

# PRESS PRESS

Release

28<sup>th</sup> September 2001

## **Press Release announcing the conclusion of an MOU between ATU and RASCOM for Technical Co-operation in the development of satellite industry in Africa.**

The African Telecommunications Union (ATU), the specialised agency of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) responsible for the co-ordination of the development of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) in Africa is delighted to announce that it has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Regional African Satellite Communications Organisation (RASCOM), the organisation that is responsible for planning and installation of a dedicated satellite communication system to cater for telecommunications, radio and television broadcasting needs for Africa.

The purpose of establishing the MOU is to create a base on which ATU and RASCOM will co-operate in undertaking joint projects that benefit their respective membership. In this respect, the joint projects will be from the following areas of co-operation:

### - Satellite Education and Training:

ATU and RASCOM will establish a joint project that will work with the Association of African Universities (AAU) for developing curricula/courses to fill the satellite skills gaps. This project 'ATU Academy' will also create networking platform for education and training institutions owned by Member States for the evolution of priority training courses/programmes in satellite communications to meet present and emerging skills requirements. ATU and RASCOM will cooperate in search and administration of scholarships and internships for deserving students in satellite communications.

### -Satellite Industries:

The two parties will cooperate in promoting satellite-related industries in Africa. Special attention will be given to responding to special needs of small and medium enterprises in accessing and developing intellectual property in the field.

### -Stakeholders Forum:

The parties commit to establish a stakeholders forum to bring together policy-makers, regulators, and operators from time to time to deliberate on strategies to be used in harnessing satellite technologies to bridge the digital divide whilst contributing to creation of wealth to alleviate poverty. The forum 'African Radiocommunication Forum' will also address the challenges of global treaty-making to ensure Africa gets rightful share of orbital resources and spectrum for launching its own satellites.

### -RASCOM System- Services and products:

The synergies of the parties will be used to ensure that the services and products of the RASCOM system are used fully and optimally to expand crossborder and rural connectivity from day one the system is online. This initiative of African Governments launched in 1992 is approaching the commercial phase and all stakeholders are being rallied around to ensure it fulfills the vision of its founders.

Done in Nairobi 28/9/2001



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