

FINAL Communiqué  
**9<sup>th</sup> ICT AFRICA INVESTMENT SUMMIT**  
27 – 29 November 2008  
Palais des Congrès, Cotonou, Republic of Benin

Theme: Connecting Africa: Focus on Broadband Infrastructure  
and Universal Access

### **Introduction/Opening**

The 9<sup>th</sup> ICT Africa Investment Summit took place 27 – 29 November 2008 at the Palais des Congrès Cotonou, Republic of Benin. The Summit was attended by representatives of the various stakeholders in the ICT sector in Africa namely Ministers, Policy makers, Regulators, Operators, Users, System integrators and manufacturers from Benin, Mozambique, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, South Africa, Switzerland and Chad.

The Summit was organized by Kemilinks International in collaboration with the Ministry of Communication and ICT, Benin and industry partners.

The theme of the Summit was: “Connecting Africa: Focus on Broadband Infrastructure and Universal Access”.

Various countries and industry players received the **Kemilinks International ICT Africa Awards 2008** in nine (9) categories, following nominations received through the Kemilinks International website [www.kemilinks.com](http://www.kemilinks.com). The Awards were presented during the ICT Africa Awards Dinner held on Thursday 27 November 2008. The Awards are aimed at promoting best practices and rewarding excellence in ICT policy and industry in Africa.

The Summit was declared open by H.E. Mr. Desire ADADJA, Minister of Communications and ICT on behalf of the President of the Republic of Benin, H.E. Dr Boni YAYI. In his keynote address, the President emphasized that ICTs are not a matter of choice but a necessity and that they require a combined effort of the private and the public sector to achieve a robust infrastructure for Africa. He expressed appreciation to Kemilinks International for their continuous efforts to ensure that the ICT Africa Investment Summit has a rich value for continent.

He called on participants to find ways and means to ensure that the deployment of broadband be extended to remote and rural areas in Africa. ,

## **Resolutions**

Following deliberations of the various issues presented to the summit, the followings were adopted:

1. The Summit noted the efforts of the Government of the Republic of Benin in elaborating a comprehensive ICT policy for the country and encouraged all the national authorities concerned to accelerate the process for the overall benefit of the people of Benin.
2. The Summit called on all African countries who have not yet done so to accelerate the process of elaborating a comprehensive policy and regulatory framework that will place ICTs at the centre of their long term economic plans as a matter of urgency, taking into account convergence, and using African expertise to the fullest extent as well as experience from fellow African countries.
3. The Summit appeals to Africa Heads of Government, to keep Ministers and regulators that are competent and have demonstrated commitment to the implementation of people oriented ICT policies for a minimum period of time to allow for continuity of policies and stability of regulatory regimes.
4. The Summit noted the progress achieved by NEPAD and eAfrica Commission in the development of regional ICT infrastructure and urged all African countries to support their infrastructure programmes to ensure connectivity amongst all African countries, noting the benefits such as open access and joint ownership.
5. The Summit urged NEPAD and eAfrica Commission to ensure that national and Regional ICT agencies are fully informed and consulted on its work given its impact on the African continent.
6. The Summit noted that only a few African countries had embarked on elaborating a strategy for the implementation of the transition from analogue to digital broadcasting. Given that the transition is a must with a global deadline of 15 June 2015, the Summit called upon the Hon Minister of Communications and ICT from Benin to write to all his colleague Ministers to elaborate as a matter of urgency their national strategies, and called on the African Union of Broadcasting, with the support of regional economic communities to provide support to in order to develop regional guidelines.

7. The Summit urged all countries that have not yet done so to establish community radio stations noting the distinguishing characteristics of community radio as the third level of broadcasting in line with the African Charter on Broadcasting: such as community ownership and management.
8. The Summit recognized the important role that Public Private People Partnerships can play in the development of ICT projects and emphasized the need to involve the local private sector in the strategy and implementation.
9. The Summit noted the need for the ITU to extend the Centers of Excellence concept to networking of the various other national ICT training institutions across Africa. African countries should on the other hand participate actively in the ITU capacity building and other study groups so as to make appropriate interventions.
10. The Summit noted the mishaps which had occurred with the RASCOM and Nigcomsat satellites and urged the managements of these organizations to take steps to ensure that Africa continues to play a major role in the use of satellite technology through the use of amongst others, African owned satellites; furthermore, these organizations should ensure that they have reliable and adequate backup systems.
11. The Summit noted the growing need for continuous investments in ICT infrastructure and content development within Africa. It urges all Governments to give support in this area, in their development programs by applying mechanism such as public - private – people - partnerships.
12. The Summit encourages proper planning and costing before embarking on any ICT project or purchase to avoid wastage of resources and to protect the credibility of the ministry and regulators.
13. The Summit noted that African countries should invest in broadband technology, particularly in rural areas where the majority of the people live
14. Considering the centrality of the media in the development process, African governments should increase the tempo, the scale and the sophistication of the democratization of access to the media by the people.
15. The Summit urged African governments and financial institutions in the region to support investments in media institutions in Africa.

16. African leaders, social and private partners should participate in strengthen capacity building for the population in order to achieve efficient and wider use and ownership of ICT.

### **Appreciation**

In conclusion, the Summit expressed appreciation to the Government and people of Benin for their generous hospitality accorded to all delegates to the Summit. Particular appreciation was extended to the Honourable Minister of Communications and ICT, Mr. Desire Adadja for his contribution to the discussions at the beginning and close of the Summit. Appreciation was expressed to the African Ministers and resource persons for the commitment manifested by their participation and their excellent presentations and contributions to the discussions.

The Summit congratulated Kemilinks International for the commitment and efficient manner in which it organized the Summit and thanked all the public and private sector partners for their contributions towards the success of the Summit. The Summit urged the organizers to ensure good quality of future Summits.

### **Closing**

During the Closing ceremony, Engr Shola TAYLOR, CEO of Kemilinks International thanked the Government of the Republic of Benin and all those who contributed to the success of the Summit, in particular the staff of the Ministry, the resource persons, sponsors, delegates, the press, and supporting staff. He stated that he was very well satisfied with regards to the quality of the debate from the participants.

The Hon Minister of Post and Technologies from Chad, Hon Albert PAHIMI PADACHE remarked that he had learnt a lot from the Summit and he expressed the hope that Africa will be better for it.

In his closing remarks, the Host Minister Hon Mr. Desire ADADJA stated that he was impressed with the outcome of the Summit. He stated that he would personally send the communiqué to all African Ministers in charge of ICT. In addition, he would champion a move, in cooperation with his colleague Ministers, to convene a Summit that would review past ICT policies in Africa with a view to taking stock and charting the way forward. This, he said was imperative in order to ensure that Africa benefits maximally from the potentials of ICT.

*Done 29<sup>th</sup> November 2008 in Cotonou*