FINAL COMMUNIQUE (AC02)

The Administrative Council of the African Telecommunications Union (ATU) held its second Ordinary Session in Nairobi, Kenya , from 23-27 April, 2001.

Member States of the Administration Council present were:-
North Africa **:** **Egypt.**
West Africa: **Benin, Burkina Faso, Cote d'Ivoire, Mali, Nigeria.**
Central Africa**:** **Burundi, Cameroon.**
East Africa**:** **Ethiopia, Tanzania, Uganda.**
Southern Africa**:** **Lethoso, Malawi, Zambia.**

The following Member States were absent:-
North Africa**:** **Tunisia,**
West Africa: **Ghana**
Central Africa**:** **Central African Republic, Congo DR**
East Africa**:** **Sudan,**

The following Member States and Organisations attended the meeting as observers:-
Kenya, Liberia, South Africa, OAU, RASCOM, ARSO, Africa Connection and COMESA. The opening ceremony was presided over by Hon. Mathias Keah, MP, who represented the Guest of Honour, **Hon. Musalia Mudavadi, EGH, MP**. In his key- note address, the honourable Minister highlighted key issues relating to the telecommunication development in Africa, particularly the need to increase tele-density so as to enhance economic growth and help bridge the ever widening digital gap and info-communications gap between Africa and the rest of the world. He urged the re-doubling of efforts to address this problem.

He re-affirmed Kenya's support for the Union and indicated that steps were being taken to review and enhance the Protocol Agreement between the Government of Kenya and the Union. He also urged other Member States to give maximum support to the Union in order for it to meet its objectives.

The Chairman of the Administrative Council Mr. Gendy Mousa, in welcome remark he expressed appreciation on the behalf of the Government of Egypt to the Government and people of Kenya for accepting to host the Council meeting in Nairobi. He noted with happiness the launching of ATU Continental Directory. With regard to the financial support o the Union, he assured the Council that his Administration appreciates the role of the Union and would resolve the arrears situation this year and urged other Administrations to institute similar measures so that the Union may be able to implement its programmes for greater African economic integration.

The Secretary General, Mr. Jan Mutai welcomed the delegates to Nairobi and wished them an enjoyable stay. He expressed special thanks to the Guest of Honour for officiating at the Council session. He also thanked the Government and people of Kenya for the tremendous support extended to the Union since the temporary location of the Secretariat to Nairobi. He referred to the innovations being introduced at the Council session namely:-
▪ Award of commendation certificates to administrations of Member States and officials who had made significant contribution in the past to the development of the Union.
▪ Information session on ICT initiatives in Africa providing a forum for discussion of strategies by various partners which impact on ATU's work.
▪ Structure of Committee meetings to facilitate in-depth discussions of issues prior to consideration of the respective subjects by the Council.

He highlighted key landmark activities related to the Union which included:
▪ Launch of the African Connection Centre for Strategic Planning.
▪ Effective participation of ATU delegations at WTSA-2000, Montreal, Canada.

- Joint ATU/ITU Regulatory Forum, Botswana, October 2000.
- Launch of ATU Website, ATU Continental Directory and ATU Newsletter.

The Council elected the following bureau:-

Chairman: Burundi (represented by Mr Nestor MISIGARO, Director General, Telecommunication Regulatory Authority).

Vice Chairman: Nigeria (represented by Eng. Ernest NDUKWE, Executive Vice Chairman/CEO of Nigerian Communication Commission).

The Information Session on ICT initiatives in Africa was a novelty indeed as it provided exposure on many interesting and relevant topics namely:-

- OAU reform and economic integration in Africa and catalytic role of ICT.
- Global partnerships – a presentation by a representative of the European Conference on Posts and Telecommunications prospects for co-operation with ATU with regard to harmonisation of positions at international treaty forums.
- Cross border connectivity issues within the context of African Connection Projects, RASCOM Satellite Project and COMESA Terrestrial Project.

Council considered all the agenda items and made resolutions and/or decisions as follows: -

- It approved the Programme Budget for the financial year 2001/2002 amounting to US$833,635.
- It established two Council Committees, one dealing with Strategic Planning (CC/SP) and the other with Partnership Programmes (CC/PP).
- The CC/SP will among other things prepare Business and operational Plans for the following Special Purpose Implementation Organs: -
    - ATU infocom :   . A Business Unit to deal with ICT Exhibitions.
                    . A facility to Conferences and Publications.
    - ATU Radio Regulatory Consultative Board: to foster the prudent use of scarce spectrums resources and co-ordinate effective participation of Members in radiocommunication treaty Conferences.
    - ATU Academy: in collaboration with Association of African Universities and other partners, develop education and training programmes to fill in the knowledge and skills gaps in the continent.
    - Project Co-ordination Centre: To provide co-ordination services to investors and promoters of ICT infrastructure in the continent.
    - ATU ICT Standards Partnership: To work hand in hand with the African Regional Standardisation Organisation and others in the development priority ICT Standards with initial focus on public access.

- The CC/SP will also steer the process for preparation of ATU Strategic Plan 2002/2006.

- The CC/PP will among other things do the following: -

    - Prepare agenda and documents for the first Technical and Development Conference.
    - Approve MOU's and joint Work Programmes with regional and global partners (RASCOM/CEPT/APT/CITEL,etc.).
    - Prioritise preparatory programmes for ITU events (WTDC 2002/PP 2002/ WRC 2003, etc.).