Internet Governance – APKN ICT Working Group

14 October 2009

Action Plan of the APKN ICT Working Group

At an international conference on Internet Conference held on the 14th of October 2009, in Cape Town South Africa, delegates from Angola, Algeria, Chad, Egypt, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Lesotho, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Swaziland, Tanzania, Togo, Zambia, Zimbabwe and representatives of Pan African Parliament and SADC Parliamentary Forum with the support of UNDESA, UNECA and OSISA have concurred that:

- Parliament has an important role to play in ensuring an equitable information society and can contribute meaningfully to the Internet Governance processes if provided with well packaged information, and continuous capacity building;
- The digital divide is increasing in Africa as a result of inadequate mechanisms to ensure access to internet and ICTs . The people of Africa have to bear a relatively high cost of connection in the face of an inadequate broadband infrastructure, and a rise in cyber crime, owing to the lack of harmonization in policy and regulatory frameworks with regards ICTs.
- There should be a coordinated interplay between national, regional and continental responses; such interplay and exchange of information and experience that the APKN ICT Working group is ideally suited to facilitate;

In order to effectively respond to the rising challenge of Internet Governance and development of an equitable Information Society, the delegates proposed to engage the APKN ICT Working, group led by the SADC PF, in the following programme of activities for the next year, till the APKN Plenary of Oct 2010:

- Organize in collaboration with PAP an Africa wide event dealing with e-Parliament and free and open access to legislation and public information;
- Establish an APKN Steering Group in charge of the programme for the coming conference and finalization of the APKN ICT Work plan;
- Provide information services such as Policy Briefs on Internet Governance Issues and other related ICT issues affecting Parliament such as enabling

infrastructure, cyber security, consumer protection, open access to information and open standards, open source software, local content and languages etc.. The online publications of the Policy Briefs will be followed by an online Expert Led Discussions that may provide further clarifications and input for further use;

- Develop e-learning modules on Internet Governance Issues affecting the Continent identifying the practical role of Parliament;
- Work together to build a common repository of laws and regulations on issues based on member contributions regarding laws and regulations of regulating and promoting the development of an equitable information society in member countries
- Support the implementation of e-parliaments day in national parliaments that demonstrate the use of technology in Parliaments
- Support national parliaments through Committees responsible for ICTs in lobbying for resources for ICTs and the transformation into e-parliaments and be ICT Champions
- Implement an APKN Chat Room and social networking space for MPs
- Effectively engage the ICT Managers and APKN Coordinators to implement ICT related APKN Activities
- Use of local languages and local content
- Provide space for cross regional sharing on IG issues and ICT regulations