



ATU MAURITIUS “FORUM ON CCTLDS” WORKSHOP 2009

INTRODUCTION

The fourth annual meeting of AfTLD was held in Arusha, Tanzania from 13 to 17 April. The event was hosted and sponsored by tzNIC, the Tanzania ccTLD manager, and AfTLD. Other sponsors included ICANN and ISOC, the organisations that have since 2006 taken particular interest in supporting AfTLD.

The meeting was well-attended with around 50 participants from 24 African ccTLDs and ICT organisations. Aptly themed “Securing Africa’s Internet Infrastructure”, the event was unique as it focussed exclusively on security.

The event was opened by the Deputy Minister of Communications of Tanzania, Dr. Maua Daftari, who had taken a particular interest in having the event successful. She was also available with her senior employees to attend other sessions, with an aim of learning more about Internet security and what governments’ role should be in security issues.

KEY EVENTS: DAYS 1 - 3

Attack and Contingency Response Planning (ACRP) and IPv6

The first 3 days of the event saw ACRP and IPv6 training sessions run parallel. The ACRP session was primarily hands-on and particularly drew the technical attendants. Delta-Risk, a security company contracted by ICANN to offer ACRP training to ccTLDs, expertly provided the training.

The IPv6 stream was presented by AfTLD, ISOC, AfriNIC and UniForum (through Mark Elkins). It was followed up on the 3rd day by a DNSSec session.

DAY 4: NON-TECHNICAL SESSION

Day 4 was a non-technical day which saw discussions of several key issues relating to the DNS, and these included:

(a) AfTLD-led DRP service

SAIPL, the .za ADR accredited provider, made an interesting proposal based on its previous discussions with AfTLD. The presentation outlined how AfTLD could offer a free dispute resolution service to its members. The presentation was well-received and AfTLD members asked the AfTLD secretariat and SAIPL to explore implementing this project.

(b) New gTLDs

Anne-Rachel Inne of ICANN made a presentation about the forthcoming new gTLDs. This allowed African ccTLDs to raise a number of questions and express their concerns.

There was a general feeling that while ICANN had been transparent in the process and conducted certain studies on the impact of new gTLDs, it had not shown any interest in understanding their potential impact on African ccTLDs and communities.

(c) Positioning your ccTLD for Growth

.ke, .ng, .gn made presentations showing their initiatives aimed at growing their ccTLDs and increasing registration figures. The presenters emphasized the importance of improving service and of marketing ccTLDs to local communities.

DAY 5: ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The event closed with an AGM. This was an important AGM because it would see the then current executive committee replaced with a newly elected one.

Adoption of constitutional amendments

The long-going saga of amending the AfTLD constitution finally came to fruition in Arusha. The members discussed all the proposed amendments and thereafter the amendments were unanimously approved.

Election of New Excom/Board

The outgoing Excom had been in office since the 2006 Marrakesh meeting as an interim Excom with a sole mandate of reviving AfTLD. Its firm view going to Arusha was that a new, non-interim Excom definitely needed to be elected as AfTLD was now strong enough to continue functioning. The GM unfortunately could not attend this session as he had already left for SA.

After the usual debates about certain constitutional clauses regulating the elections, the members finally elected a 6 member Excom/Board comprised of:

- Dr. Paulos Nyirenda (.mw)
- Eng. Mohamed El Bashir (.sd)
- Vika Mpisane (.za)
- Abibu Ntahigiye (.tz)
- Souleymane Oumtahaga (.ci)

- Vincent Ngudi (.ke)

The AGM did not elect an Excom Chair, but delegated this task to the Excom members at their first meeting.

The outgoing AfTLD President/Chair, Michuki Mwangi, thanked all delegates for being present and made an important observation that AfTLD had shown good progress and maturity over the last 3 years.

OVERALL IMPRESSION

The outgoing Chair's observation was spot on. The Arusha meeting showed how well AfTLD had grown in stature since 2006, and was attracting more interest from African ccTLDs and other organizations. More is expected from the Excom and the AfTLD Manager, Eric Akumiah, over the next year.

Written by:

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23 April 2009*