DIRECTORATE OF INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION

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"Policy and Regulation Initiative for Digital Africa (PRIDA) - Continental Meeting on Harmonisation of ICT Policies and Regulations"

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 5 September 2019: A Meeting to discuss ICT (Information and Communication Technologies) harmonisation in Africa, how to monitor and evaluate the progress and way forward to better adapt Africa policy and regulatory environment to the challenges of digital transformation has taken place in Addis Ababa this week.

The PRIDA Continental Meeting on "ICT harmonization in Africa: How to monitor and evaluate it? "brought together more than One Hundred Forty (140) participants, including Experts and Senior Government Officials from over fifty (50) African Countries as well as representatives from the Regional Economic Communities (RECs), Regional Association of Regulators and the African Telecommunication Union (ATU) in addition to representatives of ICT private sector and partners, the European Union, including the Body of European Regulators for Electronic Communications (BEREC), and the International Telecommunications Union (ITU).

In his opening remarks, Mr. Thomas Huyghebaert, Head of Cooperation of the EU Delegation to the African Union, recalled that the initiative is a key flagship of the AU (African Union) – EU (European Union) cooperation on digitalisation and underlined its importance and potential to boost the digital transformation of the continent, also benefitting from the exchange of experience between the two Unions.

On behalf of the AU Commission Mr. Moctar Yedaly, Head of Information the Society Division, welcomed the participants to the meeting and thanked them for the commitment to support the PRIDA initiative as a cornerstone for the creation of favourable conditions for the development of African digital market. He recalled the role and mandate of the AU Commission in harmonising policies and coordinating regional initiatives as key factors for enabling development and achieving continental integration as per the Agenda 2063 aspirations.

Mr. Yedaly emphasized the importance of the Policy and Regulatory Initiative for Digital Africa (PRIDA) as an enabler of the Africa Digital Transformation Agenda.
The meeting has been a great opportunity for African governments and regional organisations to assess current and past harmonisation initiatives, identify trends and gaps of policy and regulatory approaches both at national, regional and continental levels. The meeting has also explored possibilities for reforms and improvements towards achieving appropriate regulatory responses to foster the digital transformation of Africa society and economy as well as harmonization methodology and related Monitoring and Evaluation System.

African experts have identified common priority areas for African countries to be addressed under PRIDA initiative and adopt a two-year roadmap to enhance harmonization of ICT/telecommunications policies, legislative and regulatory frameworks across Africa in such a manner as to allow their monitoring and evaluation.
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"PRIDA" stands for "Policy and Regulation Initiative for Digital Africa". It is a joint initiative of the African Union (AU), the European Union (EU) and the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) that aims at enabling the African continent to reap the benefits of digitalisation, by addressing various dimensions of broadband demand and supply in Africa and by building the capacities of African stakeholders in the Internet Governance space.

The three years initiative (2018 - 2022) is supported by the EU-funded Pan African Programme, with a specific envelope of 7.5 Mo€, and a contribution to the African Union Budget to the level of up to 1 Mo€ per year.

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