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FOR DEVELOPMENT**

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Contribution by

United Nations Economic Commission for Africa

**Note on selected Activities carried out by the United Nations
Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), with financial
support from the Government of Finland**

The views presented here are the contributor's and do not necessarily reflect the views and the position of the United Nations or the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development

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1. The Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) continues to support the development of national ICT strategies upon request from Member States. Presently 86% of the countries have national e-strategies, as recommended by the WSIS outcomes. Also a survey of member States in 2011 indicated increased investment in ICTs for development, more widespread deployment of e-government portals and greater integration of ICTs in schools.
2. ECA fosters capacity-building in the measurement of ICT indicators through the Scan-ICT initiative during 2011. In the framework of the international Partnership for Measuring ICT4D and the Task Group on E-Government (TGEG), ECA has been leading the development of the e-government indicators and produced the framework document on e-Government indicators, which together with the other indicators, coordinated by, respectively ITU (Household), UNCTAD (Business indicators), UNESCO-Institute of Statistics (Education indicators) and ECA (E-government indicators) were approved by the UN Statistical Commission in its February 2012 session in New York.
3. ECA is also working with the African Union and Regional Economic Communities to harmonise legislation on cybersecurity and electronic transactions. Support to SADC has resulted in a SADC sub-regional e-commerce strategy, approved by the SADC ministers of ICT few weeks ago in Mauritius, while ECOWAS Head of States adopted several supplementary acts respectively on electronic transactions, personal data protection and cybercrime.
4. In addition, following a request from the African Head of State Summit of January 2011 ECA, worked with Africa's Regional Economic Communities to harmonise legislation,. This has resulted into a draft cybersecurity convention, currently being reviewed by RECS in a series of workshops and will be tabled before the African Union Heads of State and Government in December 2012.
5. At the 6th IGF held in Nairobi in September 2011, the ECA in collaboration with the African Union Commission and African national and sub-regional IGFs have launched the African Internet Governance Forum (AfIGF) with the aim of serving as a platform for an inclusive multilateral and multi-stakeholder discussion on issues pertinent to the Internet in Africa in general and Internet Governance issues

- in particular. The first meeting of AfIGF will be held in Cairo from 4-5 October 2012.
6. In collaboration with the Diplo Foundation, ECA has organised training on ‘e-diplomacy’ and Internet governance, complementing delivery of the ICT Essentials for Government Leaders programme through the Information Technology Centre for Africa (ITCA), which celebrated its first online graduates in April 2012.
 7. In August 2011, the Africa Preparatory Meeting to the United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management Initiative (UN GGIM) recommended development of an African Action Plan, which is currently being finalized. In addition, ECA has supported development of regional geospatial databases in sectors such as health, water and emergency management.
 8. We organized the Innovation Prize for Africa (IPA) during the Conference of African Ministers of Finance in April 2012 in Addis Ababa. The first prize of US100,000 was won by Mr. Mohamed Sanad, professor at the faculty of Engineering in Cairo University for inventing the first small internal integrated micro strip antenna for mobile phones, which significantly reduces the interaction between the human-body and the radiation from cellular phones. There were 458 entries in the competition. IPA, which is supported by ECA and the African Innovation Foundation, has as its main objective to promote innovation across Africa in key sectors such as Green Technologies, Health and Food Security and ICTs applications.
 9. In order to build on comparative advantages of various African countries, including the expansion of the infrastructure, a young, multilingual and competitive ICT human resource, geographic proximity for some of the countries to of European/North American markets, ECA is supporting Mauritius to launch an annual African Business Process Outsourcing (BPO) Conference from 12-14 September 2012. The conference is expected to come up with an African BPO Framework to be used by member States in developing their business plan in the context of each country’s comparative advantages and priorities. This will be coupled with development of Technology Parks, which will be part of the next orientation of ECA work on ICT for Development for the coming years.
 10. Finally ECA will be holding the 3rd Science with Africa Conference in Addis Ababa in October 2012, as a Forum to share experiences and best practices. It will focus on promoting science, technology and innovation in Africa by showcasing future designs, concepts and products being developed by Africa’s top innovating firms, R&D institutions and independent researchers and entrepreneurs.