CELEBRATING 20 YEARS OF INTERNET GOVERNANCE IN AFRICA
Cotonou, 6th July 2018

GENERAL THEME : "EFFECTIVE INTERNET GOVERNANCE FOR AFRICA'S DEVELOPMENT**"**

I-   INTRODUCTION

1.1   In December 1998 a group of internet pioneers met in Benin to discuss Africa's progress, how the internet could be anchored to serve the continent better and even more to plan the development of the internet on the continent. That was the first forum ever held on internet governance in Africa, well ahead of the global ones which followed in the early 20's.
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1.2   This historic forum was organized by the African Internet Group (AIG) a newly established organization composed of Africans who had all attended ISOC-organized training sessions and who assigned themselves the task of structuring internet associations on the continent in order to further a gradual and actual ownership of internet by the Africans. The theme of the forum was : **Africa regional Conference on Internet Governance : Administration of Internet Protocols Addresses, and Domain name & Strengthening African Emerging Institutions**. The Cotonou forum was held with support from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), *Organization Internationale de la Francophonie* (OIF) and the Government of Benin.

1.3   The meeting had a positive impact as it triggered collaboration between Africans from different regions and linguistic areas on internet issues: for example, a steering committee was put in place to supervise the preparation and implementation of AFRINIC, the African internet registry which is currently based in Mauritius. The meeting also provided orientation for capacity building in Africa and somewhat prepared the pioneers for understanding the issues at stake regarding internet governance, thus allowing them to have informed access to related global debate.

II-   JUSTIFICATION

2.1   During the twenty years since this event, Africa's internet landscape went through profound changes. Internet connectivity is now 34% as opposed to 3% in 1998 (https://digitalreport.wearesocial.com/). This remarkable progress was largely due to the development of submarine cables, 18 of which now connect Africans countries between themselves and also to other continents (with a total capacity of 145 terabytes (144.94 as opposed to a few megabytes in 1998), and it is expected that this number will increase to 22 by the end of 2018.

2.2	Likewise, many African internet organizations were established, including among others AFNOG, AFRINIC, AFREN, AFICTA, which are performing very well through their diversity and activities. In addition, the dotAfrica domain name and 54 first level domain names have become operational. AIG itself evolved into AIS (Africa Internet Summit: www.ais.net), regularly holding annual meetings. Furthermore, Africans do now contribute to international internet governance fora such as WSIS, IGF , ICANN as well as internet governance training sessions.

2.3	Most African countries now boast internet strategies aiming to make the internet and the digital economy contribute 8 to 11% to the GDP. African youth is henceforth active developing innovation in start ups and fablabs and numerous applications contribute to solving local problems in such diverse areas as finances and banking, agriculture, health and education.

## III-	OBJECTIVES AND EXPECTED RESULTS

3.1	The proposed event is the commemoration of twenty years of the practice of internet governance since it was first launched by the Africa Internet Group in 1998. It aims first to remember and honor the spirit and work of the pioneers and magnify their footprints. It will also offer the opportunity to build on progress made and draw lessons from various endeavors undertaken for the development of internet throughout the continent, as well as suggest orientations for the future of internet in Africa.

3.2 The following results are expected
1)	The development of internet and its governance in Africa is assessed,
2)	The stakes of internet governance in Africa in the global context are identified
3)	A common African position is adopted specifying future orientation and actions.

## IV-	PARTICIPANTS

About a hundred fifty participants are expected to attend the one-day meeting. These will include: policymakers (ministers and senior officials) in charge of ICTs and national policy issues, coming from several African countries; development partners; universities and research centers (teachers, researchers, students); private sector, civil society, etc.

## V-	THE STRUCTURE OF THE MEETING

5.1	The meeting will use an interactive format facilitating exchanges and discussions among participants. There will be plenary sessions and panels, each covering a specific topic (sub-theme) which is introduced by a keynote address.

5.2	To cover all relevant aspects of the general theme, the following three sub-themes are defined: (i) 25 Years of internet connectivity in Africa; (ii) 20 Years of internet governance in Africa; and (iii) The future of internet in Africa. The first two sub-themes will be plenary session presentation followed by discussions and the third one will be a panel discussion

Session 1. Sub-theme: 25 Years of internet connectivity in Africa

5.3   This session will assess technological progress which has been conducive to connectivity and accessibility, by examining aspects related to infrastructure, usage and applications. In the light of relevant indicators, the presentation will provide a realistic picture of a comparison between countries, between regions of the continent and between Africa and other parts of the world. It will highlight constraints and difficulties which need to be addressed for Africa to benefit better from the advantages of the internet.

5.4 The subsequent keynote will be presented in plenary session: « ***Evolution of internet connectivity in Africa: success, strengths and weaknesses***

This paper will discuss the evolution of internet connectivity in Africa highlighting the factors (inputs and processes) which influenced such evolution. The quantitative and qualitative analysis will be based on internationally admitted sector criteria and indicators. This assessment should present an integrated snapshot of the situation and the elements which determined success as well as of persisting constraints and obstacles.

A panel will follow that keynote, with a view of further emphasizing on the subject matter, bringing alternative views and firming up the way forward for a fully connected Africa.

Session 2. Sub-theme: 20 Years of Internet governance in Africa

5.5   This session will discuss the involvement of Africans in global debates regarding internet governance for the past twenty years and how concepts such as multilateralism and the multi-stakeholder model are shaping internet geopolitics and diplomacy.

5.5 The plenary session presentation will be on the following topic « ***Evolution of internet governance worldwide and in Africa : lessons for the future*** ». While presenting the overall status of internet governance in Africa, the paper should draw lessons from this experience and discuss clearly why Africa has not yet succeeded in drawing full benefit from this global good which is the internet, and suggest way for addressing this.

A second panel will be organized to let other experts contribute their portion and help generate clear ideas and positions on Africa and the continuous evolution of the Internet governance.

Session 3. Sub-theme: Integrating the internet to Africa's development.

5.6 This session will discuss the future of the internet, where Africa stands and how the continent could benefit more from the internet. Issues to be discussed will include: innovation, incubators, fablabs, new digital jobs, clouding, big data, biotechnology, block chain, artificial intelligence, intellectual property in the digital era, and legal aspects of the digital economy.

5.8   The topic of the first presentation will be: *« **The stakes of the internet in the Fourth industrial revolution era** »*

The panel will be introduced by a keynote which encapsulates the trends and subsequent issues and highlights opportunities for Africa.

5.9   The topic of the second presentation will be: « ***Which future for the internet in Africa**** » *. A comprehensive project on the future of the Internet in Africa will launched during the celebration.

The subsequent panel will discuss substantial continental projects as they relate to the evolving Internet and the fourth industrial revolution.

6.00 These sessions will be followed by a showcase of a few on-going projects related to internet, the blockchain applications, the artificial intelligence, smart cities etc.

IV DRAFT AGENDA

<table>
<tr><td rowspan="2"></td><td colspan="2">20 Years of Internet Governance in Africa
06 July 2018

Cotonou, Bénin</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">**Theme: EFFECTIVE INTERNET GOVERNANCE for AFRICA'S DEVELOPMENT**</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="3">*05 July 2018*
Pre- conference activities

14:00-19:00 A Cultural tour in the historic city of Ouidah</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="3"></td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="3" align="center">**06 July 2018**</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="3">**OPENING CEREMONY**
Moderator :IGF Bénin</td></tr>
<tr><td>**08:00-09:00**</td><td colspan="2">**Participants Welcoming and registration**</td></tr>
<tr><td>**09:00-09:45**</td><td colspan="2">Official Opening : MC : Jacqueline Ahouansou
- 3mn video ''On the roads to Cotonou 2018''
- Remarks by :
• AIG 2018 Convenor (Pierre Dandjinou)
• OIF (Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie)
• UNDP (United Nations Development Programme)
• Minister, Digital Economy and Communications, Republic of BENIN

• Acknowledging the initial AFRINIC Steering Committee members and Initial supporting institutions (By participating Ministers and VIPs) : Georges Sadowski
• **Rapporteur: IGF, BENIN**</td></tr>
<tr><td>**10:00-10:30**</td><td colspan="2">**Coffee break**
Family Photo</td></tr>
<tr><td>**Session 1.**</td><td colspan="2">**25 Years of Internet connectivity in Africa**</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="3">Current status, options, and way forward</td></tr>
<tr><td>**10:30-11:30**</td><td colspan="2">**Keynote: Dawit Bekele, ISOC**

Panelistes: Gaston Zongo ; Thandikile Mvundula ; Serge Adjovi, (ADN Benin) ; Mureithi Miriuki</td></tr>
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	Moderator: Michel Corbin Guedegbe **Rapporteur : Yaovi Atohoun**
Session 2. Sous-theme: 20 Years of Internet Governance	
Internet governance in Africa: evolutions and lessons for the future	
11:30-12:30	**Keynote: Tarek Kamel** **Moderator : Nii Quaynor** **Rapporteur: Bob Ochieng**	**Panelists :** **Mary Uduma** **Brian Munyao Longue** **Mawaki Chango** **Alan Barrett**
13:00 –14:30	**Lunch**
Session 3. Integrating Internet to the African development	
Percevable impacts of the Internet and the fourth industrial revolution on Africa	
14:30 - 16:00	**Keynote: Seydina Ndiaye** **Moderator: Bope Domilongo** **Rapporteur: Alain Aina**	**Panelists :** **- Adiel Akplogan** **- Nii Quaynor** **- Gilles Kounou** **- Mhamed Dalla**
16:00-17:00	**Showcasing a selected Initiatives** **SEME CITY ; IA Labs ; PASS ALAFIA ; FINTECH, etc Coordinated by Medard Agbayazoun** **The Africa Internet History project (AIHP) Muriuki Mureithi/ Pierre Dandjinou/ Carole Voduhe)**
17h30	**Wrap Up** - Conference report by Conference Convenor - Official closing
19H	**Cocktail**