



GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT

MAURITIUS AFRINIC MEETINGS

INTRODUCTION

The 5th AfriNIC public policy meeting in Mauritius (29 November – 1 December 2006) was a success in terms of number of attendants and quality of discussions. The meeting was formally opened by the Mauritian Minister of IT & Telecommunications, who primarily encouraged a united African voice in Internet governance issues.

As a place, Mauritius was lovely and its summer made the nearby beach quite a temptation. But there just was not enough time to accommodate it☺!

TECHNICAL ISSUES

The IPv6 conference on 29 November provided a good outline of developments relating to the technology's implementation in various regions, particularly outside Africa. There were informative presentations by various people including:

- Philip Smith (Cisco) – IPv6 in global arena;
- Martin Potts - 6DISS Initiative;
- Yves Poppe (Teleglobe) – IPv6 international perspective;
- Hytham EL Nakhal – IPv6 implementation in Egypt;
- Hiba Osman – IPv6 in Sudan; and
- Adiel Akplogan (AfriNIC CEO) – 6Mandela Project Discussion.

The 6Mandela Project is an interesting initiative aimed at creating IPv6 awareness primarily among network operators in the continent, as Africa is still lagging behind in

implementing this technology. In addition, Jordi Palet Martinez (the usual IPv6 trainer in AfriNIC trainings) did an interesting presentation outlining the costs of implementing IPv6. His focus was primarily on training, network (more bandwidth capacity, intrinsic network growth) and dual stack costs (i.e. costs of implementing IPv6 parallel to the older IPv4 technology).

GOVERNANCE AND POLICY

Technical policy issues were discussed on 1 December, with particular discussions on IPv6 assignments for end users, IPv6 for critical infrastructure, and IPv6 address allocation and assignment. It was particularly disturbing that consensus still could not reach regarding the IPv6 end user assignments policy (first discussed at Nairobi AfriNIC in May 2006). The co.za administrator (Uniform) was particularly unhappy about this as there is a demand for end user assignment in SA.

It is recommended that the Technical Committee of .za DNA should have a closer look at this matter and recommend a position to the Board. Depending on the recommendation, some lobbying may need to be done through AfriNIC and AFTLD going into the Abuja meetings of AfriNIC and AfNOG (late April 2006).

Attention: Techcom

The other policies also could not be agreed upon; they were referred to the AfriNIC mailing list for further discussion. This is otherwise a potentially viable online discussion option, but seems to be reaping unintended consequences where people delay decision-making on important policy issues.

INET CONFERENCE

ISOC's INET conference took place on 30 November and featured discussions on DNSSec, ccTLD best practices, ENUM and domains, and the Internet Governance Forum. The GM made a presentation, on behalf of AFTLD, about "The Role of ccTLDs in Society", and this started interesting discussions about African ccTLD participation within AFTLD and other regional Internet structures.

OVERALL IMPRESSION

AfriNIC keeps growing stronger from an organizational performance viewpoint. Its services are improving and its financial performance keeps getting better. It has grown to be an important role-player in the continent and its training programme keeps attracting more participants from various African countries. The downside is only on the policy-making side where Adiel and the AfriNIC Board needs to be more aggressive in ensuring efficacy in finalizing policies.

As an organization, AfriNIC remains an important platform for .za DNA and its current sub-domains to participate in. Going forward, it will be important for the Technical Committee to recommend positions regarding issues to be discussed at AfriNIC meetings.

Prepared by:

Vika Mpisane,

General Manager

Wednesday, 6 December 2006