

REPORT OF THE 28TH EACO JOINT WORKING COMMITTEE (JWC) HELD ON 29TH JUNE 2023 IN BUJUMBURA BURUNDI.

1. Opening of the Meeting

The meeting started at 2.00pm CAT.

2. Remarks by the Chairman

The Chairman of the JWC, Dr. Samuel Muhizi, DG of ARCT Burundi, opened the meeting by thanking members for participating to discuss on the content of the reports of one committee i.e (FARMC) and the issues that were cross cutting in the Assemblies of Regulatory, Broadcasting, Telecom and Postal. The following issues were discussed:

3. Consideration and Adoption of Reports

3.1 Consideration and Adoption of the Finance, Audit and Risk Management Committee

Noted 1:

The JWC noted the newly developed EACO Strategic Plan (2023-2028):

- (i) The Strategic Plan was developed in line with the organisation's aspiration of promoting cooperation amongst stakeholders in the development and provision of ICT services in the East African region.
- (ii) The Vision for this Strategic Plan 2023 -2028 is ***“A digitally empowered East Africa region***
- (iii) Mission is To coordinate the development of communication sector through harmonization of policy, regulatory frameworks, and spearheading regional initiatives
- (iv) Goals and Strategic Objectives

These are:

- (1) Regional Digital Transformation;
 - a) Promote the development of harmonised regional policies, regulatory frameworks and strategies
 - b) Promote the development of regional digital transformation initiatives

- c) Promote the provision of e-services
- (2) Connectivity, inclusivity and affordability;
 - a) Promote secure and reliable regional connectivity
 - b) Promote affordability of communication devices and services in the region
 - c) Foster equitable and inclusive use of ICTs in the region
- (3) Institutional capacity and sustainability.
 - a) Enhance performance excellence and governance practices
 - b) Enhance partnerships and collaborative frameworks with stakeholders

Agreed 1:

The JWC noted the Report of FARMC on Strategic Plan 2023-2028

4. Consideration of the Cross-cutting Issues from the 28th Assemblies

Noted 2:

The JWC noted cross cutting issues from the four (4) Assemblies as follows:

4.1 POSTAL ASSEMBLY

- i. Addressing & Postcodes: Postal cannot succeed addressing system and cannot afford e-commerce without support.
- ii. Universal Service Fund (USF) to support postal services. In many countries, USF is under National Regulatory Authority (NRA) and there is a need to contribute to the development of postal sector
- iii. Greening postal services: postal services not to affect the environment by using solar panels to manage e-waste,

4.2 TELECOM ASSEMBLY

The Assembly of Telecom Operators identified and recommended the following Cross Cutting Issues for submission to the Joint Working Committee:

- I. Active Participation of Members States in WRC-23 preparation meetings and other ITU Radio-communication meetings
- II. Cross border frequency coordination in the region
- III. Participation of telecom operators in the activities of EACO
- IV. Promotion of Rural connectivity in the region
- V. Need for experts in the different working Groups
- VI. Budgetary support to enable member participation
- VII. Cyber security is an area of focus with the increased use of internet services
- VIII. To provide critically handle the regulation of emerging technologies in region

4.3 BROADCASTING ASSEMBLY

- I. Cross border Frequency coordination requires participation of both broadcasting and mobile operators;
- II. Participation in the work of WRC-23;
- III. Agenda item 1.5 for WRC-23.

4.4 REGULATORY ASSEMBLY

- I. Regulators and operators to appoint experts in the different working groups for effectiveness and efficiency;
- II. Regulators to encourage operators to attend working groups especially in technical ICT areas.
- III. Budgetary support by Regulators and operators to enable member participation in EACO's activities and programmes;
- IV. Encourage participation in the Working groups including ensuring attendance of the right experts;
- V. Experts from Regulators, operators and other industry partners urged to participate actively in the preparation of all EACO documents;
- VI. Build Capacity building on emerging technologies and best practices. There is also need for Capacity Building on specific subject matters.
- VII. Encourage cooperation between EACO and other regional organizations at strategic level
- VIII. Regulators should put more efforts in assisting Operators in member States to sign the EACO reviewed Constitution and also pay their membership fees.

- IX. Member States are requested to retain nominees to EACO Working Groups for consistency, continuity, effectiveness and efficiency
- X. Working Group Members are requested to devote adequate time to the working groups activities / deliverables
- XI. Regulatory Assembly to Consider and Adopt the completed work documents as presented by the relevant Working groups and Committees.

5. Any Other Business (AOB)

The Chairman ended the meeting by thanking all participants for their dedication in striving to achieve EACO’s long- term strategic goals and objectives for carrying out its mandate and urged them to double their efforts for the remaining tasks ahead.

6. Closing the meeting

The meeting was closed at 3.45pm CAT.

DR. SAMUEL MUHIZI
CHAIRMAN

MR. EMMANUEL MISAGO
1st RAPPORTEUR

MAYOR MOSES
2ND RAPPORTEUR

Dr. Norah SITATI
EACO SECRETARIAT