



## SG's Speeches / Statements 2000

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2.	20 - June 2000	Opening Ceremony of the 1 <sup>st</sup> Administrative Council Meeting	Nairobi, Kenya
3.	17 January 2000	Handover of Office ceremony between Mr. Mamadou Keita and Mr. Jan Mutai	Grand Regency Hotel, Nairobi

**STATEMENT BY THE SECRETARY GENERAL OF AFRICAN  
TELECOMMUNICATIONS UNION, MR. JAN MUTAI, AT THE OPENING  
CEREMONY**

- Our Guest of Honour, Mr. Samuel Chepkong'a, the Director General of the Communication Commission of Kenya;
- Hon. Ministers here present;
- Chairman of Administrative Council;
- Your Excellencies Ambassadors and High Commissioners;
- Distinguished Representatives of OAU, ITU, RASCOM and AFRALTI;
- Distinguished Councillors, Delegates and Observers;
- Ladies and Gentlemen

It is indeed a great pleasure for me to welcome you to our first Administrative Council Meeting in the new millennium. For visitors to Kenya it is a special 'karibu' to our presently dry-spelled country and to the bustling city of Nairobi. Please feel at home, among your brothers and sisters in the continent.

I wish to sincerely thank our Guest of Honour today, Mr. Samuel Chepkong'a who is the Director General of the Communication Commission of Kenya – the telecoms regulatory authority for Kenya. We appreciate your interest and support to the Union including finding time in your very busy schedule to come and give a Keynote Address and officially open our meeting. At this juncture, may I also express our appreciation for the support we received from you and your staff in preparation and sponsorship of this event. We extend similar appreciation to the Managing Director of Telkom Kenya Ltd, Mr. Augustine Cheserem and his staff for providing logistical facilities.

Our Guest of Honour, Sir, please convey our gratitude to the Government and people of Kenya for hosting the technical wing and temporary headquarters of the Union and for coming to its support in times of need. We look forward to continued fruitful co-operation, for many years to come.

Our GOH, Distinguished Councillors, we meet today with an extensive work programme which will be conducted in a three day time frame, in a business like manner. We have chosen this approach in order to conserve resources, and to introduce private sector practices, since one of the priority items on the Agenda is the Launch of Associate membership recruitment drive. Private sector participation in regional and global organisation is now the norm. This was recognised by the Ministers for Communication when they adopted the new enabling Constitution and Convention of the Union in the last Conference of Plenipotentiaries held in Cape Town, South Africa. The Ministers also resolved that the scale of contributions for the new Associate Member category, shall be based on that of the respective Member States.

Distinguished Councillors, another unique agenda is that of the recruitment of new Management Team members that will join the Secretary General in steering the process of restructuring and delivery of services of real value to members. Seasoned business and telecom professionals will be required to head the new directorates (or sectors) of Development and Technology. Also to be recruited are managers for a proposed Business Services-Unit and head of Finance and Administration.

Distinguished Councillors, we aspire to be an 'e-organisation' in keeping with the global trends of 'e-business' and 'e-government'. Thus we have provided in the capital expenditure budget for installation of an 'intranet' services network to link the Secretariat with its members. The proposals include plans for piloting and eventual deployment of a video-conference network for the Union. We shall be trying this form of meetings-platform because we believe it would save on airline and hotel costs which

presently limit participation by many of our members in regional and global treaty-making and standards-setting conferences (e.g. ITU & WTO).

Distinguished Councillors, our Agenda as required in the Convention covers all the basic work of an Administrative Council including :

- Review of activities of last Financial Year 1999-2000
- ATU's Strategic Plan
- Programme Budget for coming financial 2000/2001.

However, what will be different is the approach and structure we have used in the documentation. We have adopted an 'Action Matrix' format which gives greater clarity on progress to date and accountabilities and responsibilities for next steps towards full implementation. We are keen to develop and use innovative ways of tracking and accelerating implementation of the decisions and resolutions that we make in our meetings.

Distinguished Councillors, we shall also be challenged in this meeting to find solutions for strengthening the financial base of the Union. It is a given fact that we would all like Africa to have a voice in the international treaty-making and standards-setting conferences. But we cannot do this if we do not have strong continental Institutions to co-ordinate 'common proposals' for Africa. The other continents in the world have found answers, ways and means for financially supporting their continental organisations. We only need to review the contributions of CEPT for Europe, APT for Asia, CITELE for Americas at the last World Radio Conference in Turkey, May this year, to see how 'treaty-making' is done in the era of globalisation.

ATU could not participate despite having booked tickets and hotel accommodation because it lacked funds to do so. At the same time, Member States of this Council owed the Union more than US\$ 1.3 million in arrears as at 31.05.2000. The way forward is clear for African participation in the global arena. We have to strengthen the financial base of the Union so that it can fulfil its vision and mission of making Africa an equal and active participant in the Global Information Economy. In this regard, the Council has a Key and pivotal role to play in fulfilling obligations to the Union themselves and in sensitising similar response from Members in their respective regions.

Finally, may I thank you, Distinguished Councillors, for your tremendous support to the Secretariat and wish you fruitful deliberation in the next three days and concrete actions thereafter. We are at your service at all times.

'Asante sana'.

JKM/20-6-00

REMARKS OF THE INCOMING SECRETARY GENERAL OF AFRICAN TELECOMMUNICATION UNION (ATU) MR. JAN MUTAI ON THE OCCASION OF ATU HANDOVER OF OFFICE CEREMONY AT GRAND REGENCY HOTEL ON MONDAY 17<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY 2000.

- Hon. Prof. Nkandu Luo – Minister for Communications and Transport of Zambia and Chairperson of ATU Conference of Plenipotentiaries.
- Hon. Musalia Mudavadi – Minister for Information, Transport and Communications of Kenya.
- Hon. Dieudonné Sow– Assistant Minister for Communications of Mali.
- Outgoing Secretary General, Mr. Minemba Mamadou KEITA.
- Your Excellencies the Ambassadors and Members of Diplomatic Missions of Africa.
- Chairmen of CCK, TKL, POSTA and other Organisations Leaders.
- Director General of CCK, Managing Director of TKL and Postmaster General of POSTA and other Chief Executives.
- Distinguished Guests.
- Ladies and Gentlemen.

I am very delighted today to receive the instruments of my new job as Secretary General of the new Union, and take this first opportunity to share with you some thoughts and indeed my vision on how the new Union can unlock the potential for prosperity of Africa in the new Millennium.

But before I do so, may I once again thank the Ministers for Communications who elected me with such overwhelming support last December in Cape Town, South Africa. I am truly grateful for the challenge and trust bestowed on me and will do my utmost to reciprocate through dedicated service to the Union, that meets the satisfaction of all stakeholders.

My gratitude goes to His Excellency Honourable Daniel Arap Moi, the President of the Republic of Kenya, for nominating me as Kenyan candidate to vie for Secretary General position.

I am equally thankful for the tremendous support for my candidature by the Ministers, Permanent Secretaries and Staff involved in the Ministry of Information, Transport and Communications and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs plus Diplomatic Mission in South Africa.

Special thanks goes to the Chief Executives and Staff of CCK and TKL for the very special way they contributed to the success of my candidature.

The potential for prosperity in Africa is truly tremendous in the new millennium, given the ongoing thrust for policy reform and market restructuring that is sweeping across the continent.

Considering that Africa has 12% of global population but only 2% of the telephone lines, the investment potential for technology providers is over USD 60 billion just to bring the continent to the global average teledensity. The new revenues for network operators will exceed these sums on an annual basis given the very high return on capital per line in the region. With convergence of digital technologies, Africa will not need to build separate networks for telecommunications, computing and broadcasting and thus can rapidly leap forward to the Global information Economy.

To unlock this potential, the Union will move rapidly to implement strategies approved by the 4<sup>th</sup> Extraordinary Session of the Conference of Plenipotentiaries of PATU on 7<sup>th</sup> December 1997, the highlights of which are to:

- Widen the membership base of the Union by admitting a new category defined as Associate Members from the private sector network operators. This will open a

new era of public and private sector partnership in growing telecom networks in Africa.

- Restructure the General Secretariat of the Union to create the necessary organisation focus for innovative implementation of agreed action plans with a new sense of urgency.
- Sustain evolution of policy and regulatory frameworks to enhance investment flows into national and continental networks. Care will be taken to ensure that the regulatory frameworks developed are transparent and predictable, so as to consistently protect consumer interest, improve investor confidence and facilitate accelerated fulfilment of universal access obligations.
- Develop licensing framework for cross-border connectivity and continental backbone network operations and service provision.
- Accelerate investment flows and operationalise continental telecom backbone projects which include : RASCOM Satellite, AFRICA ONE Submarine fibre optic cable; PANAFTEL micro-wave system and COMTEL micro-wave ATM network.
- Adopt, internalise and implement the vision and missions of the Union:
  - ❖ To make Africa an equal and active participant in the Global Information Society.
  - ❖ To promote the rapid development of info-communication industry in Africa to achieve universal access in addition to full broadband inter-country connectivity in an efficient and effective manner.

With these remarks, may I call upon the new stakeholders of the Union (Policy Makers, Regulators, Operators, Service Providers, Technology Providers including Education and Training providers) to be active in providing solutions for linking African capitals by fibre optic cable in our journey towards an "African Information Economy".

Finally, I wish to pay tribute to the outgoing Secretary General, Mr. Minemba Mamadou KEITA, for successfully steering the Union in the last five years especially through the rough and tumble of temporary relocation in Nairobi and the re-structuring exercises and initiatives.

May I also wish him every success in his endeavours back home in Mali.

Thank you.