

Conformity & Interoperability Testing: *Network Development, Integration & Interconnection: **Zambian case***

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Bridging the digital divide between the developed and the developing countries remains the industrial development challenge that is further reflected in the standardization capacity gap between the industrialized top economies and less industrialized lower income economies.

This gap has further been translated into a unbalanced global trade situation where bilateral and regional trade agreements work much better than the global trade agreements such as Agreement on Basic Telecommunication (ABT) leading to technical barriers to trade especially for to smaller nations who may not have the necessary human and technical capacity to specify high standards as well as check their conformity to the said standards. In the era where there is high market concentration of large and established manufacturers in developed countries against the backdrop of shorter product life cycles, the one-way trade has resulted in dumping of inferior sub-standard products in the developing countries such as Zambia.

Consequently, Network Developing, Integration and Interconnection presents a key challenge as the conformity assessment regime in developing countries is not robust thereby leading to a number of interoperability problems and hence poor quality of service. The Resolution 76 (WTSA,2008) on CIT and Possible ITU Mark Program would go a long in helping developing country have confidence in ICT equipment and Networks being installed. Zambia is especially concerned about the possible electronic dumping after the DTT migration period expires in 2015. Zambia, therefore, attaches great importance to Resolution 76 and is ready to contribute towards its implementation. Accordingly, Zambia has put in place comprehensive legal and regulatory framework on conformity & interoperability testing.

The presentation will catalogue the known conformity and interoperability problems in the network development, integration and interconnection process in Zambia. The presentation will also describe the new legal and regulatory interventions such as the National Quality Policy (NQP), ICT Standards Policy, New Type Approval Regime, QoS Framework and new equipment certification program with the planned establishment of **ZamTest** regulatory test laboratory.

PRESENTATION AGENDA

1. **Introduction:** Zambian ICT Supplier Landscape
2. **Zambian Experience:** Conformity & Interoperability issues
3. **Policy Interventions**
 - National Quality Policy 2010
 - ICT Standards Policy 2010
4. **Legal & Regulatory Framework**
 - QoS Framework 2011
 - Type Approval Regime
5. **New Equipment Certification Program**
 - Verification of Conformity (VoC) Program 2011
 - Future Zamtest Lab 2014
6. **Conclusion**