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PICTA Bulletin is a monthly publication that provides information on activities of members in the partnership, as well as offers news on ICT-related activities in Africa. This bulletin is also available at: <http://www.uneca.org/aisi/picta/PICTAbulletin>

NEWS: PICTA Members

ECA-ITU-UNCTAD Regional Workshop on Information Society Measurements in Africa. This event jointly organised by the three organisations was held from 7 to 9 March 2007 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. The workshop was organised under the framework of the international Partnership on Measuring ICT for Development. The purpose was to address challenges related to Information Society measurements in the African region, present possible solutions and identify technical assistance needs. The workshop also reviewed progress made with regard to the implementation of Scan-ICT Phase II involving National Statistical Offices (NSOs). Activities of the Partnership and the Scan-ICT project provided the basis for the workshop, aimed at advancing the availability of comparable data on ICT in the region. A preliminary list of core indicators for e-Government was also discussed. Over 40 participants drawn from 25 African countries including representatives from NSOs, telecom regulators and government ministries, researchers, international partners as well as representatives from ITU, UNCTAD, ESCWA, ILO, UNAIDS and UNEP attended the workshop. Participants made a number of concrete recommendations and suggestions focusing on the need for capacity building on ICT statistics, comparability of data, ensuring sustainability of the process as well as harmonisation of activities at sub-regional, regional and international levels. More: <http://www.uneca.org/disd/events/2007/ict-measurement/>

GK III Launched. The Global Knowledge Partnership (GKP) launched the Third Global Knowledge Conference (GK III) on "Emerging People, Emerging Markets, Emerging Technologies", on February 5th, in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. The GK3 theme is a dynamic focus on the interplay, interface and interweaving of issues related to Knowledge for Development (K4D) and Information and Communication Technologies for Development (ICT4D) within the context of evolving societies, economies and technologies worldwide. The Third Global Knowledge Conference will be held from 11-

13 December 2007 in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. More: <http://www.globalknowledge.org>

GKP Releases Summary Results of Consultation for 10th UN Round Table on C4D. GKP published the summary results of its consultation with Communication for Development (C4D) practitioners, which was conducted in January 2007. The results were presented at the 10th United Nations Round Table on C4D that took place in Addis Ababa, from 12 - 14 February 2007. More: <http://www.globalknowledge.org>

New publication from ITU: Measuring the Information Society 2007 - ICT Opportunity Index and World Telecommunication/ICT Indicators. The publication contains both the 2007 ICT Opportunity Index and the World Telecommunication/ICT Indicators (WTI). The index highlights that while countries have made significant progress since the turn of the century, digital opportunities remain unequally distributed. The ITU's authoritative World Telecommunication/ICT Indicators (WTI) tables present statistics for year-end 2005. These statistics monitor the main indicators of telephone network growth, mobile communications, Internet subscribers, and Internet users, tariffs, revenues and investment for around 200 economies worldwide. More: <http://www.itu.int/ITU-D/ict/publications/ict-oi/2007/>.

NEWS: ECA Activities

Building an inclusive Information Society in the SADC Region: Making ICTs work in Parliaments. In collaboration with the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) Parliamentary Forum and the ECA Sub-Regional Office for Southern Africa, the ICT, Science and Technology Division (ISTD) facilitated a 4-day MPs Forum on "Building an inclusive Information Society in the SADC Region" from 12-14 February 2007 in Johannesburg, South Africa. More than forty MPs and staffs from twelve SADC member States participated in the event. The UNDP sub-regional offices for East and Southern Africa and West Africa as well as representatives from the SADC Secretariat and the NEPAD e-Africa Commission also participated. The main objective of the Forum was to promote the use of ICTs at Parliament level as a tool for democratic governance through increased access to information by Parliaments to enable effective debate, knowledge sharing and enhanced public participation in the

legislative and policy making process. The focus was also aimed at developing the capacity of MPs to utilise ICTs as a tool for institutional development and efficiency. This Forum served as a platform for the establishment of ICT Committee within the SADC member States' Parliaments as a mechanism for MPs to become proactive in the development of ICTs in their respective countries and promote inter-Parliamentary collaboration. The event was also followed by a two-day meeting to review the overall SADC ICT strategy of the Forum. The Forum was part of the implementation programme for the e-Policy Resource Network for Africa (ePol-Net Africa: <http://www.epolafrica.org>) with support from the Canada Fund for Africa. More: Thierry Amoussougbo (tamoussougbo@uneca.org).

North Africa Development Forum on Trade for Growth and Job Creation. ECA's Sub Regional Office for North Africa, in collaboration with the Government of Morocco, organised the event which took place in Marakesh, Morocco from 19 - 20 February 2007. The Forum was composed of plenary sessions, workshops and a market place. Preliminary plenary sessions were intended to set the scene with keynote addresses. The parallel sessions explored more specific issues dealing with the policy measures as well as the Public-Private Partnerships that are required for promoting trade and facilitating economic integration in the sub-region. One session focused on the role of ICTs in trade promotion. Participants discussed reports on e-commerce in Egypt, Mauritania, Morocco and Tunisia; and adopted the specifications of a proposed electronic platform for intra-regional trade in North Africa. Recommendations were also made on the plan for the development of the platform, and the harmonization of the legal framework for e-commerce in the sub-region. More: Mohamed Timoulali (mtimoulali@uneca.org).

The Africa node for the Global Alliance on ICT and Development (GAID) to be launched. ECA, in collaboration with the Conference of NGOs in Consultative Relationship with the United Nations (CONGO), the African Women's Development and Communication Network (FEMNET) and the African Union, is organising the African Civil Society Forum on "Democratising Governance at Regional and Global Level to Achieve the MDGs" that will take place in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, from 22 - 24 March 2007. The purpose of the Forum is to bring together representatives of national, regional and international NGOs from Africa to explore the most effective ways to work with the United Nations system and to partner with and impact on African institutions: the African Union, ECA and the New Partnership for African Development (NEPAD). Alongside the Forum, the Africa node of GAID will be launched. GAID was launched in 2006, as the main outcome of the UN-ICT Task Force, after comprehensive worldwide consultations with governments, the private sector, civil society, and academia. A principal distinguishing

feature of the Alliance will be the promotion of a multi-stakeholder cross-sectoral process that would bring together all stakeholders active in the Information and Knowledge Economy. Prior to the forum on 21st March 2007, the African Civil Society Network on the Information Society (ACSIS)'s strategic meeting on "involving CSOs in implementing national and sub-regional ICT policies" will be organised. More: Thierry Amoussougbo (tamoussougbo@uneca.org).

Experts Confirm ICT as tool for growth and competitiveness in African economies. ECA, in collaboration with the Governments of Ethiopia and Kenya, organised roundtable meetings on "ICTs, Trade and Economic Growth" held from 26 - 27 February in Addis Ababa, and from 8 - 9 February 2007 in Nairobi. The meetings discussed studies commissioned by ECA on the role of ICTs in trade and economic growth in Ethiopia and Kenya. The studies, part of follow up activities to the "ICTs, Trade and Economic Growth" initiative, were carried out in six African countries, including Ethiopia and Kenya. The initiative was launched by ECA last March under the auspices of the Global ePolicy Resource Network (ePOL-NET), with funding from the Canada Fund for Africa. Participants of the roundtables made key recommendations for accelerating the development of ICTs in support of trade and economic growth. The studies confirmed that economic growth and competitiveness of an economy can be enhanced through the use of ICTs. Participants of the roundtables included major stakeholders such as bankers, and Chambers of Commerce, as well as the IT and communication private sector, research institutes and various ministries and agencies. More: <http://www.epolafrica.org/>

OTHER NEWS..... OTHER NEWS.....

Eassy renamed The Nepad Broadband Infrastructure Network. Eassy (The East African Submarine Cable System) has been renamed The Nepad Broadband Infrastructure Network (NBIN), because Kenya has opted out of the South African-led continental fiber optic backbone system, says South Africa's communications minister Ivy Matsepe-Casaburri. Matsepe-Casaburri The NBIN aims to provide a number of landlocked African countries, mainly on the eastern side of the continent, access to two broadband networks. One will run as a backbone from South Africa through Botswana, Zimbabwe, Zambia, Malawi and Uganda to terminate in the Rwandan capital of Kigali. The second is an undersea cable that will run up the African east coast and was supposed to land in Kenya. The new landing point has not been announced as yet. Other countries that have signed up are Lesotho, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Mauritius, Namibia and Madagascar. More: <http://www.itweb.co.za/sections/telecoms/2007/0702201600.asp>

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

26 – 28 March 2007, Communications Regulators' Association of Southern Africa (CRASA) annual general meeting, Windhoek, Namibia. CRASA's 10th Annual General Meeting, the supreme decision making body of CRASA, will be meeting in Windhoek, Namibia from the 12th to 16th March 2007. The main objectives include receiving country reports from members, specialist committee reports, updates on activities of the Association, approving CRASA Action Programme, and receiving, approving and adopting audited financial statements for the year ended 31st March 2006. More: <http://www.crasa.org/>

27 – 29 March 2007, The African e-Gov Forum 2007, Accra, Ghana. Hosted by the Ministry of Communications of the Government of the Republic of Ghana, the African e-Gov Forum 2007 is organised by the Commonwealth Telecommunications Organisation (CTO). The themes will focus on the core topics that form the wide-ranging e-Gov concept. Papers will concentrate on case studies, best practice and bench marking projects. More: Matthew Dawes (m.dawes@cto.int).

27 – 30 March 2007, First Egyptian International Conference on e-Medicine, Cairo, Egypt. The First international conference on e-Medicine (Cairo 2007) is assumed to be a timely reminder of the inter-related nature of the link between medicine and the Information Technology. The organisers strongly believe that such meetings around the world, whether they are local or international in nature, inevitably bring together people who are working in the medical field with those of the IT field and foster the belief that the sharing of ideas and experience is the way forward. More: <http://www.onlinediabetes.net/emedicine/>

5 – 6 April 2007, Research and Development in the Information Society: Identifying Information Society socio-economic impact Indicators in Tunisia, Tunis, Tunisia. ECA, in collaboration with the Government of Tunisia through the National Statistic Council and the Academia Research Network (ARN) working on Information Society Indicators will jointly organise a forum on: "The Information Society socio-economic impact indicators and the Knowledge Economy" in Tunis from 5 - 6 April 2007. The ARN team working on the Information Society indicators intends to look at socio-economic impact indicators in the Information Society by using Tunisian case study. So far, the team has successfully established a collaboration framework with existing statistics bodies including, the National Statistics Council, the National Institute of Statistics, the Statistics Training Institution and other specialised bodies and has successfully identified for a pilot phase a core group of socio-economic impact indicators. The workshop aims at reviewing the work of the research team and provide

an implementation methodology. The national Council of Statistics will use this opportunity to launch a permanent group of statisticians and ICT experts to coordinate the Tunisian Knowledge Economy's continuous data collection, analysis and dissemination process. More: Thierry Amoussougbo (tamoussougbo@uneca.org).

11 – 13 April 2007, Knowledge Management Capacity for African Research Institutes and Networks: Western Africa Workshop, Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso. The Global Development Network (GDN) in cooperation with the Centre d'analyse des Politiques Economiques et Sociales (CAPES), African Capacity Building Foundation (ACBF) and the World Bank Institute (WBI), is organizing the 3rd in its series of sub-regional workshops across Sub-Saharan Africa entitled "Knowledge Management Capacity for African Research Institutes and Networks: Western Africa Workshop". Representatives of government, non-profit, private and university-based African research institutes and networks were invited for the workshop. The workshop aims at strengthening the operations of Western-African research institutes and networks by exposing them to knowledge management concepts, tools and approaches, and helping them to develop Action Plans to enhance their organizational capacity. This workshop comes as a follow-up to the previous similar workshops held in Cairo, Egypt in February 2005, in Kampala, Uganda in June 2006, and in Johannesburg, South Africa in November 2006. More: <http://www.gdnet.org/middle.php?oid=1177>

23 – 26 April 2007, First International Conference on Research Challenges in Information Science, Ouarzazate, Morocco. The First International Conference on Research Challenges in Information Science (RCIS) aims at providing an international forum for scientists, researchers, engineers and developers from a wide range of information science areas to exchange ideas and approaches in this evolving field. More: <http://www.farcampus.com/rcis/index.php>

29 April – 5 May 2007, The Fifth Meeting of the Committee on Development Information (CODI V), Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. The Committee on Development Information (CODI) is one of the seven subsidiary bodies of the ECA, providing ECA with policy and technical guidance for the sub-programme "Harnessing Information for Development". The theme of CODI V is "Employment and the Knowledge Economy in Africa". The meeting will explore the institutional foundations and policy dimensions of employment in the Knowledge Economy, and illuminate fundamental policy choices that member States have to make in developing or enhancing knowledge-centric employment in African economies. Reports and discussions will focus on the following sub-themes: a) ICT and the Knowledge Economy: innovation, productivity and expansion of

opportunities for entrepreneurship and employment, b) Enhancement of employability through access to information and knowledge in libraries and other information services, c) Geo-information dimensions of employment policy-making in the Knowledge Economy, d) Employment and the Knowledge Economy: definitions, indicators, and measurement challenges; and e) Employment in the information sectors, including ICT industries, geomatics and information services. More: <http://www.uneca.org/codi/>

9 – 11 May 2007, IST-Africa 2007 Conference & Exhibition, Maputo, Mozambique. Part of the IST-Africa Initiative, which is supported by the European Commission under the Information Society Technologies (IST) Programme, IST-Africa 2007 is the second in an Annual Conference Series bringing together delegates from leading commercial, government & research organisations, to bridge the Digital Divide by sharing knowledge, experience, lessons learnt & good practice. Hosted by the Government of Mozambique and technically co-sponsored by the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE), IST-Africa 2007 focuses on Applied IST research in the areas of ICT for Networked Enterprise, ICT Infrastructures, ICT for Environmental Risk Management, eGovernment and eDemocracy, Technology Enhanced Learning and ICT Skills, ICT for Inclusion, eHealth and International Cooperation. More: <http://www.ist-africa.org/conference2007>

28 – 30 May 2007, eLearning Africa 2007 - Building Infrastructures and Capacities to Reach out to the Whole of Africa, Nairobi, Kenya. The second International Conference on ICT for Development, Education and Training, aims to reflect on the efforts of African countries in setting up their national and regional information and communication technology (ICT) infrastructures to create access to education, training and services for all. It will also look at how Africa is providing the capacities for all stakeholders to efficiently exploit the huge potentials advanced telecommunications technologies offer for the benefit of Africa. More: <http://www.elearning-africa.com>

ANNOUNCEMENTS/RESOURCES

Director of ISTD appointed. Ms. Aida Opoku-Mensah was appointed Director, ICT, Science and Technology Division (ISTD) of ECA. As most PICTA members are aware, Ms. Aida Opoku-Mensah was the Officer-In-Charge of the same division and its predecessor, the Development Information Services Division (DISD) for the last three years. The Division is in charge of implementing the AISI, and serves as the Secretariat for PICTA. More: <http://www.uneca.org/disd/>

Call for Applications: DiPLO Capacity Building Training Programme 2007. DiploFoundation, in cooperation with various partners, is currently accepting applications for the 2007 Internet Governance Capacity Building Training Programme. This programme is designed to improve Internet Governance (IG) related knowledge and skills for participants mainly from developing countries and to facilitate community building among individuals with different national, cultural, and professional backgrounds. More: <http://www.diplomacy.edu/ig/igcbp/>

APC Chris Nicol FOSS Prize 2007. The nominations for the Prize will be collected until the end of March 2007. The Prize recognises initiatives that are making it easy for people to start using free and open source software (FOSS). The prize will be awarded to a person or group doing extraordinary work to make FOSS accessible to ordinary computer users. The APC FOSS Prize has been established to honor Chris Nicol, a long time FOSS advocate and activist who for many years worked with APC. THE PRIZE: US\$ 4,000.00 may be shared by up to two initiatives at the jury's discretion. More: <http://www.apc.org/english/chrisnicol>

PICTA Bulletin is a monthly information sharing service designed to keep members informed of each other's activities in the area of ICTs in Africa. Please send relevant information, stories or exchanges you may want to share with other members to atentime@uneca.org for inclusion in subsequent issues of the PICTA Bulletin. If you have any comments and/or suggestions, please contact:

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