

Report of the African Union Open Forum

Session Title	African Union Open Forum
Date	07/12/16
Time	1700-1800hrs
Session Organizers	Adil Sulieman, Senior Policy Officer, African Union / Makane Faye, African IGF Secretariat
Chair/Moderator	Palesa Logeze, Department of Communications, South Africa
Rapporteur/Notetaker	Koliwe Majama, Program Officer, MISA, Zimbabwe
List of Speakers and their institutional affiliations	Adil Sulieman - Senior Policy Officer, AUC Dr. Mawaki Chango - CEO Digilexis, Lecturer, University of Kara, Togo Olusegun H. Olugbile - Managing Partner, CPAA, Nigeria Mandiaye Ndiaye - Senior Librarian, University Cheikh Anta Diop, Senegal Mary Uduma - Coordinator National Nigerian IGF Moctar Yeday, Chief Information Society Division, AUC
Key Issues raised (1 sentence per issue):	<p>The need for Africans to agree on continental IG priorities and positions so that there is realisation of progress and impact on policy and overall uptake on ICTs.</p> <p>Currently, very few countries have achieved the multistakeholder approach in their respective IG processes. African States were urged to make deliberate effort to expand the multistakeholder frontier by especially focussing on increasing involvement of the youth and private sector. The AfIGF reflected the importance and possibility of meaningful participation of the youth in IG as they were visible and constitute the majority of users on the continent.</p> <p>African IGF processes need to formulate specific initiatives that focus on the building trust between the stakeholders as this is a progress deterrent.</p>
If there were presentations during the session, please provide a 1-paragraph summary for each Presentation	<p>Challenges facing Africa in ICT sector</p> <p>The presentation outlined the social, political, structural and economic challenges faced on the continent in ensuring that ICTs fully become an enabler of the Sustainable Development Goals on the continent. These included the failure by states to ratify the African Union Convention on Cybersecurity and Personal Data Protection, lack of trust particularly between the key stakeholders and lack of multistakeholder participation, especially from government side.</p>

African School of Internet Governance (AfriSIG) outline

This presentation by a Faculty member of the school gave an outline of the fourth AfriSIG, which was held 11-15 October 2016. AfriSIG was strategically planned to precede the AfIGF to enhance the learning experience of the 44 graduates on the regional internet governance trends and processes. This was reflected in the confidence of the participants to be a part of AfIGF through rapporteuring, chairing of sessions and participation as panellists during the programme. This years practicum focussed on internet shutdowns and resulted in the production of a statement with an official position and recommendations on internet shutdowns on the continent. It was delivered at the AfIGF.

Key outcomes of High level Session and possible future engagement of stakeholders

This presentation focussed on the key issues highlighted in the High-level session which agreed that because African countries share similar issues and concerns on IG there was need to utilise national and subregional levels meetings and the AfIGF for sharing and strategizing on IG concerns. It also agreed that once the African Union Declaration on Internet Governance when adopted by the African Head of States Summit, it should be implemented by African countries without delay.

Recommendations of the AfIGF 2016 and how they can adequately respond to the issues of inclusiveness and the digital transformation of Africa

The presentation summarised the AfIGF recommendations. These included: Internet Governance and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), Bridging the gender divide in the digital transformation, Digital Economy, Human Rights on the Internet, Security and Privacy issues in the Internet, Youth Entrepreneurship and Innovation, Inclusive development & Digital Transformation in Africa. These are available on the website in detail.¹

Building up on Durban's outcomes and way forward for Inclusive development and the digital transformation

This presentation emphasised on the need for stakeholders within the national IGFs to follow up on incorporate the recommendations into their plan of actions. Emphasis was laid on buy in from all stakeholders, and in particular, the governments was critical for the realisation of all the recommendations; African Union's facilitatory role of ensuring that the multistakeholder model is adopted in NIGF level; strengthening of links between the work at NIGF level with that

¹ www.afigf.org

	<p>of the Regional IGFs ; Increasing participation of the private sector in IG processes; and the promotion and support of universities to identify and carry out research at continental level on critical IG issues.</p>
<p>Please describe the Discussions that took place during the workshop session: (3 paragraphs)</p>	<p><i>Why has there been lower participation at the AfIGF in the recent years? What are the main challenges?</i></p> <p>There has been a cut in the allocation of the budget that has affected the organising of the AfIGF. The first three IGF offered full sponsorship of participants, but there is a possibility that participants may be required to self sponsor as early as next year.</p> <p><i>Why has there been a low uptake on the Cyber security convention and what role can the AU play?</i></p> <p>The lack of political will needs to be addressed and it remains unclear what the challenges are in ratifying the Convention which is in no way a duplication to other cyber security conventions. In this context, the meeting noted with appreciation the ratification by Senegal and some few other countries of the African Union Convention, while they had already signed global cybersecurity conventions. The AU pushes a programmatic and not political agenda, it is therefore necessary that states are self motivated to own and localise regionally agreed positions at country level.</p> <p><i>Why has the African Union not given an official statement on the internet shutdowns on the continent?</i></p> <p>The AU is made up member States, who bear the responsibility of drawing up and agreeing on the official position. The secretariat is limited in the issuance of the statement but will endeavour to push for action.</p>
<p>Please describe any Participant suggestions regarding the way forward/ potential next steps /key takeaways: (3 paragraphs)</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Need for wider representation of Africa in IG forums so that the African voice is heard; 2. Need to put in place strategies to bring on board both African government and private sector; 3. Increase the number of platforms for discussions on IG issues putting together all stakeholders; 4. Fundraising for research should be a priority within the IG agenda so that it informs priorities;