Assistance Framework

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Strengthening Parliaments' Information Systems in Africa

- **The aim is to reinforce Parliament capacity to harness ICT tools and to place them at the service of the institutional process, citizens' access to parliamentary activities and of inter-parliamentary cooperation.**
- **The focus is not on ICT itself, but on the use of ICT in combination with organisational change and new skills.**

Strengthening Parliaments' Information Systems in Africa

Why a regional approach?

Synergy and opportunities for cooperation

Leverage limited resources

Ownership, commitment and leadership

Sound and open partnership

The Conference created a platform for discussion among African Parliaments and participants where to share experiences, practices and concerns on ICTs and to strengthen the existing partnership to lead the process set in motion through the regional initiative.

The Inter-Parliamentary Union resolution (adopted unanimously by the 109th Assembly on 3 October 2003):

Calls **on Parliaments and their members to make full use of the NICTs: a) to enhance the effectiveness, efficiency and transparency of their activities and to better connect with the electorate; b) to expand inter-parliamentary relationships and cooperation at bilateral and multilateral levels, thus enhancing parliamentary democracy and diplomacy.**

Recommends **that each Parliament put in place the necessary structures to follow up and monitor annually the development of e-government in its country so as to guarantee its transparency for citizens and democracy.**

Invites **Parliaments to take legislative action with the aim of providing an environment conducive to the dissemination, development and secure use of the NICTs.**

The introduction of innovation and technologies in Parliaments must emanate from a political decision -not a technical one-, sustained over time, aiming at improving the governance of the Institution – its efficiency and effectiveness, autonomy and independence – and its capacity to relate to society.

Parliaments and the Information Society

Parliaments as *Users* - to enhance the effectiveness, efficiency and opennes of their activities and to better connect with the electorate

Parliaments as *Facilitators* - to provide an enabling environment for the dissemination, development and use of ICTs

There is a growing realization of the need to place the various activities that are taking place in this area in different Parliaments, as well as other related initiatives underway in the field of technical assistance, within a broader framework which, while remaining concretely rooted in the application of information technology, can help connect in a more comprehensive way the efforts of Parliaments and the international community in support of democracy and development.

Much remains to be done to ensure that every African Parliament and regional Parliament can operate within the IS.

- **Research** — Availability of results, New and focused research, Partnerships
- **Networking** — Share experiences, Expand public space for knowledge development
- **Action** — Partnering in initiatives, raising awareness, mobilizing resources

At the international level, there is a need for greater dialogue and collaboration to make experiences and financial resources available in order to facilitate the integration of ICT in parliamentary processes and to ensure that Parliaments, through their legislative and representative mandate, can help build the Information Society