Press Release

AfTLD concludes a successful annual African ccTLD event in Accra

Accra, Ghana May 2011. Africa Top Level Domains (AfTLD) recently concluded its 5th annual African ccTLD Event in Accra, Ghana. The event, which ran from 18 to 22 April, comprised of a 3 day Attack Contingency Response Planning (ACRP) workshop for African ccTLD managers, and a 2 day Policy meeting and AGM.

Address by the Ghana Minister of Communications

The Policy Workshop had the honour of having an address by the Hon. Haruna Iddrissu, the Minister of Communications of Ghana. Appreciating AfTLD for choosing Ghana for this important Internet security event, the Minister said the ACRP training came at a right time when Internet access has increased tremendously and cyber attacks are the new generation warfare.

The Government of Ghana, he said, attaches to great significance to online privacy, and plans to pass into a law the Data Protection Bill by July this year. The Minister also expressed Ghana's support to the Africa Union Commission (AUC) - led process of endorsing a suitable bidder that will apply to ICANN for the delegation of the dot Africa new gTLD. AfTLD, as the foremost TLD association in Africa, represented sufficient African Internet community interests to manage the dot Africa new gTLD on behalf of the AUC.

Address by Dr. Nii Quaynor

Dr. Nii Quaynor, a veteran of Internet development and governance in Africa and globally and the current .GH chairman, in his welcome address, reminded the meeting how Ghana was instrumental in establishing AfTLD about a decade ago. He urged African TLD managers to take note of the imminent changes in the domain name policy environment globally. African TLD operators, he urged, needed to be strengthened to meet the challenges that ICANN's new gTLDs will bring as many capacity challenges still faced African TLDs, including higher level governance interventions.

He also added that there was a need to continue strengthening African ccTLD capacity to overcome the challenges on security, and affirmed the ACRP as a step in the right direction. He echoed the Minister's support for an AUC endorsement of a suitable bidder to apply to ICANN for the operation of .africa.

Overwhelming endorsement of AfTLD's .africa bid

At the AfTLD AGM on 22 April, Vika Mpisane (AfTLD chairman) said the case of the AfTLD .africa project was an illustration of the commitment of the AfTLD to help African TLDs grow. He added that he believed that AfTLD had a good opportunity to win the endorsement of the African Union (AU) and the approval by ICANN. "We will do our utmost best to see to it that AfTLD wins the .africa bid," he said.

After the presentation of AfTLD's .africa bid strategy, it was remarkable that all the ccTLDs present expressed their support of AfTLD's .africa bid. Their unanimous view was that only AfTLD in the African Internet community had the collective experience and know-how of setting up a successful operation of a .africa registry. Some of the ccTLDs went as far as stating openly that they lobbying their governments to support AfTLD's bid. This huge vote of confidence goes right against some of the recent malicious views claiming AfTLD was not best suited to operate .africa.

Over 50 attendants were present at the event and the AGM, the majority of whom came from 19 ccTLD managers present at the event. The event was hosted by National Information Technology Agency (NITA) with the support of the Ministry of Communications.

Presentations and photos from event can be found on the event homepage at
http://www.aftld.org/gh2011

About AfTLD

AfTLD was established in 2002 to act as a focal point for African Country Code Top Level Domain (ccTLD) managers in coordinating, formulating, developing and presenting a unified approach to issues related to the Domain Name System. AfTLD also presents a forum for sharing ideas between the regions Internet community with an aim of promoting the utilization of national country's Top Level Domains.