

RESOLUTION 75 (Rev. Buenos Aires, 2017)

Implementation of the Smart Africa Manifesto and support for the development of information and communication technologies sector in Africa

The World Telecommunication Development Conference (Buenos Aires, 2017),

considering

- a)* the provisions of the ITU Constitution, as contained in Chapter IV thereof on the Telecommunication Development Sector (ITU-D), particularly with regard, *inter alia*, to the functions of the Sector for building awareness of the impact of telecommunications/information and communication technologies (ICTs) on national economic and social development, its catalytic role in promoting the development, expansion and operation of telecommunication services and networks, especially in developing countries¹, and the need to maintain and enhance cooperation with regional and other telecommunication organizations;
- b)* that, at its 22nd ordinary session, it was decided that the African Union Assembly "ENDORSES the key outcomes of the Transform Africa Summit hosted by H.E. Paul Kagame, President of the Republic of Rwanda in October 2013 which adopted the SMART Africa Manifesto highlighting the need to place ICT at the centre of national socio-economic development agenda and SMART Africa Alliance as implementation framework";
- c)* Resolution 30 (Rev. Guadalajara, 2010) of the Plenipotentiary Conference, on special measures for the least developed countries, small island developing states, landlocked developing countries and countries with economies in transition;
- d)* the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 2015-2020 adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in September 2015;
- e)* the outcome of the Geneva (2003) and Tunis (2005) phases of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) as well as the WSIS+10 Statement and WSIS+10 vision beyond 2015,

¹ These include the least developed countries, small island developing states, landlocked developing countries and countries with economies in transition.

noting

that, in its Declaration and resolutions, the World Telecommunication Development Conference (Doha, 2006) reaffirmed a commitment to enhancing expansion and development of telecommunication services in developing countries and harnessing capacity for the application of new and innovative services,

taking note of

- a) the recognition by the United Nations General Assembly in its Resolution 56/37 of the adoption by the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the Organization of African Unity at its 37th ordinary session (Lusaka, July 2001) of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD);
- b) the actions for NEPAD set out in annex hereto;
- c) the declaration by the Economic and Social Council on the role of the United Nations system in supporting the efforts of African countries to achieve sustainable development,

taking cognizance of

- a) the work under way to implement the African Regional Action Plan for the Knowledge Economy (ARAPKE);
- b) the request, formulated in the Addis Ababa Declaration adopted by the Heads of State and Government during the 14th Conference of the African Union, that an African digital agenda be set;
- c) the appeal made by the conference referred to in *b)* above to development partners, especially financing institutions, to integrate telecommunications/ICTs into their priorities by granting them financing conditions similar to those of other basic public utility infrastructures;
- d) the African Union's Agenda 2063 and NEPAD;
- e) the decisions taken by the Connect Africa summit held in Kigali in October 2007,

recognizing

that, in spite of the impressive growth and expansion in infocommunication services recorded in the African region in recent years, many areas of major concern still exist and considerable disparities persist in the region, and the digital divide continues to widen,

recalling

the Connect Africa summit goals adopted by African Heads of State present on 29-30 October 2007, which reflect the challenges and opportunities in the Africa region,

resolves to instruct the Director of the Telecommunication Development Bureau

1 to mobilize the resources needed to implement this resolution, which complements the resolutions resulting from the 14th Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the African Union, held in Addis Ababa in February 2010, on the theme "Information and communication technologies in Africa: challenges and prospects for development";

2 to pay particular attention to implementation of the provisions of the ITU-D action plan relating to the recommendations of the report "Partnership framework for ICT infrastructure development in Africa", earmarking resources so that this can be permanently monitored;

3 to continue supporting the Smart Africa Manifesto in accordance with Resolution 195 (Busan, 2014) of the Plenipotentiary Conference, and to provide technical expertise to carry out feasibility studies and project management for the implementation of the Smart Africa Manifesto,

instructs the Secretary-General

1 to engage the different United Nations agencies to support various components of the Smart Africa programmes, in areas within their scope and mandate;

2 to mobilize financial support from the existing networks, including broadcasters, satellite providers, etc.,

invites Member States

1 to cooperate with African countries in promoting regional, subregional, multilateral and bilateral projects and programmes for the implementation of the Smart Africa Manifesto;

2 to transmit this resolution to the Plenipotentiary Conference (Dubai, 2018) for consideration and in order to make available the financial resources required to implement it.

ANNEX TO RESOLUTION 75 (Rev. Buenos Aires, 2017)

Recommendations of the report "Partnership framework for ICT infrastructure development in Africa"

1 Infrastructure

- i) Support to the Ministerial Committee of the African Union for the establishment of the Inter-Agency Coordinating Forum
- ii) Preparation of master plans for ICT infrastructure development (PIDA)
- iii) Facilitation of the introduction of digital technologies, especially for broadcasting
- iv) Support for all projects which promote ICT development and subregional and regional integration, for example, the East African Submarine Cable project (EASSy), the NEPAD e-school initiative, the telecommunication/ICT component of the Programme for Infrastructure Development in Africa (PIDA), RASCOM, e-Post Africa, COMTEL, SRIL, INTELCOM II, the ARAPKE projects, etc.
- v) Establishment and interconnection of national Internet exchange points
- vi) Evaluation of the impact and adoption of measures for strengthening functional capacities and the new missions of subregional maintenance centres
- vii) Encourage the establishment of technological alliances in order to promote research and development at a regional level

2 Environment

Development and implementation of:

- i) an Africa-wide vision, strategy and action plan for ICT
- ii) a national vision and strategies for the development of ICT with maximum linkage to other national development strategies, notably the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP)
- iii) elaboration of a national policy framework and strategy for universal access

- iv) provision of support for the harmonization of policy and regulatory frameworks at the subregional level

3 Capacity building, cooperation and partnerships

- i) Support for the elaboration of the planning and management of the frequency spectrum at national, subregional and regional levels
- ii) Support the strengthening of ICT training institutions and the network of centres of excellence in the region
- iii) Establishment of a cooperation mechanism amongst regional institutions that provide development assistance to African countries in the ICT sector
- iv) Regional or multi-national approach to provision of support
- v) Establishment of an ad hoc regional ICT think tank for Africa
- vi) Strengthening of subregional telecommunication regulatory associations
- vii) Strengthening of public-private partnership
- viii) Establishment of an African ICT database
- ix) Strengthening the capacities of regional economic communities for better implementation of the ICT projects and initiatives.