

Final Communiqué (ESAC01)

The Administrative Council of the African Telecommunications Union (ATU) held its First Extraordinary Session in Nairobi, Kenya, from 22 - 24 January 2002.

The following 14 Member States of the Administrative Council present were:

North Africa	-	Egypt
West Africa	-	Benin, Burkina Faso, Cote d'Ivoire, Ghana, Mali, Nigeria
Central Africa	-	Burundi, Cameroon,
East Africa	-	Ethiopia, Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda
Southern Africa	-	Zambia.

Kenya also attended in its capacity as host country.

The following Member States of the Administrative Council sent apologies:

North Africa	-	Tunisia
Central Africa	-	Central African Republic, Congo (DR)
Southern Africa	-	Lesotho, Malawi

The following Members States, Associate Member and Organisation attended the meeting as observer:

Chad, Senegal, Telkom Kenya Limited, CEPT and African Connection

The Council was honoured by the presence of Hon. Augustine Mwape, Minister of Transport and Communications, Republic of Zambia and Chairman of the ATU Conference of Plenipotentiaries who presided over the opening ceremony and Hon. John Achuliwor MP, Deputy Minister of Communications and Technology, Republic of Ghana.

In his address to Council, Hon. Mwape drew attention to the great economic challenges facing Africa in spite of its abundant human and natural resources. He recalled the great vision of our forefathers in setting up machinery for the African Union. He stressed that it now behooves each and everyone and in particular the African technocrats to strive to achieve the noble objectives.

He drew attention to the strategic importance of the info-communications infrastructure to economic development and added that the Council as an important organ of the Union had a critical role to play in fostering these objectives.

The Hon. John Achuliwor, Deputy Minister of Communications and Technology, Republic of Ghana, added his voice to the appeal for African technicians to adopt practical measures in enhancing the growth of info-communication technology in the African region. He stressed the need for effective participation at international fora to ensure that Africa's hope and aspirations are realised.

In his remarks, the Chairman welcomed delegates to the session and expressed appreciation to the Government and People of Kenya for hosting this 1st Extraordinary Session of the ATU Administrative Council.

Lastly, the Secretary General, drew attention to the significance of this Council Session whose principal objective was to adopt an effective consultative process for evolving African Common Proposals/Positions for international conferences.

Significant results were achieved by Council following intensive discussions on the practical modalities of evolving cost effective approaches to conference co-ordination strategies. Having considered various possible alternatives, the Council unanimously agreed to adopt a mechanism that would employ co-ordination through Sub-regional Economic Communities (Sub-RECs) as the main focal point for initiating conference opinions. The Secretariat would maintain close working relationships in this regard and would also interact with Member States in order to establish harmonised positions. A resolution outlining detailed approaches in this regard was adopted.

A review of all other impending conferences was also made and the appropriate guidelines given.

The Council noted the existence of a Committee for the Strategic Planning whose membership had been enlarged and open to other members. This Committee would develop a new ATU Strategic Plan for 2002-2006 and also consider the preparatory processes for the First ATU Technical and Development Conference, the Celebration of the 25th Anniversary of ATU and the ATU Conference of Plenipotentiaries in Soudan.

A resolution was adopted urging the Republic of Sudan to do its utmost to host the ATU Conference of Plenipotentiaries before the ITU Plenipotentiary Conference of Marrakech.

The Council adopted the following theme for the 2002 ATU Day Celebrations: *"Africa and the Global Info-communications Technology Revolution: **Opportunities and Challenges**"*.

Done in Nairobi, Thursday, 24 January 2002
