Concept Note

Africa Regional WSIS Follow-up and Annual Review & EGM on Emerging Issues in ICT Meeting
22- 24 November 2016

1.   Background

The United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) , in its Resolution 70/125 : *" Outcome document of the high-level meeting of the General Assembly on the overall review of the implementation of the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS)"* extended the mandate of the WSIS process to 2025 and called for the continuation of the work of the United Nations Group on the Information Society in coordinating the work of United Nations agencies, according to their mandates and competencies, and invited the regional commissions to continue their work in implementation of the World Summit on the Information Society action lines and their contribution to the reviews thereof, including through regional reviews. (P.68)"

Pursuant to this, the ninth Joint AUC-ECA Annual Meetings of the AU Conference of Ministers of the Economy and Planning held in March 2016, to take into consideration the outcomes of the UNGA overall review of implementation of the WSIS outcomes in 2015, adopted a resolution requesting ECA in collaboration with other partners to take all necessary steps to organize an annual basis an African regional review of progress made in the implementation of the WSIS outcomes in support to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the AU's Agenda 2063. Emphasising 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 implementation of WSIS Outcomes in Africa.

Furthermore, in addition to contributing to the global review of WSIS undertaken by the United Nations Commission on Science and Technology for Development (UNCSTD), ECA also conducted a capstone ten-year review of the implementation of WSIS outcomes in Africa in 2015 entitled "WSIS+10 and beyond". This regional review meeting not only assessed progress made in the region in implementing WSIS, it also identified challenges, future priorities, strategies and actions particularly in the wake of the adoption by the African Union of Agenda 2063 and the UN post-2015 development agenda. The Outcomes of this Africa consultation served as an input into the United Nations General Assembly debate and resolution on WSIS in December, 2015.

It is in this context that ECA, pursuant to its mandate to promote the economic and social development of its member States, through the New Technologies and Innovation Section (NTIS) in the Special Initiatives Division (SID), plans to organize the 2016 Africa WSIS review meeting.

2.   Objective

The objective of the regional review meeting is to assess the progress that African countries are making in achieving the WSIS outcomes in general as well as the ICT emerging issue in support of the implementation of the Agenda 2030 Sustainable Development Goals. As well as the ICT emerging issue.

More precisely, the review meeting will:

a) Review progress in Africa on each Action lines of the WSIS Outcomes;
b) Discuss challenges encountered in the region in mainstreaming ICT for development with specific reference to the implementation of the African Union's 2063 and the United Nation's Agenda 2030.

Special sessions will focus on a) the rise of the financial technology (fintech) industry in Africa and the increasing challenge of cyber-security; b) an All-of-Africa indicator framework for ICT measurement in the context of the SDGs and the AU's Agenda 2063; c) Internet Protocol version 6 (IPv6) transition; and d) emerging Internet governance issues.

3.   Expected Outcomes

The key expected outcomes of the Regional WSIS follow up and review meeting will be:

a) Report on progress made in the region in the implementation of WSIS action lines,
b) A set of recommendations on financial technology (Fintech) services and cyber threats in the financial services industry;
c) Measurement framework for ICT within the context of Agenda 2030 and Agenda 2063;

d) Recommendations on IPv6 and the future of e-commerce in light of increasing use of geo-blocking;
e) Recommendations on emerging Internet Governance..

4.   Documents
   http://www.uneca.org/wsis-2016

5.   Date and venue

The Review meeting will take place from 22 to 24 November, 2016 at the United Nations Conference Centre (UNCC), Addis Ababa, Ethiopia**.**

6.   Participants

The Review will take place at the United Nations Conference Centre, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia and will be attended by African policy makers, ICT experts, RECs and IGOs, representatives of regional and international organizations, Telecommunications operators, private sector, civil society, academic and research institutions, and others.

7.   Working language

English and French are the working languages of this meeting. There will be simultaneous interpretation into the other.

8.   Contact

For further information, including registration information, please contact:

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