International Telecommunication Union (ITU)
Arab Regional Office

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To: ITU Administrations, Regulators, Sector Members, Associates and Academia Members, Telecom Operators and Service providers, Manufacturers and Academic Institutions of the Maghreb Region

Subject: Workshop for Maghreb countries to promote the development and implementation of Conformity Assessment programmes, Tunis (Tunisia), 9-11 December 2014

Sir/Madam,

I have the pleasure to inform you that the ITU Arab Regional Office is organizing the Workshop for Maghreb countries to promote the development and implementation of Conformity Assessment programmes. This workshop is kindly hosted by the Centre d'Etudes et de Recherche des Télécommunications (CERT) and will take place from 9 to 11 December 2014, in Tunis (Tunisia).

The Workshop is open to both Members and non-Members of the ITU wishing to contribute to the work, covering various aspects of the ITU Conformity and Interoperability (C&I) programme. This will include tasks, efforts and priorities to be fulfilled in the international standardization field to increase interoperability of products between various providers/manufacturers, capacity building and creation of test centres in the Maghreb   region, accreditation, certification, mutual recognition agreements of quality certificates and the testing experience for system and network solutions, services and parameters of network functioning for ensuring the required quality of service (QoS). Many leading international experts will be invited to speak at the event.

The objective of the workshop is to share information and to discuss strategies and methods to address and promote Conformity and Interoperability programmes on a Regional Basis. This workshop, based on the results and the recommendations coming from the assessment study on C&I conducted for Maghreb countries, aims at identifying all the necessary elements and promote the Collaboration among Regional and Sub-regional Organizations for establishing a common C&I Programme and Mutual Recognition Agreements (MRA), seeking to present possible scenarios to meet the needs and interests of Member States and Regions.

The Workshop shall cover, but not be limited to, the items described below.

1) General aspects of the Region: Description of the region e.g. demography, economy, geography, penetration of telecoms and Internet including wireless, broadband and ICTs, governance, service providers, supply and manufacturing, natural resources and export/imports

2) Regulatory framework and Institutions (per country)

- Regulatory framework and regulation which establishes technical requirements for products and services to be legally imported and deployed in the marketplace e.g. ICT products and services.

- Legislation and regulation dealing with ICT and telecom products and services and related areas such as electrical safety and environmental issues. MRAs on Conformity Assessment e.g. for certification. National standards system and national Standards Development Organizations (SDOs). Institutions responsible for the Development of conformity assessment programs, in the areas of products, processes, services and personnel, mandatory or voluntary, which involve the approval of regulations.
- Legislation and regulation which establishes importation requirements for products and services such as ICTs including telecom products, electrical safety and environmental aspects
- Importation control of the products entering the country/region enforced e.g. at point of entry, spot checks and post market surveillance, audit and enforcement regime established for products entering the country/region, and deployed in the country/region, and a schedule of punishments for infractions
- What actions, if any, are undertaken to identify counterfeit products and what actions are taken to remove such products from the marketplace and to deal with parties.
- Accreditation Body (ISO/IEC 17011) (not only in ICT). Laboratories, Certification Bodies and Marking
- What Certification Bodies (ISO/IEC 17065) are in the country, where are they located. Establishing a common C&I Regime and MRAs. Possible Scenarios to permit the collaboration for establishing of Common C&I Regime and Mutual Recognition Agreements
- Establishing and maintaining a registry/repository of MRA signatories and related information such as scopes of operation, technical standards covered etc.

Discussions will be held in French and English.

Please note that there are no participation fees for this event. Travel arrangements and accommodation should be made and borne by the participating entity. The draft Programme is attached as Annex 1 to this invitation letter.

I invite you to visit our website (http://www.itu.int/ITU-D/arb/ARO/2014/CAP/index.html) in order to obtain additional/detailed information, including the latest Programme, registration, logistics information (hotels, visa, etc.) and other relevant material.

Following ITU's latest events, the Workshop will also be a paperless event and participants are invited to download the documents needed for the event. We encourage participants to kindly confirm their participation by filling the Registration Form online by **1 December 2014** at the latest. The Registration Form can be found on the following link:

http://www.itu.int/online/regsys/ITU-D/workshop/edrs.registration.form?_eventid=4000203

Mr. Slaheddine Maaref, ITU Arab Regional Office, Tel.: +202 35 37 1777, E-mail: Slaheddine.maaref@itu.int, is at the disposal of participants who require assistance.

I very much hope that you will be able to participate and share your views and valuable experience with the participants, which will contribute to enrich the discussions and the outputs of the Workshop.

Yours sincerely,

Ebrahim AL HADDAD
Regional Director

Annex 1: Draft Programme