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ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR AFRICA

Annual Meeting of the Vth African Technical Advisory Committee (ATAC)

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

12 - 14 December 2006, United Nations Conference Center- **Large Briefing Room**

**Report of the Annual Meeting of the Fifth African Technical
Advisory Committee (ATAC V)**

INTRODUCTION

In May 1996, the ECA Conference of Ministers adopted the African Information Society Initiative (AISI). In resolution 812 (XXXI) adopting the Initiative, the Conference of Ministers mandated ECA to institute an African Technical Advisory Committee (ATAC) made up of African experts in all aspects of information and communication technologies (ICT) and the Information Society to provide advice on the implementation of AISI. ATAC members were also expected to play an advocacy role, identifying best ICT practices, and assisting ECA mobilize resources for its work programme.

Since 1997, four committees had been established (ATAC I, II, III, and IV), and ATAC IV members had recently completed their period of tenure. New ATAC members were appointed in September 2006 and the first meeting of ATAC IV took place from 12 - 14 December 2006, in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia as reported below.

Session I – Opening Session

1. Welcoming and introductory remarks

In her opening remarks, Ms. Aida Opoku-Mensah, Officer-in-Charge (OIC), ICTs, Science and Technology Division (ISTD) welcomed the participants and thanked them for accepting to serve as ATAC members for the two years term. She also briefed participants about the new repositioning exercise in ECA, focusing on two pillars: regional integration and meeting Africa's special needs. She also pointed out that as the result of this exercise, the former Development Information Services Division (DISD) has been changed to ICTs, Science and Technology Division (ISTD) while the work programme focus was on implementing the AISI. She highlighted the important role that ATAC members will play in assisting ECA realize its new work programme and business plan. Ms. Opoku-Mensah said, "this year's ATAC membership is a very special one, as most of you are not just experts and/or advisors but colleagues and friends who have been working with us for a while and it was only natural that at this particular moment-when we are celebrating the 10 years of AISI - we wanted ATAC to be more of a family gathering than a simple advisory committee." In addition, Ms. Opoku-Mensah informed ATAC members about the upcoming Fifth meeting of the Committee on Development Information (CODI-5) which is scheduled to take place in late April 2007, and called for their active participation and contribution during the event.

2. Introduction of participants

This first meeting of the Fifth African Technical Advisory Committee had in attendance, ATAC members and ECA Secretariat, led by Ms. Opoku-Mensah. ATAC V members and ISTD staff members participating in the meeting introduced themselves. The ATAC members present at the meeting were:

- ◆ Mr. Abdoulaye Ndiaye
- ◆ Prof. Clement Dzidonou
- ◆ Ms. Opportune Santos
- ◆ Ms. Olive Chikankheni

- ◆ Dr. Ahmed Hussien
- ◆ Mr. Ebrima Jobe

The following members could not make it:

- ◆ Mr. Massani Koroney
- ◆ Mr. Mzwandile R. Mabuza
- ◆ Dr. Nagwa El Shenawy
- ◆ Mr. Moses Bayingana
- ◆ Ms. Natalie Sunker

The list of participants of the meeting is attached in Annex 3.

3. Adoption of Agenda

Participants adopted the provisional programme agenda and proceeded with the main deliberations. The Agenda is detailed in Annex 1.

4. Introduction to ATAC, Objectives and Terms of Reference

Ms. Opoku-Mensah, Officer-in-charge, ISTD made a presentation that detailed the origins and objectives of ATAC, as well as the roles of ATAC members and their terms of reference. It was pointed out that the past ATAC, especially ATAC IV members were instrumental in supporting ECA in the WSIS process by actively participating as resource persons. The presentation also reflected on the challenges faced with regard to operations of ATAC. Ms. Opoku-Mensah pointed out that one of the lessons learnt in the process is that it takes a while for new ATAC members to become familiar with all ECA's activities in a short period of time. To address this challenge, it was decided that ATAC V members would be those experts with some familiarity with ECA's work programme – the AISI. The presentation also charted the way forward on ATAC V's contribution to the AISI.

5. Election of Officers

The meeting elected the following officers for ATAC V:

Chairperson:	Prof. Clement Dzidonou
Vice-chairperson:	Ms. Olive Chikankheni
Rapporteur:	Dr. Ahmed Hussien

Session II: Review of activities

6. Report on activities: Status, Challenges and the Way Forward

The meeting of ATAC V was organized in such a way that each member reports on their respective activities in the areas of ICT4D, and the situation in the countries where they are working in collaboration with ECA. This was aimed at sharing experiences and lessons on

activities on the ground. On the other hand, contributions from ATAC members were needed as input to two upcoming ECA publications: one focusing on AISI+10 and the other on status and impact of national e-strategies in Africa, as well as the development of eGovernment indicators and the 2007 – 2009 ISTD work programme.

6.1 Rwanda, Ghana, and Nigeria

Prof Clement Dzidonu presented a brief on the Rwanda, Ghana and Nigeria NICI's, the Ghana Scan-ICT and the e-Traditional Governance.

Rwanda

In his presentation, he advised that that the entire NICI process in Rwanda was comprised of four plans, which included the NICI-2010. He emphasized that the four plans were not mutually exclusive but were rolling plans, which were derived from the review of the NICI-2005 plan. This ensured that the NICI-2010 Plan was a continuation of the NICI-2005 Plan. The presenter advised that the NICI-2010 Plan with ECA's support had had been approved by Cabinet and had 10- pillars each translating to a sub-plan.

Ghana

The presenter advised that the Ghana ICT4D Policy, based on the NICI methodology, was approved in 2003 and the plan was currently being formulated. To facilitate policy implementation and process ownership, sectoral strategies and Ministerial ICT Policy statements had been developed. Work in progress included the translation of the 14 pillars into corresponding sub-plans and the formation of the appropriate coordination, implementation, monitoring and evaluation structures.

- *e-Traditional governance* - the presenter advised that the implementation of the network (fibre optic backbone) had been completed at the Manhyia Palace in Kumasi. The network included an e-museum and a management decision support system.
- *Scan-ICT* – the presenter advised that the outcomes of this ongoing pilot initiative were:
 - The Ghana Basket of ICT4D Indicators.
 - The Framework for Integration ICT4D Status and Impact Monitoring and Measurement Indicators into the National Statistical System.
 - The Framework for Integration ICT4D Status and Impact Monitoring and Measurement Indicators into the National Statistical System
 - The ICT4D Indicators Integration Tools, Methods and Mechanisms
 - The Ghana Core ICT4D Indicators Compilation and Analysis Demonstration Project

Nigeria

On the Nigerian ICT4D Plan development process, the presenter advised The Plan was designed to contribute to the realization of the stated socio-economic development policy priorities and

Government programmes. The ICT4D Plan-2010 was organized in terms of a number of broad policy focus areas -sub-plans.

The implementation of the programmes of the sub-plans was to be undertaken by a number of implementation agencies at the federal and the state level. Ownership of the implementation of the Plan would be at the Implementation Agency level and NITDA would play a plan implementation and coordination role as opposed to being the sole institution for implementing the Plan.

6.2 Malawi

Ms. O. T. Chikankheni, the Director of the Department of Information Systems and Technology Management Service at the Malawi Ministry of Information and Tourism, presented a paper on the Malawi NICI process. She advised that the national ICT4D mission was to facilitate the creation of an enabling environment for efficient, effective and sustainable utilisation, exploitation and development of ICTs in all sectors of the economy in order to attain information rich and knowledge based society and economy.

Some of the major objectives highlighted included, the need to improve the ICT human resource capacity of Malawi to meet the changing demands of the economy; the development of a highly competitive ICT-driven value-added services sector; the development of an export oriented ICT industry; and, the transformation of the country into an ICT aware and literate nation.

The pillars of the policy were:

- Strategic Leadership for ICT for development
- Human Capital
- Governance
- ICT Industry
- ICT Infrastructure
- Growth Sectors
- Community
- Legal and Regulatory Framework

The presenter advised that a stakeholder consultative process had led to the development of a draft policy, which was currently being reviewed by the Ministry of Finance prior to Cabinet review. In the meantime, a National ICT4D Plan was being developed with financial assistance from UNDP Malawi.

In conclusion, the presenter indicated that several ICT4D catalytic programmes were underway, especially e-government initiatives aimed at modernizing and improving the efficiency of the Public Service. The presenter also alluded to the fact that the Malawi ICT4D Policy development process had been lengthy and hoped for a speedy approval albeit with resource constraints and challenges for implementation.

In the discussion, which ensued, the role of ECA in the development of NICI policies and plans was acknowledged. It was also acknowledged that some countries with approved NICI's had not

made much headway in implementing the respective plans. Modalities of “operationalising” policies and plans - strategies for mobilizing policy implementation resources should be explored.

In response to this, it was clarified that although ECA’s support focused on developing the policy and plan, it played a significant role in the bringing development partners on board to support member States in implementing the plans. In some cases, development partners had effectively used the ECA NICI blueprint as a platform for funding activities as the process has gained a wide recognition such as the Geneva declaration and plan of action. Emphasis was placed on the need for political leadership to guarantee success on the NICI process – the need for champions.

6.3 Chad and Togo

Mr. Abdoulaye Ndiaye and Ms. Opportune Santos (NICI Consultants) made a presentation on the status, challenges and the way forward regarding the NICI process and its gender dimension in Chad and Togo.

Mr. Abdoulaye Ndiaye introduced NICI Togo by alluding to the fact that the policy is developed in an environment of political commitment at the level of the head of state who instructed for the acceleration of the process. He then presented the process, which is still going on with sectoral studies and is expected to be finalised in March 2007. Specific study is also going on to look at mainstreaming gender in the NICI and the report is expected in February 2007. Main risks that could impact on the process include: (i) political instability, (ii) conflict between Minister of telecommunication and Minister of ICT (iii) lack of focal point capacity and constant mobility of staff and no committed staff in the Ministry to the NICI process. However, he cited the high-level commitment, and strong buy-in from stakeholders including the private sector, women and youth associations.

He then continued with the process in Chad by explaining the conflict of two agencies (the former Ministry of Telecommunications and Posts and the Ministry of Communication), which was finally solved by merging the two Ministries to form a new Ministry of ICT & Posts during the last reshuffling. The process is quite identical with the Togo one but was suspended in April 2006 because of rebels attack and re-conducted in August 2006. Risks include political instability; constant mobility of focal point and lack of ICT capacity form stakeholder and the commitment from stakeholder is like Togo an opportunity for the process.

Opportune Santos followed to explain ongoing strategy to mainstream gender in the NICI processes of Togo and Chad. After highlighting the global situation of West Africa where the majority of policies do not take into consideration gender issues, she explained that current proposal for mainstreaming gender in the Togo and Chad NICIs constitutes a great opportunity to improve the situation as far as AISI implementation is concerned. The final result can be showcased and be a lesson for other processes. To sustain this exercise and ensure the full gender equity in these NICI processes she suggested that women should constitute 1/3 of the NICI committee members. She concluded with a recommendation for the two ECA Divisions ISTD and ACGD to collaborate mainstreaming ICT in some ongoing gender initiatives.

The following issues were raised during discussions:

- Mainstreaming gender in the NICI process should look at two main approaches including:
 - How ICT can be used to resolve gender inequality
 - How to put policy in place to address gender inequality, and the value ICT could bring.
- Despite the fact that there's still misunderstandings on how to deal with ICT and Telecommunication ministries even at international level, ECA could work with the African Union Commission to address the creation of two Ministers dealing with different ICT issues and related conflict to advise Head of States on the structure of their Government in ICT domain or advise to put ICT coordination under the Cabinet;
- Sensitization workshop should be organized for both countries to fine tune the strategy of mainstreaming gender into the NICI;
- Engendering the NICI process should be based on comparative advantage according to each country; mainly it needs to be oriented for empowering women, enhancing their productivity and livelihoods in their environment (Morocco, Mali and Malawi experiences were raised to highlight this point).

6.4 Ethiopia

Dr. Ahmed Hussein, CEO of HILCO in his presentation spoke of the NICI process in Ethiopia and the role of Academia as well as provided a country profile from 1983 to 1988. The main issues, which could be considered as milestones include the first stakeholder seminar on policy, organized in 1983, existing law and institution related to ICT, the conceptual NICI framework adopted in 1998 under the coordination of the Primer Minister. Unfortunately the process is still going-on; a new authority, the Ethiopian ICT Development Authority (EICTDA) was established in 2003, detailed plans and implementation strategies are designed (NICI 2010, NICI 2020), and yet to be presented to the Cabinet of Minister for approval. On the ground there are a couple of ICT-led initiatives going on in terms of Human Resource Development, infrastructure development, e-payment application, etc. As far Academia involvement is concerned, he explained that different research activities are being undertaken including, localization, the ECA-VarsityNet research activities among others. Dr. Ahmed reiterated the fact that the main hindering factors of the development of the ICT sector in Ethiopia can be attributed to various obstacles to the growth of the ICT Private Sector, which could be the driving force for development.

Main issues/recommendations raised during discussions include:

- In the policy process, can Governments empower the local Private Sector?; it has been noticed that the current ICT infrastructure growth is driven by the external private sector; Ghana, Egypt, Ethiopia, Morocco, Malawi, Senegal experiences were shared in this regard and the final consensus was to:

- Undertake a research study and organize a meeting to develop a framework to involve the Private Sector in building the Africa Knowledge economy at national and sub-regional levels;
- Niche of priorities should also be taken into consideration in devising the framework, and two approaches should be considered:
 - Using ICT for private sector development as a tool;
 - Developing the ICT private sector.
- Also, a Private Sector Development Plan should accompany the NICI process.

6.5 The Gambia

Mr. Ebrima Jobe from The Gambia made a presentation on the status of NICI implementation and the Scan-ICT project in The Gambia. He stated that a national task group composed of various stakeholders was formed to lead the NICI process in the country. Efforts were made to link the NICI process with the national development agenda (Vision 2020) as well as the PRSP process. He reported that activities are currently at the implementation stage based on the identified NICI pillars. He said that the main challenge is lack of resources, and it is planned to organize a resource mobilization roundtable, as Government resources are very limited. In addition, UNDP is being approached to support some of the programmes in the framework of the UNDAF and PRSP process.

With regard to the Scan-ICT project, Mr. Ebrima described the whole process and achievements so far including the formation of a national task force chaired by the Director of the National Statistics Office, the organization of the launching workshop, the identification of core indicators, the data collection exercise both from secondary sources (desk research) and primary sources based on the survey instruments developed for this purpose. He said that the process is at its final stages with analysis of the data and writing the final report. However, the main challenge has been that the expert who was leading the whole process from the NSO went on fellowship to the UK, and the process has been stalled. Since he was the person in charge from the very beginning and as he returns in mid December, efforts are being made to continue pressuring him to work on producing the analytical report. Due to this, Mr. Ebrima requested ECA to extend the deadline for submitting the report by mid February. The Secretariat explained that as a requirement to the normal reporting procedures to partners, a report on at least the current status of the progress made in implementing the Scan-ICT project in The Gambia should be prepared before the end of the year and submitted to ECA. Mr. Ebrima was requested to discuss further with the Secretariat regarding deadlines and the procedures.

Session IV - Review of selected current ECA activities

7. Two publications on: “10 years of the AISI” AND “NICIs: Status, challenges and the way forward”

Makane Faye and Sizo Mhlanga made a presentation on the outline for the AISI+10 publication and the NICI publication respectively, requesting ATAC members to comment on the outline and provide input. Makane Faye presented the outline of the publication, which includes:

- A preface by ECA Executive Secretary
- Origins of AISI
- NICI development in Africa - extract from the NICI publication
- ICT Measurement
- Regional Integration
- Knowledge Management and capacity building
- AISI and Stakeholders
- The World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS)
- Partnerships in implementing AISI
- Conclusions: re-engineering AISI.

The NICI publication outline include:

- A foreword by ECA Executive Secretary
- An overview on NICI
- Country case studies
- Regional and sectoral dimensions
- Development activities and NICI
- The Knowledge Economy
- Spatial Data Infrastructure (SDI)
- ICT measurement
- The status and the way forward.

Discussions/Main recommendations:

- The outlines are well presented and addressed all the areas. Most of the required information is available, there is need to do some desk research to update existing content and document lessons learnt.
- There is a need to point out very clearly about the purpose/objectives of the publications, whether as a stocktaking exercise or showcasing best practices and lessons learnt in the process to serve as resource material for further studies and chart future directions.
- Focus should be made on lessons learnt and best practices especially the lack of capacity to implement NICIs
- The preliminary results from the NICI questionnaire need to be unpacked and elaborated further to indicate the challenges in these areas.
- Countries such as Mauritius that have shown serious commitment to move forward with the knowledge economy through allocation of the necessary resources/budgets and putting in place the concrete plans should be showcased.
- It was suggested to commission an independent study on evaluating why implementing NICIs in a number of African countries was not working, and learn from lessons and re-engineer the process. This publication can supplement the NICI book.

- The idea of “new generation NICIs” may create some misunderstanding in those countries, which are already developing/implementing NICIs. Therefore, it was suggested that it would be better not to introduce it in the publication.
- Support to specific projects might be considered as viable option in addressing the challenges of implementing NICIs.
- In re-engineering the African Information Society Initiative, focus should be in implementation.
- An ISTD/ATAC retreat should be organized to review the ISTD working process, procedures and work programme culminating in the adoption of concrete and implementable proposals for the re-engineering of the AISI and mapping-out how best the ISTD can function to effectively deliver on its mandate and programmes in the post reform ECA.

8. Proposal on e-Government indicators

Afewer Temtime of ISTD/ECA presented the proposed areas for identifying e-Government indicators. He provided the background for the need of ICT indicators for e-Government including assessing e-readiness, use and impact of ICTs as well as for eStrategies formulation and implementation. He also cited several relevant recommendations such as the WSIS plan of action, Scan ICT programme, the partnership on measuring ICT4D and ECA’s role as coordinator of the e-government Task Group.

He then presented seven proposed areas of e-Government indicators, which include Public Sector Management, Delivery of public services; facilitating development of the private sector; legal and judicial reforms; policy, legal and regulatory frameworks; strengthening the capacity of parliaments and empowering local authorities.

He concluded his presentation by highlighting the purpose of the identified areas for e-Government indicators.

- ATAC to focus on core indicators for use of ICT in Government within an African perspective
- ATAC to review the proposed areas and make recommendations for a preliminary list of indicators for making government services available through ICTs.

The following issues were raised during the discussions:

- How far is the SCAN ICT programme linked with this practice? It was indicated that the SCAN methodology be used in addition to desk research.
- Some countries have recognized ICT as an investment sector providing various incentives. Will there be indicators to capture efforts made by governments to promote

ICT investment? It was pointed out that the area on policy, legal and regulatory frameworks would cover it.

- e-Government requires ICT literacy at all level, within Government as service provider and citizens at large as users of the services. Where do we measure level of ICT literacy? Indicators on literacy may be included when the indicators are structured as G2B, G2C, and G2G based on the suggestion by the Director of ISTD.
- ECA needs to put in place a strategy in the NICI process to identify ways and means to fast track e-Government programmes, especially in relation to G2G, G2B and G2C.
- A framework to guide the e-Government indicators should takes into account the broad purpose of the indicators, and more importantly the framework should be cast in the SCAN ICT “CUT” methodology, which was adopted by ECA and Scan countries in 2005.
- It was indicated that there is a need to clarify the purpose of the exercise. Once this is achieved, the indicators can be classified into two groups based on supply and demand. The supply side measures the Government’s level of e-Government investment by putting forward indicators for e-Government capacity, e-Government system development and e-Government service delivery. In the demand side indicators would be required to measure the capacity of citizens to use the services.
- One of the points raised was how we look at the acceleration of public service delivery in light of the various challenges faced by Governments.
- It was pointed out that Governments need to realize that e-Government is not about interests of development partners who are keen to support such initiatives, but it is about Governments’ relationship with its citizens, its private sector, etc.
- It was indicated that there is a need to define the framework to guide ATAC members in the process of identifying the indicators.
- Other issues raised were the relationships of these indicators with other indicators identified by other entities such as ITU; and issues of harmonization, standardization and interoperability of technology in governments. It was indicated that the topic of e-Government is not addressed by others, and was delegated to ECA, as education was delegated to UNESCO.
- It was indicated that the discussion on the indicators could be one of the topics ATAC members would deliberate on in their online discussion.

9. Partnership between ICT Team and Natural Resources Canada AND presentation on eCommunications Regulations

Mr. Omar Allam representing the Earth Sciences Sector of Natural Resources Canada (NRCan) made a presentation on the partnership between ECA and NRCan. He outlined how the alliance came into effect and its three main pillars. Current activities in Africa were (i) Land Management in the Knowledge Economy, (ii) Harnessing Science & Technology & Innovation for Public Health and (iii) Developing a National Geomatics (ICT) Framework in Support of the Senegalese NICI plan. The presentation ended with the vision for the way forward for NRCan's partnership with ECA being shared: a) leveraging expertise and support b) coordinated / harmonised approach c) progress towards global goals such as MDGs, NEPAD and G8 Africa Action Plan.

Ms. Tuula Broman, a Finnish consultant, representing ECA made a presentation about EU telecommunications regulation and competition. The EU competition law, directives and harmonisation directives were discussed. This was followed by a focus on two directives concerning neighbouring areas namely the TV without frontiers directive and the e-business directive. The presentation concluded by stressing that coordination is needed between several actors including ITU, World Bank, EU, Canada and Finland for an "all-to-all connection in Africa".

Discussions/Main recommendations:

A discussion ensued and the following points and recommendations were made:

- As a very rapid innovation cycle exists in ICTs, the economic and legal consequences of innovation should be considered in telecom regulation
- Guidelines exist in Africa which are similar in nature to the EU directives, these get updated as and when things change
- Africa is not on a par with the EU in terms of the model developed for the ICT and Telecommunications industry however best practices can be adopted
- Content needs to be regulated as convergence can identify loopholes in regulation, eg. Broadcasting over the Internet
- Africa specific challenges need to be addressed vis-à-vis issues such as convergence, a mechanism to take stock of what is out there and of measuring whether guidelines are being followed and to identify the gaps needs to be put in place
- An issue of how ECA can leverage NICI plans was raised. The bad experience of liberalization in Africa was highlighted and the need to pull donors to support clusters of countries and avoiding bad experiences was stressed. It was also recommended that harmonization should not be done at a continental level due to the large size but at the sub-regional levels.
- The case where emerging technology, such as VoIP, has not been regulated in the EU until such technology matures was highlighted. The recommendation that Africa should be regulated at a regional level was reaffirmed. It was also stressed that liberalization without regulation is a wrong approach
- The work done to operationalise the NICI plans together with CePRC was outlined
- A recommendation was put forward for ECA and NRC to work together on an approach to integrate SDI into NICIs

- It was recommended that the African Development Network, chaired by Mr. Ndiaye was a resource that ECA and NRCan can tap into.

Session V: Review of ISTD's Work Programme 2007 - 2009

10. ISTD's work programme 2007 – 2009

The secretariat made a presentation on the ISTD work programme for 2007-2009. ATAC members were informed that due to the restructuring of ECA, the new Division in charge of Information Society issues is now composed of the following three sections: ICT for Development, Geo Information and Science and Technology. The objective of the sub-programme was to strengthen and sustain the African Information Society and Knowledge Economy and develop capacity for the formulation, adaptation and implementation of appropriate science and technology programmes. The ICT for Development programme will focus on the following:

- Development of national e-strategies (NICIs) with a view to improving the capacity of African countries to formulate, implement, coordinate and evaluate policies and strategies for information for development, with consideration given to gender equality.
- Development of regional e-strategies with a view to improving capacities of Regional Economic Communities to harmonize and coordinate e-strategies in their respective sub-regions as well as spearhead development of sectoral sub-regional strategies on emerging issues.
- Development of sectoral strategies in order to enable implementation of the NICI policies and plans, which were developed over the years. Emphasis would be put in trade, government, education, and health. Development of e-security strategies would also be undertaken.
- ICT measurement will be carried out in the framework of SCAN ICT and the Partnership for Measuring ICT in order to improve capacity of African countries to collect, analyse and disseminate data on ICT4D indicators to support the policy making process, and promoting the Information Society in Africa with focus on the MDGs.
- Capacity Building will be geared to improving the capacity of member States and stakeholders in ICT4D through the Information, Science and Technology Centre for Africa (ISTCA). Training would be both awareness raising and technical. In this context, on-line training modules would be developed to enable access from all over Africa.
- Involvement of Stakeholders in the activities of the Division will be continued at the national and regional levels in order to build capacity of stakeholders in ICT4D process, including Research and Innovation activities.

- The TIGA Awards will be launched starting from 2007 in cooperation with CePRC with the objective of recognizing African Governments in the effective use of ICTs for public service delivery focusing on the following categories:
 - Public service delivery to citizens and communities
 - Improved health services through the use of ICTs
 - Improved educational services through the use of ICTs
 - Public Private Partnership in economic and financial e-Service delivery
- Studies and publications will be carried out in several domains of relevance to the Division's work programme.
- Servicing of Intergovernmental and Expert Bodies
- Field project on emerging issues.

In this session, Girma Dessalegn from ECA demonstrated the e-learning platform under development by ISTCA outlining its features, design, and functionality. He mentioned that the platform is being developed under the framework of the African eLearning Initiative (<http://www.epolafrica.org/elearnafrica>). As it is a work in progress, ATAC members were requested to provide their comments and feedback.

After the presentation, the Committee was requested to review the work programme, after which they discussed several issues.

ATAC members sought clarifications on the process of preparing; presenting and publicizing the ISTD work programme as well as the composition, governance structure and mandate of the new Division. They also congratulated the secretariat for a detailed presentation.

ISTD staff gave the necessary clarifications and expressed the need to involve ATAC members in supporting implementation of the programme, especially activities dealing with extra budgetary resources. On publicizing the ICT4D programme, ATAC members were informed that several channels were used including the CODI meetings, the AISI websites, various discussion groups, international fora, newsletters and travel of regional advisors on mission in member States.

Copies of the ECA Business Plan was handed over to ATAC members who reviewed and congratulated the Executive Secretary for work well done and promised to lend all their support in advising on the implementation of the ISTD sub programme. In this context, there were discussions on the need to bring GIS and S & T to rally around ICT in order to come up with more comprehensive frameworks on STI in member States building on the NICI process. As a result, ATAC members asked ECA to convene a retreat, which would look deeper in the linkages between NICI, RICI and SICI. They also emphasized the need to consolidate GIS as an integral part of the NICI process.

On the African eLearning Initiative, ATAC members congratulated ECA and requested that the online modules be extended to the entire Commission and provided with required staff.

On the TIGA Awards, ATAC members promised to participate in the nomination process and ensured that African Governments are on board.

Session VI: Closing

11. Recommendations on the way forward

The meeting made a series of recommendations for future action. These recommendations are listed in Annex 2.

12. Date & venue of next meeting, and AOB

Next meeting will be held in 2007. The exact date and venue will be decided at a later stage. However, ATAC members will be participating in CODI V, which is scheduled to take place in late April in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

13. Closing remarks

Chairperson of ATAC, Professor Clement Dzidonou thanked all the participants for their active participation and exchange of knowledge and experiences. He said all members are committed to supporting ECA in implementing the AISI as described in the ATAC ToR. It was noted that the meeting had been enlightening on the ongoing activities and the members would actively digest the information so as to offer expert advice on the variety of issues discussed.

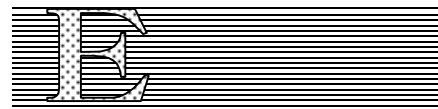
In her closing remarks, Ms Aida Opoku-Mensah thanked the members on her behalf and also on behalf of the ECA Executive Secretary, Mr. Abdoulie Janneh. She requested ATAC members to provide ECA with statements or a paragraph of their comments and feedback on the ECA Business Plan, which will serve as the basic framework for ECA's work in the coming years. She emphasized the importance of the central advocacy role played by the members in terms of policy and intellectual leadership support to member countries. She also supported the suggestion made by members to organise a retreat for ATAC and the secretariat so as to review the business plan, NICI methodology in particular the private sector development component, as well as re-engineering AISI and recommendations of the meeting. Measurable outputs were required from ECA and ATAC members. As experts in their fields, members should be in a position to contribute to the successful execution of the work program. Ms. Aida Opoku-Mensah stressed the role of ATAC members in supporting ECA in reviewing its products such as the AISI+10 and NICI publications. Finally, she highlighted on the AISI ambassadorial role of ATAC members and requested for their active participation in CODI 5 and the Technology in Government in Africa (TIGA) Awards programme.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:30 pm on 14 December 2006.

Annex 1 : ATAC V Agenda



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ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR AFRICA

AGENDA

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Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
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AGENDA

Tuesday, 12 December 2006

Session I:

Opening Session

14:30 – 14:50

Welcoming and introductory remarks
Ms. Aida Opoku-Mensah, OIC, ISTD

14:50 – 15:10

Introduction of participants

15:10 – 15:25

Introduction to ATAC, objectives and Term of References
Ms. Aida Opoku-Mensah, OIC, ISTD

15:25 – 15:40

Election of Officers (Chair person, vice Chair & Rapporteur)

15:40 – 16:00

Coffee Break

Session II:

Review of activities

16:00 – 16:30

Report on activities: Status, Challenges and the Way Forward

Ghana: NICI, SCAN-ICT & ICTs for Traditional Governance

Nigeria: NICI

Rwanda: NICI and SCAN-ICT

Prof. C. Dzidonu, NICI Consultant, International Institute for Information Technology (INIIT), Ghana

Malawi: NICI

Ms. O. Chikankheni, Department of Information Systems & Technology Management Services, Malawi

16:30 – 17:00 Q&A session

Wednesday, 13 December 2006

Session III:

Review of activities (Cont'd)

9:00 – 10:30

Report on activities: Status, Challenges and the Way Forward

Togo and Chad: NICI and Gender

Mr. A. Ndiaye and Ms. O. Santos, NICI Consultants

Ethiopia: Academia

Dr. Ahmed Hussein, HiLCOE, Ethiopia

Gambia: NICI & SCAN-ICT

Mr. Ebrima Jobe, Department of state for communication and information technology (DOSCIT), Gambia

10: 30– 10:45

Coffee Break

10:45 – 13:00

Q&A Session

13:00 – 14:30

Lunch Break

Session IV:

Review of selected current ECA activities

14:30 – 15:00

Publication on 10 years of the AISI
Makane Faye, ISTD

Publication on NICIs: Status, challenges and the way forward
Sizo Mhlanga, ISTD

15:00- 16:00

Q&A Session

16:00 – 16:15

Coffee Break

16:15 – 16:45

Proposal on e-government indicators
Afework Temtime, ISTD

16:45 – 17:15

Q&A Session

- 17:15 – 17:30** Partnership between ICT Team and Natural Resources Canada
Mr. Omar Allam, Natural Resources Canada
- 17:30 - 17:45** eCommunications Regulations
*Ms. Tuula Broman, Telecommunications Regulation
Expert/Consultant, ISTD*
- 17:45 - 18:15** Q&A Session

Thursday 14, December 2006

- Session V:** **Review of ISTD's Work Programme 2007 - 2009**
- 9:00 – 9:20** Presentation of ISTD's work programme 2007 – 2009
Eskedar Nega, ISTD
- 9:20 – 10:30** Q&A session
- 10:30 – 10:45** **Coffee Break**
- Session VI:** **Closing**
- 10:45 – 11:15** Recommendations on the way forward
- 11:15 – 12:00** Date & venue of next meeting, and AOB
- 12:00 – 12:30** Closing remarks

Annex 2: First Meeting of ATAC V: Recommendations

Annual Meeting of the Fifth Vth African Technical Advisory Committee (ATAC)

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

12 - 14 December 2006

United Nations Conference Center

Following a three-day meeting, members of the African Technical Advisory Committee on the AISI, adopted the following recommendations under different topics:

General

- In re-engineering the African Information Society Initiative, focus should be in implementation.
- An ISTD/ATAC retreat should be organized to review the ISTD working process, procedures and work programme culminating in the adoption of concrete and implementable proposals for the re-engineering of the AISI and mapping-out how best the ISTD can function to effectively deliver on its mandate and programmes in the post reform ECA.

Review of ECA activities on Information Society: Challenges and the Way Forward

- ECA's NICI development methodology and framework, which it has developed and refined over the years, should be vigorously promoted to facilitate the NICI development process in member States.
- ATAC should assist ECA to continue to promote high-level leadership in the NICI countries, including promotion of the NICI development process.
- ECA should continue to use its convening power to support member countries in the development and implementation of their NICI policies and plans and encourage the countries to put in place suitable and appropriate national organizational structures to support implementation of their NICI policies and action plans.
- Support to specific sectoral projects might be considered as viable options in addressing the challenges of implementing NICIs
- Although ATAC recognizes that ECA by itself does not have financial resources to support the implementation of NICI policy programmes and initiatives in member States, it still felt that ECA can assist in resource mobilization using its convening power targeted at members of the Partnership for Information and Communication Technology in Africa (PICTA) and other development partners. ATAC acknowledges that without these efforts by ECA it will be difficult for the NICI countries to roll-out the implementation of their NICI programmes and plan actions.
- There is need to find ways and means to fast track the NICI process in some countries notwithstanding challenges faced by ECA and the NICI consultants.
- ECA should look into ways and means to have deliberate plans for local private sector development strategy as part of the NICI at national and sub-regional levels. It is

proposed that ECA leverages on its partnership with the African Development Bank (ADB) to facilitate key involvement of the private sector in the implementation of the NICI programmes in member countries.

- In order to avoid conflict between various Government Agencies and Ministries dealing with ICT issues in a given member State, it is recommended to include in the NICI committees all relevant government agencies and to provide for additional focal points, thus reducing frustrations.
- ECA should intensify its coordinating role as per the NICI process in member countries to avoid duplication of efforts that could result from different donor agencies and development partners trying concurrently to assist member States in developing separate NICI policies and programmes.
- The need to address gender issues as an integral component of the NICI process should be encouraged with a focus on the following two main approaches:
 - How ICT can be used to resolve gender inequality issue
 - How to put policy in place to address Gender inequality created by ICT
- There is the need for ECA to identify and encourage member States to mainstream into the NICI process best practices resulting from the implementation of the AISI to-date

Review of selected current ECA activities

Publication on 10 years of the AISI and NICI publication

- There is a need to clearly spell out the purpose/objectives of the publications, as stocktaking exercise and showcasing best practices and lessons learnt in the process to serve as resource material for further studies and chart future directions.
- As a complement to the NICI book, ISTD should commission a study to establish the challenges that member states are facing in rolling-out their NICI process and propose ways to address those challenges with the assistance of ECA.

Proposal on e-government indicators

- A deliberate sensitization and awareness raising activity should be launched to assist governments to realize the importance of e-government and the backstopping needed to make it happen.
- ECA needs to put in place a strategy in the NICI process to identify ways and means to fast track e-government programmes, especially in relation to G2G, G2B and G2C.
- ATAC recommends that a framework to guide the process of identifying suitable e-Gov indicators should take into account the broad purpose of the indicators, and more importantly the SCAN-ICT-2 Tool Kit 'CUT' Model should be adopted as a suitable framework for these indicators

Session on Partnership between ECA & NRC and Telecom Regulation

- Africa specific challenges need to be addressed vis-à-vis convergence and competition; in this regard harmonization should be implemented at the sub-regional and regional levels

- Natural Resource Canada (NRC) should work closely with ECA in order to devise a joint-approach in the integration of SDI into the e-strategies of countries, which are recipients of the NRC support.
- ECA should identify African competencies, including the Network of African Developers, to work on ICT projects.

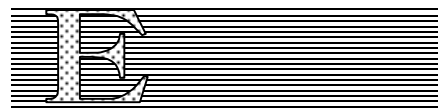
Review of ISTD's Work Programme 2007 – 2009

- ATAC in its advisory role to the ISTD needs to take into account the new focus and orientation of the ISTD resulting from the restructuring of the ECA divisions. In this respect the advisory role of ATAC should encompass issues relating to ICTs, Geo Information and Science and Technology – representing the constituent functional Divisions of the ISTD
- ATAC endorses the ISTD's intention to in addition to supporting the development of NICI policies and strategies in member States to also facilitate the selective development and the implementation of targeted and catalytic sectoral ICT programmes in areas like e-education, e-commerce and trade, e-government and e-security
- ATAC recommends that ISTD should take an integrated approach in its operations and in particular, Geo-information should be considered as an integral part of the NICI process.
- ISTD should further the development of on-line learning at ECA and include material from other Divisions.
- ITCA should include French language in its online course modules and provide training to francophone member States.

On the ISTD Business Plan

- ATAC commends the ISTD for putting in place a comprehensive and innovative Business Plan to support and guide its operations in the coming years. ATAC has undertaken to work with the Division in implementing this Business Plan

Annex 3: List of Participants



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UNITED NATIONS ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL

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ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR AFRICA

Annual Meeting of the Vth African Technical Advisory Committee (ATAC)

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

12 - 14 December 2006, United Nations Conference Center- **Large Briefing Room**

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