



COMMUNIQUE

ON ITAN/NCS/WITSA WORLD INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY CONFERENCE ABUJA NIGERIA

THEME:

”ADVANCING THE DYNAMICS OF ICT POLICY ENGINEERING FOR E-GOVERNMENT” “ADIPENG 2009”

ICT is now recognized as the preferred and fastest growing industry with the power to actualize national visions and enrich economies. Reliable studies estimate the global value of ICT opportunities to be over US\$100 trillion. The 2009 ICT spend is projected to exceed US\$5 trillion. As the Internet and technological advances continue to reshape power, redistribute national resources, transform government, education, culture and the way we work in government and industry, and competition and economic pressures create quicker and more efficient ways to do business, the reality of increased and quality information for economic and national survivability remains a fundamental concern to all nations of the world.

Informed by the above, the **Information Technology Association of Nigeria (ITAN)** in collaboration with the **World Information Technology and Services Alliance (WITSA)**, **Nigeria Computer Society (NCS)** and the **National Information Technology Development Agency (NITDA)** hosted a World IT Conference in Abuja, Nigeria. The global event was held at the prestigious Transcorp Hilton Hotel Abuja, Nigeria from 20th – 23rd April 2009. The Conference objective amongst others was to examine, assess, evaluate and determine the **e-Readiness Status of Nigeria** and provide a global ICT update for the benefit of Stakeholders. The Conference was declared open by Senator Adamu Aliero (former Governor Kebbi State of Nigeria) and Hon. Minister of the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) Abuja, Nigeria. WITSA is a consortium of industry association members from nearly 70 economies, who among them represent more than 90 percent of the world ICT market. ITAN is WITSA's newest member.

The Conference attracted global IT Professionals, Business Community, Academia, NGOs, Stakeholders and distinguished Resource Persons and Facilitators who are global experts and champions in ICT and classified as highly experienced, skilled and visionary. These ICT Resource giants are from USA, UK, Malaysia and also from 30 states of the Federation - including the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) Abuja, Among such ICT Champions were the Chairman of WITSA, **Dato' Dan E. Khoo**, President of ITAN, **Dr. Jimson Olufuye**, **Mr Chris Uwaje**, Regional Director, D-Link West Africa, Vice President ISPON and Past President ITAN. Other dignitaries in attendance were **Prof. Oye Ibidapo-Obe**, President Nigeria Academy of Science and former Vice-Chancellor University of Lagos; **Prof. Augustine Odinma**, Coordinator of Telecommunications, School of IT and Communication. Chair Research American University of Nigeria Yola.

Dr. Ernest Ndukwe-Executive Vice Chairman Nigerian Communication Commission (NCC), **Barr. Funso Fayomi**, Secretary of the Board, USPF; **Ismail Radwan**, Senior Economic Officer of World Bank, **Prof. Cleopas Angaye** (DG) National Information Technology Development Agency (NITDA), **Isa Jalo Waziri**, Coordinator Information and Communication Technology, Federal Capital Territory Abuja Nigeria, **Prof Egongdu Onyejekwe**, a Professor of Health Informatics and Unit Head Health Informatics Department of Public Health Technology, Federal University of Technology Owerri Nigeria, **Professor Manny Aniebonam** of AfriHub among others.

At this global Conference, Scientific and Professional papers were presented on very important issues/topics with special focus on strategies for '**Advancing the dynamics of ICT Policy Engineering for e-Government in Africa – with particular reference to Nigeria**'. Special recognition was made on how ICT Policy Engineering is important in achieving Vision 20-2020 and the mission of re-branding Nigeria aimed at making her one of the top twenty economies in the world by 2020. The use of ICT has boosted productivity, created new jobs, enabled more efficient businesses, produced higher quality of goods and services, and led to greater innovation.

The Conference observed that the emerging technologies are speedily moving the world into a globalized Information Society (IS). **It also recognized that unless ICT is recognized and made the engine room of Nation-Building, many of the economic and social developments in many developing countries such as Nigeria may become irrelevant and/or submerged – especially now that the Internet has become the centre of gravity of world affairs, economic development, power, competitiveness and survivability for all nations.** Above all, it recognized that as the single largest concentration of people of African decent in the universe, Nigeria has a fundamental role to play in advancing the dynamics of Information and Communications Technologies to deliver quality and effective e-government, e-transaction, e-education and other essential services to the citizenry. Indeed, the ICT and in particular, the Internet has grown from a tool primarily in the realm of academia and the defense/intelligence communities, to a global electronic network that cements world activities and touches nearly every aspect of everyday life at the workplace in government, education, business, tradition and culture and in our homes.

All the above critical issues make re-engineering the dynamics of ICT Policy and **e-Government a strategic imperative for Nigeria.** The conference evaluated and recognized with great concern that the current e-readiness Framework in Nigeria is inadequate – especially in the areas of **National Power Generation and Supply, Information Infrastructure, Automation of Government processes, Electronic Payment, e-Education, Capacity building with special emphasis on Software Engineering Skills and ICT Network and Internet Security.**

In view of all the above, ICT leaders, experts and stakeholders who were present at the Conference has endorsed this communiqué with the following recommendations.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The Federal Government should increase ICT Investment and funding - ensuring that her national IT spend is scaled-up to between 12-15% of the National Budget as the key catalyst for the success of vision 20-2020. Available Information estimates the current e-Spend at about 3% of the National Budget.
2. Policy makers should view ICT as the key and strategic component for actualizing economic policy and national development, ensuring that the policies and programs they put in place spur digital transformation and benefit societies at large.
3. Enhancing the e-Readiness status of Nigeria demands that the President become the driving force behind ICT development – nationally and internationally.
4. Adequate and consistent, energy supply and Broadband-centric ICT Infrastructure, Leadership and political will and IT Skilled Capacity building should become the strategic imperatives for National development
5. Government should leverage on ICT solutions and policy makers to introduce fiscal stimuli and programs to develop an ICT industry and accelerate the use of the technologies across all economic sectors and society.
6. ICT-based information, infrastructure and sustainable solution should be deployed to expedite economic recovery in Global Meltdown on the short term and provide the vehicle to generate prosperity in the long term.
7. Adopt multi-stakeholder PPP approach to ICT policy re-engineering, that government and the private sector should work in concert to establish a national framework that offers the right incentives to encourage investment and includes the necessary structure to develop knowledge-based human capital
8. In line with 7 above, the Federal Government in collaboration with the ICT industry under the PPP scheme should spearhead an annual **Africa ICT Summit** as a credible medium of articulating policy direction for ICT development in Africa and Nigeria in particular.
9. Sponsor an executive Bill on National Information Technology Framework capable of promoting the following Acts: Indigenous Software Content Act, IT Law and Cyber Crime Act, e-Education Act. Digital Signature Act, National Information Infrastructure Protection Act and others.
10. Develop an ICT industry that can drive the economy by building businesses and creating jobs.
11. Establish ICT Departments at all levels of Government operations at the Federal, State and Local Government. Retool the Civil Service operations by making all workers ICT literate and skilled.
12. Review the National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) program and re-engineer its function to engage the opportunities in Offshoring/Outsourcing.

13. The Federal Government should ensure effective coordination of its disparate ICT initiatives across several Ministries and Agencies of government and also should be proactive in focusing of state ICT initiatives towards a common national goal.
14. In view of 13 above, and due to urgent need for effective coordination of national ICT initiatives for rapid development and for the realization of the MDG and the vision 20 2020 of the Mr President, It is recommended that
 - a. a Chief Information Officer (CIO) in the Presidency be appointed by Mr President
 - b. the Ministry of Information and Communications be transformed into the Ministry of Communications and Information Technology (MCIT), and
 - c. that NITDA should be absorbed by the **new** Ministry mentioned above

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