



United Nations
Economic Commission for Africa

Aide memoire

**2017 Africa Regional Review of Progress in the
implementation of the outcomes of the World Summit on
the Information Society**

**on the theme of “ICT for transformation towards
sustainable and resilient societies”**



22 and 23 November 2017

United Nations Conference Centre

Addis Ababa

Aide-memoire

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A. Introduction

1. The General Assembly, in resolution 70/125, adopted the outcome document of the high-level meeting on the overall review of the implementation of the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society, and reaffirmed the continued implementation of the World Summit on the Information Society outcomes for the next 10 years and called for a close alignment between the World Summit on the Information Society process and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, highlighting ICT’s cross-cutting contribution to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. The resolution also invited Regional Commissions of the United Nations to continue their work on the World Summit on the Information Society action line implementation, and their contribution to the reviews thereof, including through regional reviews.

2. In that context, the ninth Joint Annual Meetings of the African Union Specialized Technical Committee on Finance, Monetary Affairs, Economic Planning and Integration and the Economic Commission for Africa Conference of African Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, held in Addis Ababa from 31 March to 5 April 2016, adopted resolution 941(XLIX), and called upon the Economic Commission for Africa and other partners to take all necessary steps to organize, on an annual basis, an African regional review of progress in the implementation of the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society in support of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and Agenda 2063.

3. Pursuant to relevant mandates, ECA proposes to organize the 2017 Africa Regional Review of Progress in the Implementation of the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society on the theme relating to information and communications technology (ICT), “ICT for transformation towards sustainable and resilient societies”.

4. **“ICT for transformation towards sustainable and resilient societies”**. The 2017 meeting of the Africa Regional Review will serve as a key forum for discussing the role of ICTs as a means of implementing the 2030 Agenda, which states that the spread of information and communications technology and global interconnectedness has great potential to accelerate human progress, to bridge the digital divide and to develop knowledge societies, as does scientific and technological innovation across areas as diverse as medicine and energy.

5. The theme of the current Africa Regional Review aligns perfectly with the theme of the 2018 high-level political forum: “Transformation towards sustainable and resilient societies.” It is pertinent because the full implementation of Agenda 2063 requires substantive support and the use of ICTs. The 2017 Regional Review Meeting will therefore facilitate the discussion on the best ways of harnessing ICTs to support implementation of the 2030 Agenda,

particularly Goals 6, 7, 11, 12, 15 and 17. Of particular importance will be an open debate on, and discovery of, realistic mechanisms capable of helping African countries to implement the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063.

6. Since 2005, as part of its mandate, ECA has been carrying out Africa Regional Reviews of the implementation of action lines from the World Summit on the Information Society. It has produced several reports that document Africa's steady progress in the implementation of the action lines. Emphasizing the importance of data and statistics to support ICT for development, ECA, as a member of the Partnership on Measuring Information and Communications Technology for Development, is also mandated to continue its valuable contribution to data gathering and dissemination including through annual follow-up and review of the World Summit on the Information Society implementation in Africa.

B. Objective

7. The main objective of the follow-up and review of the 2017 Africa Regional Review of Progress in the implementation of the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society is to assess progress in Africa in the implementation of the World Summit action lines, in order to achieve the 2030 Agenda and the aspirations of Agenda 2063. A matrix was developed based on the World Summit and the Sustainable Development Goals by the Action Line Facilitator of the United Nations World Summit on the Information Society. The matrix was presented at the World Summit on the Information Society Forum 2015, and is intended to serve as the mechanism to map, analyse and coordinate the implementation of the World Summit action lines. More specifically, it is anticipated that the matrix will position the ICTs in such a way that they become enablers and accelerators of the Sustainable Development Goals. ECA has also adopted the matrix and expanded it to align the action lines of the World Summit on the Information Society with the aspirations of Agenda 2063.

8. Specifically, the annual follow-up will address the following:

- **The degree to which member States are aligning their implementation of the World Summit on the Information Society action lines with the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063;**
- Emerging issues and challenges in the implementation of the action lines in Africa;
- Reviewing progress made by African countries in the implementation of the World Summit on the Information Society outcomes based on a set of ICTs indicators.

C. Outcomes

9. There are a number of ways that the outcomes of the Regional World Summit on the Information Society will be reviewed and followed up, including:

- A meeting report summarizing the proceedings and containing recommendations for policymakers and identifying further areas of work for ECA and its partners;
- A shared understanding and experience, among participants, of progress in the implementation of World Summit on the Information Society action lines in Africa, the challenges and prospects.

D. Documents

10. The main documents of this regional consultation meeting will be a draft report on the implementation of the World Summit on the Information Society action lines in Africa, the aide-memoire and brief presentations by member States. All documents will be posted on the ECA website as they become available.

E. Date, venue and participants

11. The meeting will take place on 22 and 23 November 2017 at the United Nations Conference Centre in Addis Ababa.

12. The meeting will be attended by policymakers, ICT experts, telecommunications operators, and representatives of various sectors, including regional economic communities; international, regional and intergovernmental organizations; private sector; civil society and academic and research institutions.

F. Outputs

13. The main output of the Review will be a report of the proceedings containing policy recommendations on scaling up the implementation of the action lines in Africa. Another output will be a progress report. Policy briefs will be drafted based on the outcome of the Review.

G. Working languages

14. English and French are the working languages of this meeting. Interpretation will be available.

H. Contacts

15. For further information, including registration details, please contact:

Mr. Mactar Seck
New Technologies and Innovation Section
Special Initiatives Division
Economic Commission for Africa
P.O. Box 3001, Addis Ababa
Email: seck8@un.org
[Tel:+251 11 544 3424](tel:+251115443424)