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Subject: The DNS Project

The Africa ICANN Discussion List members (Africann@afrinic.net)
provide the following comments in response to the National
Telecommunications and Information Administration Notice of Inquiry
"Assessment of the Transition of the Technical Coordination and
Management of the Internet's Domain Name and Addressing System [Docket
No. 090420688-9689-01]."

In a view to provide comments which reflect the general views of the
Africa region on the termination of the JPA agreement and thereof a
final report on the DNS project, members of the Africann list , a
discussion list including more than two hundred members who are
interested in ICANN's matters , organized an online brain storming
session. The Group is now happy to submit its deliberations to the
National Telecommunication and Information Administration (NTIA).

According to ICANN's mission statement, it coordinates the allocation
and assignment of the three sets of unique identifiers for the
Internet, which are: Domain names; Internet protocol addresses and
Autonomous system numbers; Protocol port and parameter numbers. After
its 11 years of existence, ICANN has served as the testbed for many
initiatives that have come to make the Internet an ever growing space
for communication and knowledge sharing. The Africa region is
particularly marked by the new developments which ICANN has generated
in its core business of DNS and IP address management. Thus, the
bottom up approach to policy development, the constant search for
transparency and accountability constitute the overarching features
which ICANN has struggled for since 1998. Indeed, since then, the
successive MoUs which have delineated ICANN's perimeter have provided
an outlet for an experiment which spans diverse issues and cross
sector relationships.

In performing its function as the custodian and coordinator of those
critical resources that are domain names and IP addresses, ICANN has
constantly striven to be open, transparent and accountable. The JPA
and the subsequent MoUs have certainly provided the framework for this
coordination which has now given its global and international nature
to ICANN. While the Africa region benefitted from the ICANN's
experience in many ways, including the development of the African
Internetworking groups and associations and the growing participation
to ICANN's policy development processes, Africa would like to
recall/state that Internet being a global good, it's sound and
effective coordination should continue to be operated along those
criterion and procedures that have given to the Internet its stability
and secure operation.

ICANN's Model has proven to be a success in many ways including
capacity development and cross fertilization of ideas and knowledge. Its
bylaws and internal mechanisms have ensured over the years more transparency

and accountability which portray ICANN as an experiment in global self governance which could be replicated in other institutional formulas. Therefore, termination of the JPA will only reinforce its credibility at the global
level. There is always room for improvement and the termination of the JPA and the end of the DNS project will only give ICANN its full dimension and potential as a global and international and multistakeholder institution within its restricted mission of coordinating the critical resources of the Internet. One such room for improvement should be the role to be played by governments in the specific layout of ICANN which guarantees openness, inclusiveness, freedom and security within the larger context of global Internet
governance.

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on behalf of the AfrICANN List