**THE REPORT OF THE 22nd ASSEMBLY OF THE BROADCASTING OPERATORS HELD AT SHERATON HOTEL, KAMPALA-UGANDA 22nd TO 23RD JUNE, 2015.**

**1.0. INTRODUCTION**

The 22nd Assembly of Broadcasting Operators of EACO was held at Sheraton Hotel-Kampala, Uganda from 22nd – 23rd June, 2015. It was attended by participants from the five member countries. The list of Participants is attached as Annex I.

**2.0. ELECTION OF THE BUREAU**

In accordance with the Rules of Procedures of the EACO, the Assembly of Broadcasting Operators elected the following members to the Bureau:

Mr. Meddy Kaggwa (Uganda) - Chairperson

Mr. Paul Mukasa (Uganda) - 1st Rapporteur

Mr. Asiimwe Arthur (Rwanda) - 2nd Rapporteur

Following the election of the Bureau, the outgoing chairperson Mr. Nathan Lwehabura (Tanzania) handed over to the new chairperson Mr. Meddy Kaggwa of Uganda Communication Commission (Uganda).

**3.0 OPENING OF THE MEETING**

The meeting was opened by the Chairman, Mr. Meddy Kaggwa (Uganda), who also oversaw the adoption of the Agenda and programme of the meeting in addition to the election of the bureau. The chairperson welcomed members present to the 22nd Assembly of Broadcasters of EACO.

**4.0. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA**

The agenda of the Assembly was presented to the members and adopted as follows.

**AGENDA**

1) Opening of the Meeting

2) Adoption of the Agenda and Programme

3) Report of the Chairman

4) Election of the Bureau

5) Consideration of the Matrix on the status of implementation of decisions of the last Assembly.

6) Consideration of the report of the Working Groups

a. WG6 - Broadcasting Service Development and Regulation Working Group

b. WG11 - Spectrum Management Working Group

7) Consideration and Adoption of the Report for the Congress

8) AOB.

9) Closing of the meeting

**5.0 REPORT OF THE OUTGOING CHAIRMAN**

The outgoing chairman Mr. Nathan Lwehabura from Tanzania presented his report (**Annex II)**. The Assembly considered the report and highlighted the following:

**Noted 1**

The progress made by member countries on digital migration with Tanzania and Rwanda having completed the Analog switch off (ASO).Uganda plans to switch off by August 2015, Kenya September 2015 and Burundi by 2016.

**Noted 2**

The challenges faced in the digital migration such as lack of legal instruments for digital migration, high cost of migration roll out, affordability of set top boxes, insufficient local content and poor quality of service and consumer experience.

**Noted 3**

The efforts of the Regulators in collaboration with the Copyright bodies to address copyright and piracy issues.

**Noted 4**

The challenges faced by Free to Air (FTA channels) and public broadcasting after the digital migration.

**Agreed 1**

That the evolution from DVBT 1 to DVBT2 and other technologies remain market driven.

**Agreed 2**

That multiple channels be encouraged in order to promote local content but on whether sub channels should be licensed separately, the issue be decided by each regulator in the respective countries.

**Agreed 3**

A study be carried out to resolve the issue of must carry channels on the Pay TV or subscription platform which is a contentious issue in the entire region.

**Agreed 4**

The need to make extra efforts to encourage broadcasters to attend the EACO broadcaster’s forums,

**6.0 CONSIDERATION OF MATRIX ON STATUS OF IMPLEMENTATION OF DECISION OF THE LAST ASSEMBLY**

Member countries forwarded the status of implementation to the EACO Secretariat. The matrix is attached as **Annex III**. The following are the highlights;

**Noted 1**

That the EACO secretariat visited Uganda on an awareness campaign to interest broadcasters to attend EACO broadcasters meetings.

**Noted 2.**

That signal distributors are carrying content without entering service level agreements with content service providers.

**Noted 3.**

That Signal distributors are carrying content not licensed within the jurisdiction of the respective regulators.

**Noted 4.**

That Must carry condition was adopted and used to carry more TV channels during the simulcast period to facilitate the transition**.**

**Noted 5.**

The need to develop rules and legislation to properly govern the Signal distribution function.

**Noted 6**

That the public concern of free to air channels being part of the subscription bouquets and the issue of their availability when the subscription has expired.

**Agreed 1**

To carry out a comprehensive study of how free to address the public concern highlighted above.

**7.0 CONSIDERATION OF THE REPORT OF THE WORKING GROUP 6.**

The report of the working group 6 (WG6) on Broadcasting Services Development and Regulation meeting was presented and the following was noted. **Annex IV**

**Noted 1**

1. **The Strategies to mitigate the challenges currently facing the EACO member states for completion of the analogue to digital migration process in the region**.

The key strategies discussed are:

* *To engage stakeholders and enhance consumer awareness campaigns*
* *To ensure adequate legal frameworks addressing digital migration issues are in place*
* *To consider subsidization of the public signal distributor to complete the digital migration and achieve universal service*
* *To review license conditions for signal distributors in order to include provision of universal service obligation*
* *To consider zero rating of the Set Top Boxes*

1. **The Harmonized technical standards for digital broadcasting**; *the harmonized standards for Digital Broadcasting spells out the recommended parameters associated with the broadcast transmission standard and the minimum basic features and technical specifications of the Set-Top-Box with updated standards.*
2. **The Harmonized quality of service parameters for terrestrial digital broadcasting***; the report covers quality of service parameters for Digital broadcasting transmission network, distribution network and subscription services related parameters.*
3. **The Performance statistics for the broadcasting industry in EACO member states;** *the objective of this activity is to develop a core list of ICT indicators that could be collected by all countries and serve as a basis for comparable statistics on the broadcasting sector.*

*The various performance indicators identified are;*

* *Penetration of Broadcasting Services in the region*
* *Quality of Service of the broadcasting services*
* *Percentage of Local content available in the region*
* *Access to broadcasting services by specific target groups in the region*
* *Interactivity of broadcasting services available in the region*

1. **The coordination and follow up the work of the Sect oral Committee on Transport, Communications and Meteorology of the East African Community and facilitate the development of EACO’s recommendations or contributions relating to the work of the EAC**
2. **Ongoing activities in working group 6;**
3. To determine the best strategies for implementation of harmonized methodologies and principles for determination of transmission fees by the signal distributors. A questionnaire has been distributed to all member states to collect information on the current status of the implementation of the pricing methodology. The collection of the data is still under process
4. To develop guidelines for content sharing, digital rights management, digital content management and local content development. The Working Group has developed a consultative document for content sharing, digital rights management and local content development.
5. The key activities identified by the working group as critical but the deliverables were not completed within the allocated period.
6. *To study and redefine the role of Public Service Broadcaster (PSB) in the digital era;*
7. *To identify sources of finances for public service broadcaster ;*
8. *To review sustainability of Public Service Broadcasters;*
9. *To devise the licensing framework for PSB;*
10. *To develop guidelines for non-terrestrial digital broadcasting services;*
11. *To formulate regulatory framework for “MUST CARRY” channels and the licensing of subscription services on all platforms; and*
12. *To review report on the emerging multimedia services and formulate a harmonized regulatory framework*.

**8.0 CONSIDERATION OF THE REPORT OF THE WORKING GROUP 11.**

The report of the working group 11 was presented (Annex V) and the following were noted**;**

**Noted 1;** **Harmonization of Radio Spectrum policy and regulations**

That the working group developed a spectrum policy to be considered.

**Noted 2**; **Workshop on satellite issues focusing on regulatory aspect.**

A workshop on satellite was organized by EACO in collaboration with AFRALTI and ITSO from 10th to 11th July 2014 in Bujumbura, Burundi. The training on satellite issues did not take place. ITU was not able to provide required trainers within the time frame of the activity.

**Noted 3; issues related to digital dividend.**

That a questionnaire was circulated to collect information from member states on issues related to digital dividend. The draft and structure of the report on issues related to digital dividend are available.

**Noted 4;****mechanism for radio frequency coordination**

The working group developed a framework on cross-border coordination. Two coordination meetings were organised on FM broadcasting and Digital Television Broadcasting.

**Noted 5; to coordinate preparations for WRCs**

EACO common positions/ proposals on WRC-15 agenda items have been achieved and the report on WRC-15 preparatory activities and key agenda items is available’

**9.0 RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE EACO CONGRESS**

The 22nd Assembly of Broadcasting Operators proposes the following recommendations to the 21st EACO Congress;

1. **Adoption the following reports from the two Working Groups - WG 6 /WG 11**

The Assembly of Broadcasting Operators recommends that the 21st EACO congress considers and adopts the following reports from the Working Groups.

1. *Report on the Harmonized technical standards for digital broadcasting. (Annex VI)*
2. *Report on harmonized Quality of service parameters for terrestrial digital broadcasting (Annex VII)*
3. *Report on the Performance statistics for the broadcasting industry in EACO member states (Annex VIII)*
4. *Report of challenges faced by EAC member states in implementing digital migration & mitigation measures (Annex IX)*
5. *Framework for cross border coordination*
6. **To Grant and allow more time to working group 6 (WG6) on Broadcasting Services Development and Regulation to complete ongoing activities.**
7. **To Increase sensitization and mobilization for broadcasting operators in member states to attend EACO meetings**.
8. **To Request Governments of member states to fund public service signal distributors to roll out networks in order to meet the Universal service obligation**.
9. **That only public broadcasters be carried by all signal distributors under must carry obligation after completion of Analog switch off.**
10. **That the use of C-Band in the Frequency range of 3.4 GHz-3.6GHz be dedicated to Broadcasting and Civil aviation services to avoid frequency interference.**
11. **That EACO undertakes a comprehensive study with the following Terms of reference;**
12. **To undertake study on the sustainability of FTA TV content.**
13. **To study and propose appropriate business model for Pay TV service providers to carry FTA TV channels.**

**The Congress ought to consider Research agencies that are members of EACO to carry out the study. The terms of reference are attached in annex X.**

**Mr. Paul Mukasa (Uganda) Mr. Arthur Asiimwe(Rwanda)**

**Rappoteur 1 Rapporteur 2**

**Mr. Meddy Kaggwa Chairman**

**ANNEX I; ATTENDANCE LIST**



**ANNEX II; REPORT OF OUTGOING CHAIRMAN**



**ANNEX III; MATRIX ON STATUS OF IMPLEMENTATION OF DECISION OF THE LAST ASSEMBLY**



**ANNEX IV; REPORT OF THE WORKING GROUP 6**



**ANNEX V; REPORT OF WORKING GROUP 11**

**ANNEX VI; REPORT ON THE HARMONIZED TECHNICAL STANDARDS FOR DIGITAL BROADCASTING.**

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**ANNEX VII; REPORT ON HARMONIZED QUALITY OF SERVICE PARAMETERS FOR TERRESTRIAL DIGITAL BROADCASTING**

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**ANNEX VIII; REPORT ON THE PERFORMANCE STATISTICS FOR THE BROADCASTING INDUSTRY IN EACO MEMBER STATES**

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**ANNEX IX; REPORT OF CHALLENGES FACED BY EAC MEMBER STATES IN IMPLEMENTING DIGITAL MIGRATION & MITIGATION MEASURES**

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**ANNEX X; TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR STUDY**

