Access to Basic Infrastructure in Africa.
27. The concept is in line with Aspiration 1 of the AU Agenda 2063 namely A prosperous Africa based on inclusive growth and sustainable development and Goal 1 "End poverty in all its forms everywhere", Goal 5 Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls, Goal 7 Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy, Goal 9 Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable

industrialization and foster innovation and mostly Goal 10 reduce inequality within and among countries of the SDGs.

28. The Overall objective of the concept is to design, plan and implement basic Infrastructure projects (Energy, Water, ICT and transport) in an integrated manner

29. **The Honourable Ministers are requested to;**

- (i) Welcome the initiative towards the development of an integrated approach to Unlock Access to basic infrastructure and Services for Rural and Remote Areas;
- (ii) Call upon the AU Commission to prepare a strategy paper for the integrated approach within the context of basic infrastructure and services)
- (iii) Invite the partners notably Regional Economic Communities (REC), AfDB and UNECA to support the Approach.

PLENARY SESSION III

VI. CONTINENTAL AND REGIONAL PROGRAMMES

30. Mr. Moctar Yedaly, Head of Information Society Division, presented the new program on Policy and Regulatory Initiative for Digital Africa (PRIDA).

31. The following RECs, Specialized Agencies and International Organization/Institution made presentations on their initiatives: ECOWAS, EAC, SADC, ATU, PAPU, NPCA, RASCOM and AFRINIC

32. **Following the discussions, the Honourable Ministers are invited to:**

- i. Call upon Member States to support the program on Policy and Regulatory Initiative for Digital Africa (PRIDA) and nominate focal persons to work with the AUC its implementation;
- ii. Take note of the reports presented by ECOWAS, EAC, ATU & PAPU, NPCA, RASCOM, SADC and AFRINIC;
- iii. Request the AU Commission to be a member of the RASCOM Board of Directors with observer status
- iv. Urge all Member States in the pilot project on electrification and connectivity of Post offices in Africa to uphold their commitment towards the successful implementation of the project made during the 1st African Union Specialised Technical Committee on Information and Communication Technologies (STC-CICT) meeting held in Addis Ababa from 31st August to 4th September, 2015;
- v. Urge, in particular all the Countries in the pilot project on electrification and connectivity of Post offices in Africa to explore multiple sources of funding for the project as well as ensure its rapid implementation to ultimately accelerate socio-economic inclusion;
- vi. Call upon all other interested African governments to incorporate the project into their national development plans and explore multiple sources of funding for this important project aimed at leveraging the postal networks to foster socio-economic development in Africa.

VII. AFRICAN UNION ONGOING PROGRAMMES AND PROJECTS (ICT)

A. Cybersecurity

33. To address these issues of cybersecurity, despite the many challenges to mobilize resources and implement comprehensive African cybersecurity programs, the AU Commission implemented a number of activities in cooperation with partners:

34. Three years after its adoption by the Heads of State, the Malabo convention has been signed by 9 countries and ratified only TWO. In addition there is a very low rate of Cyber policy, Cyber strategy and cyber legislation adopted in the continent. This makes the Cybersecurity in the continent very challenging especially with regard to Cybercrime and Personal Data Protection.

35. **The Hon. Ministers are invited to:**

- (i) Request the AU Commission to dedicate appropriate resources for the implementation of a comprehensive Cybersecurity programs including assistance to AU Member states to adopt cyber strategies and Cyber legislations and to establish national and regional CIRT/CERT ¹
- (ii) Request the AUC and NEPAD Agency to develop an action plan and mobilise resources to advance co-operation between the policy and legislative arms including ministries associated with ICT, justice, constitutional affairs and international affairs in the Member States to facilitate procedural measures for the ratification of the Malabo Convention.
- (iii) Urge Member States with the support of the AUC and NEPAD Agency to take stock of their policy, legal and regulatory environments in relation to the Malabo Convention, the Budapest Convention, the Guidelines on Internet Infrastructure Security for Africa and align with the provisions of the two Conventions to promote a safer African Cyberspace while considering signature, ratification or accession.
- (iv) Direct the AU Commission to: (i) Form an Africa Cyber Security Collaboration and Coordination Committee (ACS3C) to advise AUC and policymakers on Cyber strategies (ii) draft guidelines on Personal Data Protection, (iii) Organize yearly an AU Conference on Cybersecurity in collaboration with Industry and Academia and (iv) to establish a continental Cybersecurity awareness month.

B. DotAfrica

36. The dotAfrica (.africa) Top Level Domain (TLD) was proposed as a new generic Top Level Domain (gTLD) for the promotion of Africa business, peoples and culture on the Internet. It is a real illustration of the integration of the continent in that it enables Africa to have its own Digital Identity;

37. The Dot-Africa Top Level Domain has been delegated by the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN) to the ZA Central Registry (ZACR) on 15 Feb 2017; On 15 February 2017 at exactly 14:58:59, the first .Africa domain name

extension (www.nic.africa) was added to the root zone managed by the Public Technical Identifiers (PTI);

38. The delegation paves the way to start the process for the creation of the dotAfrica Foundation as an alternative source of funding that will oversee various developmental projects and initiatives related to Internet development in Africa;

39. Since April 2017, the African Union Commission has been consistently requesting African Governments to protect domain names of geographic, economic, cultural, religious and linguistic values and of public interest through the process of the Government Reserved Names List (GRNL). This reserved name list will also allow governments to guard against offensive names on the basis of race, ethnicity, political association, gender, culture ...etc in order to prevent abusive registrations;

40. An awareness campaign (Dot Africa Road show) within the continent has commenced and will continue throughout January 2018. It is intended to encourage African people and businesses to use the DotAfrica TLD.

41. The Honourable Ministers are invited to:

- (i) Note the delegation of the dotAfrica domain name as an example of Africans from all walks of life working together to achieve a common goal and that Africa now has its own Digital Identity;
- (ii) Urge Member States who have not yet nominated focal points for dotAfrica Reserve Name List (RNL) to do so.
- (iii) Urge African Governments to redeem their Government Reserved Names List (GRNL) as per the GRNL policy;
- (iv) Urge Member States to actively participate in DotAfrica Road Show awareness campaign within the continent;
- (v) Urge Member States, African Business to start using the dotAfrica domain name.

C. Action Plan for the Sustainable Development of Postal Services in Africa

42. In implementing the decision EX.CL/Dec.900 (XXVIII) Rev.1, related to the sustainable development plan of the postal services, two Ad-hoc reports on: i) Addressing and postcode systems in Africa and, ii) Electrification and Connectivity of Post offices have been submitted to the following three Specialized Technical Committees:

- a) Finance, Economic Planning and Integration
- b) Public Services, Local Government, Urban Development and Decentralization.
- c) Transport, Transcontinental and Interregional Infrastructures, Energy and Tourism:

43. The three STCs Decisions, resolutions and recommendations are summarized as follows:

- To prioritize and to include in national development plans the address and postcode systems as part of the infrastructure needed to increase access to basic services and to improve road naming in rural areas,
- To encourages member States implementing such projects to make the necessary political commitment, to prioritize effective internal coordination for implementation and to resolve project funding challenges prior to the start of the project;

- To urge member States to explore multiple sources of funding, such as national budgets, universal service funds, public-private partnerships and international development partners, with a view to ensuring successful implementation of the project;
- To request the AU Commission and its partners to provide political and technical support to Member States to ensure the connectivity and electrification of post offices in rural electrification programs.

44. The Honourable Ministers are requested to:

- (i) Take note of the progress made in the implementation of the addressing and postcode systems in Africa and the Electrification and Connectivity of Post offices;
- (ii) Call upon Member States to continue providing support to the postal sector's development to ensure effective social, digital and financial inclusion for populations in remote and rural areas:
- (iii) Requests the AU Commission to organise in collaboration with PAPU, a special meeting on the UPU reform to develop an African Common position.

D. Book of African Records (African Factbook)

45. The Book of African Records (BAR), also known as the African Fact Book project is guided by the AU Pan African Vision of Agenda 2063 and Aspiration Five (5), which seeks to enhance the strong cultural identity, common heritage, values and ethics of Africa.

46. The African Factbook will be one of the tools of communication available to build a common understanding of key facts about Africa in order to build continental pride in the history, culture, economic successes and achievements of Africans across various spheres of society. It chronicles the great work done by African people through the ages. It helps Africa to take charge of its narrative by presenting well researched and authenticated facts about where we have been and what we have done.

47. The Government of Zimbabwe has made a contribution of good will by donating state land for the construction of headquarters of The African Factbook.

48. The Honourable Ministers are requested to:

- (i) Commend the work done by the AU Commission to implement Agenda 2063, through the production of the Africa Fact Book
- (ii) Urge all member states to adopt the Africa Fact Book as an educational tool, to enhance their knowledge of and pride in Africa
- (iii) Request the AU Commission to continue its cooperation with Book of African Records (BAR), under the MOU, to produce more editions of the book and in more AU working languages, in order to build common understanding of key facts about Africa in order to build continental pride.

E. AU Communication and advocacy Strategy 2014-2017

49. The DIC elaborated the second communication strategy for the AU (2014 -2017) that took into account the pressing need of popularization and enhancing the visibility of the organization. The communication strategy successfully guided the

Commission's efforts in terms of providing relevant information to different stakeholders. The following activities were reported on:

- Improved use of Digital Platforms to engage with African Citizenry through FaceBook (320 000 followers), Twitter (249 000 followers), YouTube (1516 subscribers), Flickr and Google. Visitors to the AU website stand at 2.1 million page views
- Stakeholder Engagement: Among other achievements, engagements are ongoing with the African Media Initiative, The African Editors' Forum and the Federation of African Journalists
- Publications – i.e. the AU ECHO whose content is aligned to the AU theme and the AU Handbook which serves as a reference guide of the AU
- Agenda 2063 Communication Activities include distribution of handbooks, advertorials in publications with regional and continental reach; production of thematic documentaries on Agenda 2063 flagship projects; podcasts communication around the African Economic Platform
- AU branding: Corporate brand identity guidelines developed to promote use of the correct AU symbols; communication policies developed; and a workshop planned for December for all AU communication officers on brand identity and communication policies
- AUC audio visual studios: Set up of the studios is ongoing with the objectives of increasing awareness and understanding of the AU; disseminating news in a timely manner; controlling the African narrative; maintaining and preserving current and historical audio visual materials
- Update on AU reforms: Following the establishment of the Institutional Reforms Unit, the DIC has submitted a communications strategy and is awaiting approval

50. The Honourable Ministers are invited to:

- (i) Commend the ongoing communication efforts, especially the new initiatives that have enhanced the Union's awareness-raising and the support lent to other AU offices
- (ii) Urge the Commission to continue efforts to give the AU more communication capacity, especially the incremental setting up modern communications equipment that will enable the Commission to produce and disseminate international standard communication products as well as the right staffing level to ensure faster implementation
- (iii) Request the Commission to produce the next information and communication strategy 2018-2022.
- (iv) Commend the efforts made by AUC on AU branding, especially the amendment of the AU flag and development of a Brand Style guide to be submitted to the STC
- (v) Encourage Member States, through their national broadcasters to support the AU in disseminating content from the AU on their national platforms
- (vi) Call on Member States to accept and adopt the AU branding
- (vii) Call upon Member States to provide annual progress reports on the implementation of the AU Communication Strategy

PARALLEL SESSION (CIT)

F. Status of implementation of PIDA Priority Action Plan

51. Programme for Infrastructure Development in Africa (PIDA) is designed to close the infrastructure gap in Africa and improve access to integrated transport, energy, ICT and trans-boundary water infrastructure and networks.

52. The current status of ICT PIDA PAP effective implementation is summarized as follows:

- African Internet Exchange System-AXIS Project (Axis is one the main programme of ICT component of the PIDA PAP, a specific presentation will made on its implementation);
- The alternative infrastructure for ICT in transport and energy projects: Power Transmission, Rails, Trans African Highway and Smart Corridors;
- The follow up of the development of projects profile for the selected priorities ICT Fiber optics projects of the ECCAS
- Coordination with NEPAD IPPF projects preparation and formulation of new priorities such as the project "Enhancing Cyber Infrastructure Development in Africa" aiming at supporting Member States to set up cybersecurity infrastructure (Internet Exchange Points & Data Centers) and set up National CERTs in countries where they don't exist and the African CERT
- ICT projects financed and implemented under AfDB Programmes: Trans Sahara Optical Fiber Backbone, Central Africa Backbone

53. Following the presentation, the meeting noted the need for PIDA to consider land-locked countries as a priority and focus on concrete activities

54. **The Honourable Ministers are invited to:**

- (i) Collaborate with their counterparts Ministers in charge of transport and energy to ensure that ICT duct or fiber are deployed on transport and energy regional infrastructure, as alternative infrastructure, a strategy adopted in PIDA PAP implementation to speed up ICT broadband services deployment and to secure countries connectivity to submarine cable.

G. African Internet Exchange Systems (AXIS) Project

55. Africa is currently paying overseas carriers to exchange "local" (continental) traffic on our behalf. This is both a costly as well as an inefficient way of handling inter-country exchange of Internet traffic.

56. The AXIS project aims to keep Africa's internet traffic local by providing capacity building & technical assistance to facilitate the establishment of Internet Exchange Points (IXP) and Regional Internet Exchange Points in Africa.

57. Capacity Building Support has been extended to 32 AU Member States:

58. Following the support of the African Internet Exchange System Project, the following fifteen Member States have since set up their Internet Exchange Points (IXPs).

59. Through open tendering, eight internet exchange points have so far been awarded grants to become regional internet exchange points. A final call for proposals has been issued for the unallocated amounts for the Western and Northern Africa regions.

60. With the support of the AXIS project, regional ICT cross-border interconnection policy & frameworks have been developed for Central, Southern, Western and Northern Africa. EAC cross-border interconnection regulations were also developed.

61. **The Honourable Ministers are invited to:**

- (i) **Commend the efforts made by the African Union Commission to implement the African Internet Exchange System project.**

H. The Pan African e-Network (PAeN) for Telemedicine and Tele-education

62. The Pan African e-Network (PAeN) is connecting 48 Member States of the AU by satellite network (within Africa) and fiber optic cables (India to Africa) and is providing namely Tele-education and Tele-medicine services and diplomatic communications (VVIP services). This project was funded, implemented and operated (for 8 years) by the Government of India at an estimated budget of 150 Million USD with the Assistance from AUC.

63. Up to 150 VSAT terminals have been installed in 48 AU Member States participating in the Network and the Satellite Hub Earth Station has been installed in Dakar (Senegal). A total of: (i) 21 280 students enrolled from 39 participating countries graduate disciplines in various different Indian universities through the network; (ii) 771 Tele-medicine consultations took place; (iii) 6771 Continuous Medical Education (CME) sessions held.

64. The hub station was transferred to the AUC following a hand over process held on August 2017.

65. The AUC is conducting assessment on how to continue using the existing and new satellite based services.

66. **Following discussions, the Honourable Ministers are invited to:**

- (i) Request the African Union Commission to present to the next bureau of the STC for approvals a project proposal on the use of this infrastructure for the Pan African Mass Education TV for Talent and content development (DIY TV) and VVIP communications
- (ii) Recommend to AU Policy Organs to allocate adequate financial resources to continue the operationalization of the Pan African e-Network (PAeN) which is an Agenda 2063 flagship project

I. Harmonized Use of Digital Dividend

67. As per the AU Executive Council Decision Assembly/AU/11(XIV) adopted in July 2010 calling for the harmonization and efficient management of radio spectrum at both national and regional levels, and in an effort to implement the World Radio communication Conferences decisions which allocated both the 800 MHz and the 700 MHz as first and second digital dividends (DDs) at WRC-2007 and WRC-2012 respectively. *The African Union Commission* developed a guidelines for the harmonized use of these valuable scarce resources to address the growing demand for wireless data traffic, enabling economies of scale for the provision of new affordable ICT devices and enhance the low level of broadband penetration in Africa

68. The Guidelines define the technical conditions as well as Policy and Regulatory procedures for an optimum and efficient use of the Digital Dividend (DD) including a recommended channeling plans as well as policy and regulatory guidance on the harmonized use of the 700 MHz, 800 MHz, 850 MHz and 900 MHz bands.

The Honourable Ministers are invited to:

- (i) Request Member States to adopt the proposed channeling plans for the digital dividends (DDs) and to use to the extent possible the AUC "guidelines on the harmonized use of digital Dividends".
- (ii) Further request Member States to use the digital dividends to consolidate the ICT market in Africa by enabling economies of scale and fostering the provision of new affordable ICT and internet based services.
- (iii) Urge Member States to promote the use these resources to enhance broadband penetration and provide access to rural areas and underserved populations across the continent.
- (iv) Request the AU Commission to commit budget annually for the development of harmonized spectrum policies and implementation of WRC decisions.
- (v) Request the AU Commission to create a forum as a key annual conference to discuss and develop common spectrum policy in Africa.

J. African Internet Governance Forum (AfIGF)

69. The Africa Internet Governance Forum (Af-IGF) was launched in 2011 and held its inaugural meeting in Cairo in September 2012. The 2nd, 3rd, 4th and 5th Af-IGFs were held in Nairobi, Abuja, Addis Ababa and Durban respectively.

70. Regional and sub-regional IGFs are the building blocks of the Af-IGF. Currently all the 5 AU geographical regions have IGFs but not all member states have national IGFs. In line with the CITMC-4 Khartoum Declaration, the AUC and NEPAD Agency have been working to encourage RECs *'to support the establishment of national IGF to create dialogue between all stakeholders on ICT for development issues and facilitate the countries' participation in the regional and African IGF processes as well as in the global IGF'*.

71. The African Union Commission as a Secretariat of the African IGF is planning the 6th AfIGF 2017 that will take place from 4 to 6 December 2017 in Cairo, Egypt.

72. The African Union Commission is working on a large scale capacity building imitative on IG to enable African stakeholders to actively participate in the Global IG debates.

73. The Honourable Ministers are invited to:

- (i) Encourage Member States, that have not yet done so, to accelerate the establishment of their national IGFs;
- (ii) Encourage Member States to commit technical and financial resources to support national and regional IGFs;

- (iii) Encourage Member States to support the Organization of the African IGF as the continental multi-stakeholder vehicle for Africans to reach common positions on IG matters.
- (iv) As such, call for the institutionalization and funding of the Forum as a key annual Conference for Africans to discuss internet development on the Continent and pursue mainstreaming of Digitalization into African policy development.
- (v) To set up and promote an African Union Academia on Internet Governance to build capacity in IG especially among youth
- (vi) Request the AU Commission to commit budget annually for the organization and support of the Annual African IGF and Internet Governance Academia

K. Specific contributions from Member States, Specialized Institutions and international organizations and partners:

74. The Algerian Delegate of the Republic of Algeria made a presentation on the Algiers declaration on Internet Governance that was adopted in February 2017.

75. The Algiers Declaration is a contribution by Algeria to the efforts of the African Union to lay the groundwork for an integrated, comprehensive and coherent operational framework for Internet Policy and Internet Governance.

76. The Honorable ministers are invited to:

- (i) Take note with appreciation The Algiers declaration on Internet Governance and commend Algeria for its efforts and engagement to promote Internet governance and Internet policy within the continent.

77. The Delegate of the Republic of Tunisia made a presentation on the Digital African Strategic Center.

78. The Honourable Ministers are invited to:

- (i) Take note of the Digital African Strategic Center
- (ii) Request Member States to re-affirm their commitment in conformity with the Assembly Decision[Assembly/AU/12(XVII)]
- (iii) Invite the AUC and Republic of Tunisia in collaboration with partners to accelerate the implementation of the Digital African Strategic Center

L. CONTRIBUTIONS FROM PARTNERS

79. Presentations were made on Preparing for Internet of Opportunities (Internet Society), Budapest Convention (Council of Europe), and Space application (Azerbaijan).

PARALLEL SESSION (INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION)

M. The Media Gender Gap in Africa and portrayal of women

80. The Department of Information and Communication is supporting the Women Gender and Development Directorate in promoting this important cross cutting issue of the African Union

81. While women represent more than half of the population in many African countries they are underrepresented or misrepresented throughout all existing media whether online or offline, news media or entertainment. Their voices are not heard, they are likely to be portrayed in a stereotypical manner and they are less likely to hold influential positions in the media and ICT. The 2015 Global Media Monitoring Project notes that in Africa women's relative presence in the news has increased from 19% in 2010 to merely 22% in 2015. Women continue to enjoy less access to ICTs and the violence that women face offline is extending to online spheres. They still do not have access to this technology due to inadequate infrastructure, affordability and availability, language barriers, illiteracy and even discriminatory social norms. The struggles are derailing the potential of ICTs in the empowerment of women. Despite the existing gaps member states continue to have weak (or no) specific gender provisions in media laws and policies.

82. The Honourable Ministers are requested to approve the following:

- (i) AU and RECs to develop continental guidelines on women's portrayal and representation in the media
- (ii) AU to recognise the contributions of journalists towards the achievement of Aspiration 6 of Agenda 2063 and institutionalise the Pan-African Media Awards on Gender Equality & Women's Empowerment
- (iii) AU and RECs to develop legislation that criminalises violence against journalists on digital platforms especially social media
- (iv) AU to work with key stakeholders to develop capacity building programmes to:
 - Facilitate access to training for women in journalism and ICT
 - Mainstream gender within the academic curricula and teaching practices
- (v) AU and RECs to establish regulatory frameworks for media houses to ensure protection of journalists especially female journalists
- (vi) AU and RECs to conduct a baseline study and thereafter commission research on current patterns of women ownership of media towards making recommendation of targets in the medium term
- (vii) Encourage Member States within their own programmes of funding of Public Institutions to prioritise funding of research of institutions advocating gender related issues.
- (viii) Encourage Member States to ratify, domesticate and implement regional and international instruments related to Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in the media

N. The role of media in Africa's development, women's empowerment Media and its support for Agenda 2063

83. To ensure dissemination and understanding of the mandates and key programmes of the AU, the DIC is working with Member States communications officials and regional media associations to identify and promote Africa's development Agenda 2063

84. Whereas it is recognised that socio-economic sectors such as health, agriculture and education growth are of great importance in boosting Africa's development, these areas do not receive as much attention from African media. There is a prevailing view amongst the media that development news is not only interesting but that it also does not sell. There is persistent low level of development reporting in the continent with development reporting in Africa being 20% compared to Europe where it is at 80% level. This can be viewed as a major roadblock to promoting developmental initiatives as the media is the most powerful transformational tool we have to reach Africans and to elevate the level of collective awareness of African citizenry, policy makers and leaders of the continent to ensure an integrated and inclusive approach to defining and implementing development programmes. African Media need to move from the western concept of media that it's the 4th estate and should not engage with other policy making institutions that decide on development issues but rather African journalists must see themselves as part of the development process and ensure that content in the various media platforms promote Africa's development agenda by narrowing the information gap in ways that have impact.

85. The Honourable Ministers are requested to approve the following:

- (i) AU and RECs to develop continental guidelines on journalism education and training to include development agenda and sectorial specialisations as part of the academic curricula
- (ii) AU to recognise the contributions of journalists who give attention to development issues towards the achievement of Agenda 2063 and institutionalise the Pan-African Media Awards on Promoting Agenda 2063
- (iii) AU to put resources behind communicating the strategic framework Agenda 2063 by capacitating the Directorate of Information and Communication
- (iv) AU and RECs to develop legislation that criminalises violence against journalists on digital platforms especially social media
- (v) AU and RECs to work with key stakeholders to develop capacity building programmes to build credible and sustainable government media institutions at both national level and community media centres
- (vi) AU to engage with and use the government media as brand ambassadors to promote AU activities and Agenda 2063 and convene annual session where MS can report on national activities

PLENARY SESSION V

International Telecommunication Union

86. Mr. Andrew Rugege, Regional Director for Africa made a presentation on ITU Initiatives and highlighted the continued partnership between International Telecommunication Union and the African Union Commission to implement ICT Programs in Africa

Innovative solutions for Africa's Development (Huawei)

87. Mr. David Harmon, Vice President, Global Public Affairs, Huawei highlighted some of the innovative ICT solutions that can contribute to Africa's socio-economic development.

88. He further highlighted Huawei 's Research and Science Program and the cooperation experience with Africa's Universities

VIII. Consideration and Adoption of Documents to be submitted to the Ministerial Session.

89. The report was presented by the Rapporteur (Ghana) and was adopted as amended.

90. The proposed draft Ministerial agenda and work programme was considered with amendment and is to be submitted to the Ministers for consideration and adoption

91. The draft AU Declaration on Internet Governance was considered with amendment and is to be submitted to the Ministers for consideration and adoption

92. The draft 2017 Addis Ababa Declaration was considered with amendment and is to be submitted to the Ministers for consideration and adoption

IX. Closure of the meeting

93. In his closing remarks, Mr. Cheikh Bedda, the Director for Infrastructure and Energy, AUC, thanked all the delegates, for the efficient manner in which the meeting was conducted and highlighted the importance of issues discussed.