**Telecommunication
Development Bureau (BDT)**

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Contact:	Mr. Jean-François LE BIHAN		Ministers,
	HIPSSA, Senior Project Coordinator		Heads of Regulators,
Telephone:	+251 (11) 551 49 77		Heads of Regional Organizations,
Telefax:	+251 (11) 551 72 99		CEO of Operators and Chairpersons of
E-mail:	Jean-Francois.LeBihan@itu.int		Consumer Associations of SADC Members States

Subject: **Invitation to the validation workshop of SADC Guidelines on Universal Service/Access and Best Practices, 14-16 March 2011, Windhoek, Namibia**

Dear Sir/Madam,

The International Telecommunication Union (ITU), in collaboration with the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and the Communications Regulators Association of Southern Africa (CRASA) Secretariats, is pleased to invite you to the workshop on the **"Review and Update of SADC Guidelines on Universal Access/Service and Best Practices" from 14 to 16 March 2011 in Windhoek, Namibia** kindly hosted by the Namibian Communications Commission (NCC).

The objective of this workshop is to review, amend and validate the following documents:

1. The updated SADC Guidelines on Universal Access and Service
2. The new SADC Toolkit on Best Practices using Universal Access and Service Funds

The working documents for the workshop can be found on the ITU website:

http://www.itu.int/ITU-D/projects/ITU_EC_ACP/hipssa/Activities/SA/sa-2.2.html

In addition to an update on the regulatory framework, the participants will also review the current successes and failures regarding Universal Service/Access implementation (including funds) and validate solutions to improve the current weaknesses.

After this validation workshop, the CRASA Secretariat will submit these documents for adoption at their next Annual General Meeting (AGM). Subsequently, the SADC Secretariat may present them for adoption during the coming 2011 meeting of SADC Ministers in charge of Communications, ICT and Postal as a follow-up of their Resolution 03/2007 on Best Practices for Universal Access adopted at their 2007 meeting in Maputo.

Due to the importance of this workshop, the participants are requested to have decision making position in their respective organisations. Registration information, draft agenda and work program, fellowship application form and practical information are attached.

This validation workshop and the preparation of the working documents are supported by the German International Cooperation (GIZ) on behalf of the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) within the framework of the ITU-EC HIPSSA Project[1].

In the meantime, you may contact the following persons should you need any additional information: Ms. Bridget LINZIE, CRASA Acting Executive Secretary, E-mail: crasa@it.bw, Tel: +267 315 84 68) or Mr. Jean-François LE BIHAN, HIPSSA, Senior Project Coordinator, E-mail: hipssa@itu.int, Tel: +251 11 551 49 77).

I sincerely hope that you will be able to participate in this important event, which will be crucial for the region.

Yours faithfully,

[Original signed]

Brahima Sanou
Director

Cc: Mr. Remmy MAKUMBE, Director of Infrastructure and Services, SADC
     Ms. Bridget LINZIE, Acting Executive Secretary, CRASA
     Ms. Asenath Mpatwa, Acting Regional Director, ITU Regional Office for Africa Region

Annexes :   - General Information (Annex I)
                 - Draft Agenda and Work Program (Annex II)
                 - Fellowship Application Form (Annex III)
                 - Practical Information (Annex IV)

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[1] The full title of the HIPSSA Project - funded by the European Commission and the ITU and implemented in collaboration with the African Union Commission, the Regional Economic Communities including SADC and regional associations of regulators including CRASA is "Support to Harmonization of ICT Policies in Sub-Sahara Africa". HIPSSA is part of a global ITU-EC project encompassing Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific countries (ACP) (See http://www.itu.int/ITU-D/projects/ITU_EC_ACP/hipssa/index.html).