

**STATEMENT BY MR. AKOSSI AKOSSI, SECRETARY GENERAL ATU  
AT THE OPENING CEREMONY OF AFRICA PREPARATIONS FOR THE  
WORLD TELECOMMUNICATION DEVELOPMENT CONFERENCE  
(WTDC-06, DOHA-QATAR, 7 – 15 MARCH 2006)**

**HOTEL INTERCONTINENTAL NAIROBI  
NAIROBI, KENYA  
9-10 FEBRUARY 2006**

- Our Guest of Honor, The Deputy Secretary, Ministry of Information and Communications, (Mr. Felix Mugabi)
- Mr. Chairman and CEO, Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC), Eng. Ernest NDUKWE
- The Regional Representative ITU, Mr. Brahim Sanou
- Distinguished Participants
- Ladies and Gentlemen

Our Secretary General Mr. Akossi Akossi, has asked me to extend his sincere apologies for not being with you. He is currently bereaved and had to travel home for funeral arrangements. He has therefore requested me to represent him at this meeting and to present his statement which I now have the honour to read.

It is a great honour and pleasure for me to welcome you to this important meeting and to thank you most sincerely for having responded positively to our invitation. This meeting represents the final stage of Africa's preparations for the forthcoming World Telecommunication Development Conference (WTDC-06), scheduled to take place in Doha, Qatar, from 7 - 15 March 2006. Viewed against the backdrop of the historic World Summit on Information Society (WSIS – Tunis 05), your discussions must be considered most significant as they will no doubt encompass the wide-ranging strategies and decisions adopted by the Summit.

Indeed we cannot also lose sight of the WTDC-02 Istanbul Action Plan, which has been under implementation by the ITU/BTD. It is now to evolve into the Doha-06 Action Plan. From the wider regional ICT development perspective, close collaboration in implement these Action Plans will be necessary. In this regard, is the ATU Strategic Plan as well as the ECA led

regional plan commonly known as African Regional Action Plan for the Knowledge Economy (ARAPKE), considered at the recently concluded WSIS-05 Tunis.

Let me seize this opportunity to express our gratitude to the Ministry of Information and Communications and the Communications Commission of Kenya (CCK) for the collaboration in hosting this meeting and assisting with logistical support. As our host, the Kenyan administration has always provided ATU tremendous support in many areas for which the Union is truly grateful. I should also say a word of thanks to our valued partners ITU, in particular, the African Regional Office, headed by Mr. Brahima Sanou. We recognise the technical and financial contribution towards this meeting. Over the years, we have cooperated closely on a number of projects including the extensive NEPAD assistance program adopted by the Istanbul conference.

Mr. Chairman

Mr. Permanent Secretary

Distinguished participants

Most of you will recall that a Regional Preparatory Meeting (RPM-Africa) for WTDC-06 was held in Abuja, from 5-7 July 2005 under the Chairmanship of Hon. Chief Cornelius Adebayo, Federal Minister of Communications of Nigeria. It was preceded by two meetings, namely, an Expert's meeting on ITU Preliminary Assistance to NEPAD, 3<sup>rd</sup> July, followed by the Ministerial Symposium, 4<sup>th</sup> July 2005, on the same subject.

In its Declaration which in many respects gave direction for this meeting, the Symposium, inter alia, agreed to :-

- Adopt the report on “Partnership framework for ICT infrastructure development in Africa” as a reference document.
- Establish an inter agency coordination committee comprising the AU Commission, ATU Secretariat, ITU, NEPAD e-Africa Commission, RECs, URTNA, ADB, PAPU and RASCOM. Other institutions to be invited as appropriate.
- Congratulate ITU on its technical and financial support and the fruitful cooperation with ATU.

- Urge African countries to enhance ICT development as a catalyst in achieving the Millennium Development Goals.
- Request African states, inter alia, to submit resolution to WTDC-06 and ITU Plenipotentiary Conference (PP-06) on assistance to NEPAD.
- Outline projects in infrastructure, environment, capacity building, cooperation and partnerships.

The World Summit on Information Society (WSIS), held in Tunis from 16-18 November 2005, adopted the Tunis Commitment and Tunis Agenda. Concurrently, the African region adopted African Common Positions as well as an African Regional Action Plan for the Knowledge Economy (ARAPKE). The draft African Common Proposals that you will be considering at this meeting are a culmination of the work outlined above starting from the Abuja Ministerial Symposium through to the WSIS-05 Tunis. We commend these proposals together with other draft working documents for your close study, in order to ensure Africa's effective participation in the Doha conference.

In conclusion, I am happy to say that this gathering is yet a further endeavour to realise one of ATU's core objectives of Global Decision Making (GDM), whose implementation has seen commendable results in such meetings as ITU PP-02, WTDC-02, WTSA-04 and several RRCs. With the ITU Plenipotentiary Conference (PP-06) in view, I hasten to urge you to continue to reflect on possible African Common Proposals for that conference.

May I wish you success in your deliberations.

Mr. Chairman, I thank you for your kind attention.