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REPORT OF THE EACO POSTAL ASSEMBLY HELD ON 22 – 23 JUNE, 2015 IN KAMPALA, UGANDA

1.0 Introduction

The East African Communications Organisation (EACO) held its Postal Assembly meeting in Kampala, Uganda from 22- 23 June, 2015. The meeting had participants from; National Post of Burundi (NPB), Postal Corporation of Kenya (PCK), Communications Authority of Kenya (CA), Posta Uganda, Uganda Communications Commission(UCC), Tanzania Posts Corporation (TPC), Tanzania Communications Regulatory Authority (TCRA) , Rwanda Utilities Regulatory Authority (RURA), National Post Office of Rwanda (NPO), Multimedia University of Kenya, AFRALTI and EAC. The list of participants is contained in **Annex 1**.

2.0 Opening of the meeting

The meeting was opened by the Chairman of EACO Postal Assembly Mr. Fortunate Kapinga the Ag. Postmaster General Tanzania Post Corporation, he thanked members on the work done at the previous meeting in Arusha and handed over Chairmanship to the host country Uganda.

3.0 Election of the bureau

The meeting elected the Rapporteurs. The bureau was therefore constituted as follows:

Chairperson : Emmanuel Ocama – Uganda
1st Rapporteur : Immaculate Namunyolo - Uganda
2nd Rapporteur : Matsiko Gonzaga – Rwanda

4.0 Adoption of the agenda

The agenda of the meeting was proposed and adopted with amendments. The agenda and work programme is contained in **Annex 2**.

5.0 Report of the Chairman

In his report the outgoing Chair of the assembly of the Postal operators noted the following achievements among others;

- All Member Countries are in the process of implementing the Regional Road Transport project that is aimed at improving the mail delivery speed across borders with a view to meeting customer experience and expectations;
- A Postal Conference on leveraging ICTS in the transformation of the Postal and courier sector was held in February 2015 in Nairobi, it examined the Global Postal and Courier environment, trends and developments together with opportunities created by the new environment. One of the key recommendations from the conference was that EACO and EAC in consultation with partner states should urgently carry out a study on addressing systems and postcodes in the region and define clear mechanisms for funding the project; and
- The continued participation of members in efforts towards enhancing financial inclusion in the region.

Despite the various achievements, there is still need for member countries to focus on the achievement of the UPU, PAPU, EACO and Domestic Quality of service standards, improvement in the mail security and infrastructure development with specific focus on Postcode and national addressing, e-commerce, electrification, broadband connectivity, roads etc.

6.0 Consideration of Matrix on Status of Implementation of Decisions of the Last Assembly

Members took note of the updates on status of implementation from members and agreed that implementation of the following needed to be fast tracked:

- I. The Development of security policies where none exist e.g. put in place appropriate firewalls to prevent cyber crimes, physical security of the system.
- II. Infrastructure development e.g. broadband connectivity, roads, airports, power and the National Addressing System as a business driver.
- III. Put in Policies on Private and Public Partnerships.
- IV. Members to enter into bi-lateral agreements on mail transfers across borders.

- V. Members to take advantage of E-Commerce opportunities especially the UPU Dot. Post platform.
- VI. EACO secretariat to carry out a study on the terminal dues systems and prepare the region's position on negotiations on issues of terminal dues for the next cycle.
- VII. EACO to lobby Governments to invest in infrastructure and support the National Addressing System (NAS) project.
- VIII. Members to take advantage of the developed curriculum by AFRALTI for training.
- IX. Members to take advantage of opportunities in the region to enhance financial inclusion.

Details on status of implementation are contained in **Annex 3**.

7.0 Consideration of the Report of Working Group 4 - Postal Service Development and Regulation

The report was presented by the Chair of WG4. These following are highlights from the last WG4 meeting held in February 2015:

Achievements

- The involvement and participation by member countries hence ease of collaboration;
- Security taken into perspective including: scanners, sniffer Dogs among other equipments;
- IFS contact persons for all member countries are now in place;
- Ensured all WP were facilitated and meetings held regularly as scheduled
- Initiated a sector Ministers' forum held during the ICT Conference in Kenya (February 2015) where a lot of experience was shared while addressing other issues that required their attention;
- -Postal Network standing out as the national e-commerce, financial and social-economic enabler; and
- Coordination of the Legal and Regulatory framework in the infrastructure sharing.

Recommendations

- Re- establishment of training sponsorships with Postal training institutions e.g Thailand by EACO HR committee;
- Participation by Governments in the National Addressing System infrastructure as a national social economic driver;
- Development of the Postal statistics data template by Uganda;
- Alignment of the Postal sector policies to incorporate the Courier sub- sectors; and
- Integration through involvement of WG Chairpersons' participation in meetings of other WGs.

Members took note of the Working Group achievements and recommendations.

8.0 Presentation by MMU - Kenya: Improving people's lives through ICT – A case of Business Continuity Management (BCM) application in the Postal and Courier

Multi Media University of Kenya made a presentation on the above topic. Members were informed that BCM is a continuous proactive management practice which has to do with business resilience and management of unforeseen risks. It was agreed that it is important to encompass BCM in all business processes, assets, resources and suppliers; and that it is an enterprise- wide program requiring participation of all stakeholders.

The assembly took note of the presentation and the risks highlighted by the presenter.

Recommendation

Members should ensure that Business Continuity Plans and strategies are put in place given the operational risks incurred in their business environment.

9.0 Presentation by EAC: Baseline survey on EAC Postal Sector

The East African Community (EAC) Secretariat informed the Assembly that in 2014, the EAC undertook a baseline survey on the postal sector in EAC partner states and that the outcome of the survey will feed into the development of an EAC Postal Strategy. The scope of the survey included the following:

- Policy, Legal and Institutional Framework for postal services;
- The status of postal infrastructure and facilities;
- The business performance of postal operators; and
- Consumer welfare activities.

The report of the baseline survey will be considered by EAC organs.

The assembly noted the information about the EAC survey and the statistics therein.

10.0 Proposal for EACO to become a Restricted Union of the Universal Postal Union (UPU)

Members took note and deliberated widely on the proposal for EACO becoming a Restricted Union (RU) of the UPU. Benefits of becoming an RU were well stipulated among others being:

- RUs promote further cooperation among posts from specific regions;
- They have an import role in coordinating and facilitating postal services at a regional level;
- UPU also works with RU to develop and implement regional development plans; and
- This approach allows regions to decide on own priorities while contributing to the World Postal strategy.

Having noted the above benefits and examples of the Restricted Unions of UPU such as PAPU, SAPOA, CRASA, WAPCO, among others, the Assembly recommended that EACO Congress approves that EACO Secretariat takes up all the necessary steps to become a Restricted Union of UPU.

11.0 AOB: Report on the Joint China, ITU & East Africa Working Group on ICT Infrastructure Development in East Africa initiative

Tanzania presented a report on the Joint consultative meeting of the Ministers responsible for ICTs of Uganda and Rwanda and the Regulators from Tanzania, Uganda, Kenya and Rwanda that was convened by ITU in Geneva in May 2015 during the ITU Council meeting. Members were informed that the meeting discussed the possible ICT initiatives under a multilateral cooperation between East African countries and China in the area of ICT infrastructure development in the region.

As a follow up to the above meeting, the parties above requested Tanzania to convene a joint meeting for China, ITU, and East Africa Working Group on the ICT Infrastructure Development in East Africa Initiative on 4 June 2015 in preparation for a meeting to be held on 5th June 2015 between the Minister of Industry and Information Technology of China and the Ministers responsible for ICTs in East Africa on the possible ICT initiatives under the multilateral cooperation in the area of ICT infrastructure development for East Africa in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania.

The participants included representatives from the Ministry of Industry and Information Technology of China, ITU Africa Regional Office, the Ministry of Communication Science and Technology of Tanzania, East African Communications Organization (EACO), Tanzania Communication Regulatory Authority (TCRA), Communication Authority of Kenya (CA), Uganda Communications Commission (UCC), Rwanda Utilities Regulatory Authority (RURA) and Tanzania Telecommunications Company Ltd (TTCL).

One of the proposed initial projects of the East Africa ICT infrastructure development initiative included the East African E-commerce, Addressing System and One-Stop Service Centers Project; a concept paper on the above project was presented by Proj. John Nkoma, Director General of TCRA.

He highlighted the potential of e-commerce in the region, the contribution of a regional addressing system to the development of ecommerce services and the need for one-stop service centers to provide citizens with access to the various public services and information through integrated technology platforms based on Kenya's Huduma Services concept.

He highly recommended the above project as viable in the region that has over 143 million people, GDP of USD 110 billion, GDP per capita of USD 769 and a postal network of over 1,550 postal outlets.

The East Africa Working Group on the ICT Infrastructure Development in East Africa Initiative discussed the proposed project and highlighted the following as potential benefits:

- i. The project will facilitate universal access to government services.
- ii. The project will promote development and delivery of e-government services which will ultimately bring about efficiency and effectiveness in government service delivery.
- iii. The project will support provision of ecommerce and diversification of services of the Designated Postal Operators (DOs) in the region.
- iv. The project will promote adoption of ICTs and financial inclusion in the region.
- v. The project would support efforts of governments in achieving national security and emergency responses.
- vi. The project will enhance urban and rural development planning in the region.

Based on the above, the East Africa Working Group on the ICT Infrastructure Development in East Africa Initiative highly recommended inclusion of this project in the above initiative and it will work out a detailed concept paper highlighting the various elements of the project and related budgets.

Members took note of the outcomes of the above initiative notably; the inclusion of the East African E-commerce, Addressing System and One-Stop Service Centers Project and encouraged postal operators to take advantage of this opportunity.

12.0 Recommendations to Congress

- I. EACO and EAC in consultation with partner states should urgently carry out a study on addressing systems and postcodes in the region and define clear mechanisms for funding the project as agreed at the Nairobi Conference on Leveraging ICTs in February, 2015.
- II. EACO members to take advantage of the UPU programme on establishing a Postal training centre in the region. Kenya to spearhead the initiative.

- III. EACO members to lobby Governments to invest in the National Addressing and Postcode infrastructure and support the National Addressing System project. Regulators are requested to spearhead the engagement with governments.
- IV. EACO in liaison with EAC Secretariat to organise a high level stakeholders Conference where relevant Ministers and authorities will be sensitised on the importance and need to implement the Postcode and NAS in the EAC region.
- V. EACO Secretariat to communicate to UPU expressing interest in becoming a Restricted Union of UPU.
- VI. EACO Postal operators are encouraged to actively get involved in the Joint China, ITU & East Africa Working Group on ICT Infrastructure Development in East Africa initiative to realise successful implementation of the project.

13.0 Consideration and adoption of the Report

The report was considered and adopted.

14.0 Closing of the Meeting

The Chair closed the meeting and thanked members for their active participation and inputs.

Chairperson: Uganda

Emmanuel Ocama

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1St Rapportuer: Uganda

Immaculate Namunyolo

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2nd Rapportuer: Rwanda

Mastiko Gonzague

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