FINAL COMMUNIQUE

The launching meeting of HIPSSA project was opened by M. Brahima Sanou, Head of International Telecommunication Union's Regional Office for Africa who delivered a message on behalf of Mr. Sami Al Basheer Al Morshid, Director of the Telecommunication Development Bureau (BDT).

During the opening ceremony, the following keynote speakers addressed the meeting:
- H.E.M. Koen Vervaeke, European Union Special Representative and Head of the European Commission (EC) Delegation to the African Union
- H.E.M. Akossi Akossi, General Secretary of the African Telecommunication Union (ATU)
- M. Aboubakari Baba-Moussa, Director for Infrastructures and Energy, African Union's Commission (AUC)

During the first session, the HIPSSA project team, Sandro Bazzanella, ITU-EC Project Manager and Jean-François Le Bihan, HIPSSA Project Coordinator, presented key characteristics of the project:
- HIPSSA is a part of a global joint ITU-EC project covering all ACP countries with sub-projects in Africa, Caribbean and the Pacific.
- 43 countries beneficiary countries in Sub Sahara Africa[1]
- Approximately 5 million USD (for Sub Saharan African countries)
- 3 years (starting in September 2008 and effectively two years and half on the field after launch)
- Three main components: harmonization, national implementation and institutional and human capacity building
- Address priorities of each region
- Within a Pan-African vision

1. AU's reference framework for harmonization of telecommunication and ICT policies and regulation in Africa

The second conference of African Ministers in charge of Communication and Information Technologies adopted the reference framework for harmonization of telecommunication and ICT policies and regulation in Africa in May 2008 in Cairo, Egypt.

HIPSSA project shall commit to implement some of the actions listed as priorities by this reference framework under the objective of *establishing harmonized policy, legal and regulatory frameworks at the regional and continental levels* to create an enabling environment that will attract investment and foster the sustainable development of competitive African Telecom/ICT regional markets, infrastructures, and to increase access. The two main groups of actions are detailed hereafter.

A. POLICY GUIDELINES
- Develop model of policy guidelines for the continent on:

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[1] Angola, Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Cape-Verde, Chad, Congo (Rep.), Côte d'Ivoire, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea Equatorial, Guinea-Bissau, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Niger, Nigeria, Uganda, Central African Republic, Democratic Republic of Congo, Rwanda, Sao Tome-e-Principe, Senegal, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Swaziland, Tanzania, Togo, Zambia, Zimbabwe

- o Liberalization and privatization
- o Creation of effective regulatory body
- o Competition
- o Convergence
- o Universal access/service
- o Analog to digital broadcasting migration
- o Process of consensus building in international fora

Deliverables
- Comparative analysis of country and regional policies
- Model policy
- Harmonization methodology
- Consensus building mechanism
- Analog to digital broadcasting migration strategy

B. MODEL LEGISLATION AND REGULATORY FRAMEWORK
- Develop model Telecom/ICT Bill
- Develop model Telecom/ICT Regulations
- Provide support to ATRA (African Telecommunication Regulators' Assembly)
- Assess the need for a continent-wide regulatory body

Deliverables
- Comparative analysis of countries and regional Telecom Act.
- Model Telecommunication/ICT Bill
- Model regulatory institutional structure
- Model Telecom/ICT Regulations
- Model License
- Recommendation on the creation of a continental Telecommunication/ICT Regulatory Body

The project will focus on the HIPSSA beneficiary countries.

Priorities of the RECs will have to be in line with the priorities adopted under the AU Framework. Some of the actions are already under progress.

2. Support by HIPSSA to RECs to achieve their goals

There is a high degree of heterogeneity among the regions in terms of advancement in the harmonization process. HIPSSA will support each of them to achieve their goals taking in consideration the current level of development of their ICT regulatory harmonization initiatives and assisting them in moving forward.
The project will address specific needs of the RECs that will be involved in the project implementation in the 43 beneficiary countries in close collaboration with the associated regional regulators associations.

Some RECs presented their priorities and others should revert to HIPSSA project team by end of January 2009 in order to finalize a detailed working plan mid-February during the first Steering Committee meeting.

Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) / West African Economic and Monetary Union (WAEMU) already adopted a set of supplementary acts and directives covering the proposed HIPSSA topics. Consequently, their priorities are focused on finalization of national transposition, training and monitoring of effective implementation. At a later stage, the REC would be interested in reviewing their regulatory framework to take into account market and technological evolutions. They also expressed specific needs in terms of data collection[2] and cyber-security.

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[2] Système d'Information et de Gestion des Télécommunications (SIGTEL)

Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) will adopt on the last week of January 2009 a regional plan of action identifying priorities. The Telecommunication Regulators' Association for Central Africa (ARTAC), as a consultative body of ECCAS, contributed to the action plan for Central Africa.

Ministers in charge of telecommunication and ICT of the Central African Economic and Monetary Community (CEMAC) adopted six directives on electronic communications policies and regulation harmonization, legal frameworks, universal service, interconnection, tariffs and data protection in November 2008 and three additional directives[3] will be adopted in 2009.

Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) and Communications Regulators' Association of Southern Africa (CRASA) presented their common priorities: updating the current guidelines to align them to industry developments[4] and adopt new additional guidelines[5].

East African Community's (EAC) study on harmonization of ICT policies and regulation has been completed and will be adopted by the end of January 2009. Harmonized cyber-laws will also be adopted within the same time frame. East Africa Regulatory, Postal and Telecommunications Organization (EARPTO) focused recently on infrastructure sharing and cross-border interconnection enforcement and wishes to have these specific areas addressed.

The Common Market of Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) and the Association of Regulators for Information and Communication Services of Eastern and Southern Africa (ARICEA) were unable to attend and bilateral consultation will be undertaken. COMESA adopted Information and Communications Technology Model Policy, Information and Communication Model Bill, Information and Communication Technology Policy Guidelines on Interconnection, Licensing and Universal Service, etc.

The meeting noted that the Head of States of COMESA, EAC and SADC adopted a tripartite framework on the areas of Trade and Infrastructure development covering of ICT policy and regulatory harmonization in the region.

3. Project implementation: network of focal points, work plan and tentative calendar

Beginning of January ITU will send an information letter to all beneficiary countries ministries and regulators, RECs and regional associations of regulators mentioning the set up of a national and regional focal points network.

RECs and regional associations of regulators representatives will be primary focal points and will coordinate the national focal points network of their respective sub-region. When appropriate existing focal points networks collaborating on current regional ICT regulatory harmonization projects shall be used in order to avoid duplication. RECs in close collaboration with regional associations of regulators will provide the HIPSSA project coordinator with national focal points in their member countries with names and contact details.

It has been decided to establish a Steering Committee. The terms of reference of the Steering Committee are attached in Annex 1.

During the first week of January 2009, the HIPSSA project coordinator will contact the RECs that have identified their priorities (ECOWAS and SADC) in order to establish costing evaluation and prioritization. Other RECs will submit their priorities by end of January 2009.

In preparation of the first Steering Committee Meeting tentatively scheduled for the second week of February, the HIPSSA coordinator will prepare a detailed work plan containing a consolidated list of priorities and associated costing information.

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[3] International interconnection, cyber-criminality and cyber-security

[4] Review of SADC allocation frequency band plan 2000, licensing models taking into consideration neutral licensing, NGN and beyond, roaming, interconnection & tariffs, universal service

[5] Cyber-security, broadcasting and other electronic media, regional digital broadcasting migration plan, model dispute resolution, competition Policy, regional training, develop regulatory performance and monitoring guidelines

Annex 1

**TERMS OF REFERENCE
FOR THE HIPSSA STEERING COMMMITTEE**

A – BACKGROUND

This project which focuses on Sub-Sahara Africa aims at supporting RECs and respective countries to develop and promote use of harmonized ICT policies and regulatory frameworks in relation to ICT markets in the sub region. Furthermore, the project intends to provide human and institutional capacity building in the field of ICT through a range of knowledge transfer measures.

The specific objectives of the project are:
- Developing and promoting ICT market policies and guidelines for individual countries in Sub Sahara Africa;
- Supporting the regional organizations and the sub-regional economic groupings to develop and promote the use of harmonized ICT market policies and regulations in the area concerned;
- Building human as well as institutional capacity in the field of ICT through a range of targeted training, education and knowledge sharing measures.

The HIPSSA Project is jointly funded by the EC and ITU and the ITU is the Executing Agency.

B – OBJECTIVES OF THE STEERING COMMITTEE

The main tasks of the Steering Committee are:
- To ensure the overall coordination and decision making of the HIPSSA project implementation,
- To define the priorities in the project implementation and managing them,
- To facilitate cooperation among regional and national institutions in the provision of information and data,
- To inform the members countries and stakeholders on issues concerning various aspects of the project and
- To ensure that the implementation of the harmonized ICT policies, legal and regulatory frameworks and capacity building at national level is inline with the HIPSSA Project.

C – COMPOSITION OF THE STEERING COMMITTEE

The Steering Committee shall comprise of the representatives of the following institutions
- ITU Regional Office
- ITU-EC Project Manager
- Each Regional Economic Community (REC)
- African Union (AU)
- United Nation Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA)
- African Telecommunication Union (ATU)
- Observers that will be co-opted as and when necessary

The Secretariat of the Steering Committee shall be the HIPSSA Project Coordinator.

D – MEETINGS

- The Steering Committee shall meet at least twice annually.
- The Secretariat shall facilitate the work of the Steering Committee.

- The formal Agenda of the Steering Committee shall be agreed upon by the members of the Steering Committee and the relevant support documentation shall be circulated to all members at least 14 days in advance.
- The cost of the first meeting will be bared by the project and the Steering Committee will decide how to proceed in the future.

E – CHAIRMANSHIP

- The Steering Committee will decide on chairmanship during its first meeting.
- The Africa Union will be consulted to seek whether they would agree to chair the Steering Committee.