



SG's Speeches / Statements 2002

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#	Date	Event / Title	Venue
1.	13 th May 2002	Opening Ceremony of the ATU Administrative Council	Nairobi Safari club Hotel, Nairobi
2.	13 th – 16 th August 2002	Opening Ceremony of the COMESA's 1 st ICT Policy and Regulatory Workshop	KCCT, Nairobi
3.	28 th August 2002	Opening Ceremony of the 1 st Ordinary Session of the Conference of Plenipotentiaries	KCCT, Nairobi
4.	7 th December 2002	Occasion of Africa's Telecommunications Day	Nairobi, Kenya



Remarks by Mr. Jan Mutai, Secretary General of African Telecommunications Union at COMESA's 1st ICT Policy and Regulatory Workshop at KCCT, Nairobi 13th – 16th August 2002

- Hon. Musalia Mudavadi, Minister of Transport & Communication
- Mr. Erastus Mwencha, Secretary General COMESA
- Mr. Samuel Chepkong'a, Director General CCK,
- Director USAID –REDSO
- Distinguished Speakers and Delegates
- Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am honoured and indeed gratified to have this opportunity to make a few remarks at this landmark workshop for harmonization of policy and regulatory frameworks for ICTs in the COMESA region. This initiative is very much appreciated as we, in this continent, seek for practical ways and means, of bridging the digital divide, within and between, our countries.

In this age of globalization, access to information and communication technologies is no longer a luxury, but a critical component of social and economic development. Thus all who took part in making this workshop a reality, are to be congratulated, especially the host country, Kenya, the organizers, COMESA and the sponsors USAID.

This workshop is particularly welcome, as it builds on the successes, of efforts in other regional economic communities namely SADC and ECOWAS. SADC harmonization together with the regulatory association TRASA is a world-wide success story that is being replicated continentally and elsewhere. It was the benchmark for the WATRA launch in May 2002 Bamako, Mali. As a Union, we are carrying forward the message of harmonization and regulatory associations to other regional economic communities in North and Central Africa. This approach is consistent with the newly launched African Union, that recognizes RECs, as building blocks for Africa's unity and solidarity.

With harmonized policies as first step, we hope the RECs, will move rapidly, to establish common markets for ICTs, so that operators and service providers have a larger field to operate in: With larger markets, will come economies of scale, and

lower costs for consumers. This will make ICTs more affordable and therefore the benefits of information society that is enabled by ICTs will reach more people.

In the meanwhile, we hope the harmonization discussions this week will deal with issues of joint frequency spectrum planning and mutual recognition of type approvals.

Also important is the progressive introduction of competition in provision of cross-border backbone carrier services. Whilst the end consumer has enjoyed the choice in mobile phone access for example, corporates have had limited capacity and choice in establishing private networks across borders. Working towards a "one-stop-shop" approach for licensing cross-border VSAT, and fibre-optic operators should be part of the deliberations in this or future workshops.

Formation of regulators associations with very light secretariat structure is to be preferred. In our continent, sustaining new organizations has been very challenging. Building institutional capacity requires resources that are not readily available. However, as a mechanism for sustaining the drive for common ICT markets and co-operation at global ICT decision-making, regulatory associations are ideal. Infact, as issues at global level get more complex, prior preparation at national, sub-regional and regional level are crucial if Africa is to have a voice on issues of its prime concern. At ATU, we have established an African Common Proposals (ACP) consultation process for international ICT conferences that is bottom up from national levels. For the process to work effectively, it will require the associations to be in the loop to harmonize positions at regional economic community level. We are therefore looking forward to engaging the COMESA Regulators Associations in the process for building a stronger presence and voice at international ICT decision making processes.

Once more, may I thank the organizers for inviting me to participate, wish all the participants fruitful deliberations and look forward to the successful outcomes of the workshop.

Thank you for your attention.

JKM/12-08-02

**ADDRESS BY THE SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE AFRICAN
TELECOMMUNICATIONS UNION (ATU), MR. JAN MUTAI AT THE OFFICIAL
OPENING CEREMONY OF THE 1ST ORDINARY SESSION OF THE
CONFERENCE OF PLENIPOTENTIARIES, NAIROBI, ON WEDNESDAY 28TH**

- Our Guest of Honour, H. E. Hon. Daniel T. Arap Moi, President of the Republic of Kenya, represented by Hon. Musalia Mudavadi, Minister for Transport and Communications;
- Mr. Chairman, CPL, Hon. Minister of Transport and Communications, Zambia;
- Honourable Ministers and Deputy Ministers;
- Your Excellencies the Ambassadors and High Commissioners;
- Distinguished delegates;
- Ladies and gentlemen;

It is a great honour and pleasure for me, Guest of Honour, to welcome you and thank you most sincerely, for having availed time, in your very busy schedule, to grace this occasion with your presence. It is also an honour for me, to address this August assembly, on the occasion of the 1st Ordinary Session of ATU Plenipotentiary Conference.

My staff and I, at the General Secretariat, feel extremely happy, to receive such a distinguished gathering in Nairobi, the capital city, of the temporary headquarters of our Union. You are all most welcome indeed, and I wish you a happy stay in Kenya. I have no doubt that during your stay here, you will take the opportunity to visit some of the interesting places, around Nairobi and beyond.

Let me at the outset, express my profound gratitude, to the Government and people of Kenya, more so, for accepting to host the Conference at such short notice. As the delegates may be well aware, we had originally planned to meet in Khartoum, Sudan, at the kind invitation of the Government of Sudan. As it happened however, we were informed that due to unavoidable circumstances, the Conference could not take place at the original venue.

Needless to mention, the task of putting together all necessary arrangements, including the conclusion of the protocol agreement between the Government and ATU entailed considerable urgency. Many departments have been involved in these

arrangements, and have indeed, applied themselves, to the task with considerable speed and diligence. Once again, on behalf of the Union, we wish to register our grateful thanks, to everyone, who has been involved in this important task. May I, also, take this opportunity to apologise in advance, for any shortcomings, that may arise, but we wish to assure you, that we will do our utmost to respond expeditiously, to your requirements.

The significance of this Conference, cannot be too strongly emphasized. It represents, the supreme organ of our Union. More importantly, this is the 1st Ordinary Session of the Conference since the restructuring of the Union, and its launch at the Cape Town 1999 Conference. It is significant, to mention, that a new Constitution and Convention were adopted, including other related legal instruments.

As for any new organization, the period has seen considerable challenges, as well as opportunities, particularly in fostering new partnerships, and dialogue with Member States. Major challenges, have included persistent problem of limited resources which factor has exerted considerable constraints, in implementing work programmes at the restructured organization envisaged. It is significant to note however many Member States have continued to demonstrate positive support for the Union, a factor which has ensured modest achievements in addressing the Unions core mandates.

- Guest of Honour,
- Mr. Chairman,
- Honourable Ministers,
- Ladies and Gentlemen.

Permit me a little while, to comment on some of the achievements, and constraints of the Union, over the last four years. Starting with the Admin Council, the body responsible for coordination and management of the activities, of the Union during the intervening period of the Conference, we are happy to note that the level of participation in the annual sessions, of Council, has significantly improved. Since the launch of the new Union in Dec 1999, a quorum has always been achieved. This

augurs well for the work of the Council and the Union as a whole, and certainly signifies greater confidence and support.

At the General Secretariat level, improved methods of work have been introduced, to enhance cooperation with Member States, in such areas as meetings and workshops, collection of indices to build databases, as well as creation of web-based library services, for information exchange. An important development, that I would also like to refer to, is the initiation of strategies to enhance equitable sharing, by the African region, of globally allocated ICT resources, as well, as effective participation in standard-setting fora. This strategy entails, the adoption of African Common Proposals, which involves a concerted process of consultation at national, regional and continental levels. In this way it will be possible to build a 'louder voice' by Africa at international ICT decision-making conferences.

The issue of standard-setting, and public policy evolution for the internet, is also an important activity that we are currently giving focused attention. Over the past year, we have participated in some of the activities, of the Internet Corporation for Addresses Names and Numbers (ICANN). ICANN is an international organization responsible for the overall management of the internet names and address services. Given the growing social and economic importance of the internet, we have initiated policy briefs, to the Membership, on the need to give priority attention, to the activities of this organization, as well as ensure effective inputs, in order to protect our regions interests in internet space. ICANN is currently undergoing major restructuring, and this process will need close follow up, by both Member States and Associate Members.

In view of the importance of the NEPAD Strategy, for Africa's development, and in particular its emphasis on ICT, as a catalyst for Africa's emancipation, the Secretariat has taken specific steps, not only to publicize the strategy among our partners, but also to seek support from international agencies. In this regard, a paper was presented to the last World Telecommunications Development Istanbul, Turkey, March 2002 by the Secretariat. It received overwhelming support and the Conference

adopted resolutions, calling upon the ITU Community to accord the NEPAD strategy and ATU their fullest support.

In conclusion, let me wish all the participants fruitful deliberations in charting out, the new strategic goals and objectives for the Union, as well as in building consensus on African Common Proposals to be tabled at the next ITU International Conference. Thank you for your kind attention.

**MESSAGE OF THE SECRETARY GENERAL, OF THE
AFRICAN TELECOMMUNICATIONS UNION (ATU), MR JAN
MUTAI ON THE OCCASION OF AFRICA'S
TELECOMMUNICATIONS DAY, 7TH DECEMBER 2002**

The day, 7th December, is celebrated each year by Member States of the African Union (AU) based on a theme endorsed by the Administrative Council of the African Telecommunications Union (ATU). This day has been set aside, for annual reflection and demonstration, on the key role, Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) have played, and must continue to play, in the social and economic development of Africa.

The theme adopted by the Administrative Council for this year is: -

“Africa and the Global Info-communications Technology (ICTs) Revolution: Opportunities and Challenges”

ICT connectivity growth

Today the term global village is indeed a reality in every sense of the word. To quote from a statement by the Secretary General of International Telecommunications Union (ITU), Mr. Yoshio Utsumi, “Information has the power to bring the global community into a cohesive fraternity which shares the common ideals of peace and tolerance, growth and development.”

ICT growth in the African region, in the last couple of years, can be described as phenomenal. In this regard, the most significant factor has been the advent and subsequent growth of mobile telephony. As of 1995, Africa has just 1% of the world's mobile telecommunications subscribers, while by 2001, this had risen to 3%. In at least 10 countries, the annual compound growth rates ranging from 120% to 209% were recorded between 1995 and 2001.

Internet service has also followed the same trend. However, its deployment has been mainly in urban areas where internet cafés have sprung up very quickly. The above developments have been underpinned by the global trends in liberalization of telecommunications markets and privatization of incumbent operators. The change in

the mode of payment for services from the traditional post-paid to pre-paid has proved extremely attractive to the majority of subscribers and to a great extent, been an impetus to the high usage witnessed.

However, inspite of the phenomenal growth, Africa still lags behind other continents and the digital divide between rural and urban populations is still growing. To overcome these challenges, Africa is changing the manner in which it engages with the international community and also in the modes in which states co-operates among themselves at regional level.

Africa's participation in global ICT decision-making

Highlights and achievements by Africa, in fostering a stronger and cohesive approach to global telecommunications issues was manifest at the World Telecommunications Conference (WTDC-02), in Istanbul, Turkey, March 2002 and at the ITU Plenipotentiary Conference, Marrakech, Morocco, September / October 2002. The strategy adopted by African Telecommunications Union (ATU) entailed the extensive consultation at national, regional and continental levels to arrive at 23 African Common Proposals that were tabled in Marrakesh. Consequently, it was possible to achieve an effective voice on a wide range of issues at this ICT decision-making conferences. Key among the outcomes was the adoption of a resolution on ITU's involvement in New Partnership for African Development (NEPAD)'s ICT strategy. For the future, this will become the norm in ATU's approach to other global ICT decision-making conferences.

In the area of internet, it has become manifestly clear that with its growth and use, as convergence tool, for telecommunication, computing and broadcasting, major public policy issues which impact greatly on the socio-economic development of our countries have emerged. Consequently, ATU initiated close engagement in activities of the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN) with a view to providing well informed briefs to the membership and also encourage their active participation in ICANN reform deliberations.

In order to foster greater collaborative endeavour among regional telecommunications organizations, the ATU recently concluded Memoranda of Understanding (MOU's) with Regional Commonwealth in the field of Communications (RCC) and European Conference of Postal and Telecommunications Administration (CEPT).

Regional policy and regulatory framework harmonization

With the rapid transformation of the telecommunications market place through globalization, liberalization and privatization, which Africa has fully embraced, it has become imperative that harmonization of policy and regulatory framework should be achieved quickly. In this regard, regulatory associations at Regional Economic Community (REC's) level have or are in the process of being established. These include Southern Africa Telecommunications Regulatory Association (SATRA) in Southern African Development Community (SADC), West African Telecommunication Regulatory Association (WATRA) in Economic Community for West African States (ECOWAS) and similar entity in Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA). Workshops to harmonize ICT policies at continental level are also being organized under the auspices of the NEPAD Strategy with several regional and global partners.

Human capacity building

The rapidly changing and converging technologies demand that Africa keeps a breast of developments through enhanced human capacity building strategies. At the continental level, two centers of excellence have been established, namely, Ecole Supérieure Multinationale des Telecommunications (ESMT) based in Dakar, Senegal, and The African Advanced Level Telecommunications Institute (AFRALTI), in Nairobi Kenya. ATU together with other partners collaborate with these institutions to enable them fulfill their roles and mandates which include: -

- Serve as a focal point for training, professional development, research and information on matters related to African telecommunications.
- Train policy makers and regulators in development of national sector policies and regulations.

- Provide capability for the development and harmonization of the telecommunications standards in Africa, including support for the African participation in the World Telecommunications Standardization Forum.

Fostering Information Society

Given the significance of the World Summit on Information Society (WSIS), the Union has been actively involved in preparations for this important event. Two important meetings have so far taken place in Bamako, Mali, May 2002 and Geneva, July 2002.

Key decisions of these meeting called for the following: -

- Full involvement of African civil society in the formulation and implementation of the ICT component of NEPAD.
- Formulation of coherent national and regional policies and strategies for the development of ICT.
- Setting up of national committees bringing together the private sector, public sector and civil society.
- Ensuring greater involvement of women and youth in ICT development activities.

All stakeholders are encouraged to participate actively in the preparatory processes leading to the summits in Geneva 2003 and Tunis 2005. It is only through active involvement that Africa can reap the benefits of the emerging Information Society.

Future Outlook

The NEPAD framework representing as it does, a pledge by African leaders based on a common vision and a firm shared conviction to eradicate poverty and achieve sustainable growth and development, has set clear objectives in the ICT Sector. The infrastructure development targets include: -

- Achieve an adequate level of access for households and reach the following telephone densities by 2005;
 - 4 lines per 100 inhabitants in fixed telephony;
 - 7 lines per 100 inhabitants in mobile telephony.

- Install optical fibre backbones to link all state capitals in Africa.
- Install internet backbone linking national internet exchanges points.
- Reduce costs and improve reliability of services through building standardization culture for the ICT industry in Africa.

In addressing the implementation of the above framework, the ATU Conference of Plenipotentiaries meeting in Nairobi, August 2002 adopted as an integral part of the Union's 2002 - 2006 Strategic Plan, the following strategic goals; -

- Strengthening the Union's financial base and institutional capacity.
- Enhancing advocacy processes to achieve equitable share of globally allocated ICT resources.
- Creating intellectual property through collaborative research and development activities.
- Establishing strong partnership with development partners and technical institutions.
- Developing critical mass of ICT human capital in the region.
- Promoting rapid investment in ICT access and backbone infrastructures.

This top policy organ composed of the Ministers responsible for Information and Communication also endorsed work programmes for concerted action at national, regional and global levels.

These include sustained policy and regulatory reform to attract increased private sector investment whilst ensuring achievement of universal access targets and human development.

Conclusion

The opportunities offered by the emerging information society for leap-frogging Africa's development in the 21st Century are tremendous. What is needed is to sustain current efforts for building shared vision and commitment to concrete action by all stakeholders. Since 1998, ATU has been promoting initiatives for full African

connectivity under the “African Connection” banner which from 2001 has been incorporated in the NEPAD ICT strategy.

The mission of the ATU is to promote the rapid development of Info-communications in Africa in order to achieve universal service and access in addition to full inter-country connectivity. In doing so the ATU envisions an Africa that is empowered as full and active participant in the Global Information and Knowledge Society.

ATU Day enjoins us to focus on the above mission and vision so that the benefits of information and communication technologies may be accessible to all the people in Africa before too long.

SG/Nairobi, 7th November 2002

