EAST AFRICAN COMMUNICATIONS ORGANISATIONS - EACO

REPORT OF THE ASSEMBLY OF BROADCASTERS TO THE 19TH EACO CONGRESS

ROYAL PALACE HOTEL BUJUMBURA, BURUNDI, FROM 28TH – 30TH MAY 2012

5/30/2012

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1.0. INTRODUCTION

The 2012 Assembly of Broadcasters of EACO was held at Royal Palace Hotel in Bujumbura, Burundi from 28thto 30th May 2012. It was attended by participants from the five member states. The list of participants is attached as **Annex I.**

2.0. OPENING REMARKS

The meeting was opened by the outgoing Chairman, Mr. Francis NGABO, who oversaw the election of the bureau.

3.0. ELECTION OF THE BUREAU

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

- Mr. Deo BIZINDAVYI (Burundi),   Chairperson

- Mrs. Nancy Ninette MUTONI (Burundi), Vice- Chairperson

- Mrs. Solange NINGABIRE (Rwanda), 1st Rapporteur

- Mr. Apollinaire BIGIRIMANA (Burundi), 2nd Rapporteur

The election of the bureau was followed up with the handing over of Chair by the outgoing chairperson to the new chairperson Mr. Déogratias Bizindavyi of Agence de Régulation et de Contrôle des Télécommunications (**ARCT**) of Burundi.

4.0. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

The agenda of the assembly was presented and adopted

5.0. REPORT OF THE OUTGOING CHAIRMAN

Noted 1:

There is an improved participation of broadcasters in the Assembly of broadcasters but there is a need to urge more broadcasters to join the assembly.

Noted 2:

In some member countries, broadcasters have no forums where they can address issues regarding the sector.

Noted 3:

There is a need for the broadcasters to be updated on the technical issues regarding the digital broadcasting as the standards are evolving fast

Agreed 1:

Regulators in member states should urge the broadcasters to join EACO and actively participate in its meetings.

Agreed 2:

The broadcasters should set up platforms to address issues of interest to them in their countries.

Agreed 3:

BTTF should continue to conduct studies in all technical matters and communicate the result of the study to all members/broadcasters.

6.0. ANALOGUE TO DIGITAL MIGRATION-TECHNOLOGY STATUS AND CHALLENGES

Noted 1:

In Digital value chain, there are at least 3 main players namely broadcasters producing content, signal distributor and viewers. The content service provider should not be allowed to assume the functionality of signal distributor and vice versa

Noted 2:

In terms of Spectrum efficiency, the Single Frequency Networks (SFNs) have advantage over Multiple Frequency Networks (MFNs) due to use of frequency to provide services in the same coverage area.

Noted 3:

The capacity building is required for both technical people and content developers.

Noted 4:

Most of the existing infrastructure used for analogue broadcasting can be re used for digital broadcasting.

Agreed 1:

The member countries should implement the best option of separating entities for content provision and signal distribution.

Agreed 2:

EACO member countries should honour the analogue switch off deadline of 31st December 2012. No license for analogue broadcasting to be renewed and those still on analogue after the switch off date should not claim any protection from interference.

Agreed 3:

EACO member countries are encouraged to promote the use of MPEG-4 as compression technique and DVB T2 STBs.

7.0. WORLD RADIOCOMMUNICATIONS CONFERENCE (WRC-12) OVERVIEW

Noted:

Broadcasters need to give their contributions on WRC agenda items tackling broadcasting issues and understand the benefit of their participations in upcoming WRC.

Agreed 1:

Broadcasters should follow ITU activities.

Agreed 2:

The broadcasters should make efforts to attend WRC meetings either through their associations or by working closely with their respective regulatory bodies with a view of supporting them to attend.

8.0. REPORT OF THE CHAIRMAN OF THE BROADCASTING TECHNICAL TASKFORCE (BTTF)

Noted 1:

There is a problem on translation of content from one language to another and therefore distorting the meaning of the content to consumers.

Noted 2:

The composition of the Broadcasting Technical Task Force (BTTF) was not representative of broadcasters.

Noted 3:

The BTTF continue to work on the issue of having interoperable decoders to make the free to air channels accessible to all viewers regardless the signal distributor streaming the content.

Agreed 1:

The EACO member countries are encouraged to establish certified language translation centres of content in case of need of translation.

Agreed 2:

The composition of the BTTF was the mandate of EACO Congress. The regulatory bodies should update the broadcasters on upcoming meetings of BTTF.

Agreed 3:

The BTTF should continue working on pending issues highlighted in the BTTF report.

9.0. IMPLEMENTATION OF PUBLIC AWARENESS CAMPAIGN ON ANALOGUE TO DIGITAL MIGRATION: TANZANIA EXPERIENCE

Noted 1:

Tanzania has made a significant progress in the public awareness campaign to educate people on digital migration and prepare them for quick uptake of digital broadcasting through traditional Media (radios and TV stations, advertisements), seminar & workshops as well as other multimedia platforms.

Noted 2:

There is a need of training people who give the information about the digital migration.

Agreed 1:

EACO member states are encouraged to make sure that the current rollout coverage of digital broadcasting should match areas covered by analogue platform.

10.0. EAC POLICY AND REGULATIONS READINESS FOR DIGITAL BROADCASTING

The EAC representative presented the EAC activities

Noted 1:

The status of the implementation of policy and regulations related to digital broadcasting in member countries

Noted 2:

The EAC council of Ministers of Transport, Communications and Metrology recommendation to Finance Council to consider zero rating digital receivers to accelerate the digital migration.

Noted 3:

There is a guideline stating that EAC countries should involve line ministries, regulators, broadcasters and consumers when setting up the National Digital Committee.

11.0. CHALLENGES OF CONTENT TO MEET THE EXPECTED DEMANDS OF DTT

Noted 1:

There is a need to work out on content development criteria incorporating pricing structure as there will be many content developers selling the content to broadcasters.

Noted 2:

The BTTF continue to develop the Quality of Service (QOS) parameters of digital broadcasting.

12.0. BROADCASTING COPYRIGHTS

The Assembly discussed the issue of **"China's Star Times wins UEFA 2012-2015 free-to- air media rights for sub-Saharan Africa"**

Noted 1:

The Assembly was concerned about the unusual deal of Star Times being a Pay TV operator and not a free-to- air broad to get rights for FTA broadcasters.

Noted 2:

StarTimes was bundling free to air channels and pay channels into bouquets.

Noted 3:

Concern was raised on the authenticity of the report about Star Times acquiring Sports rights of UEFA.

Agreed 1:

Pay TV service providers should obtain explicit authorisation or agreement from Content Service Providers before including their content in the Pay bouquets

Agreed 2:

The regulators of EAC member states should ensure that the Free to Air (FTA) channels remain free to view on the Pay TV platforms.

Agreed 3:

The BTTF should study the UEFA rights matter and assess its appropriateness and come up with recommendations to address this issue.

Agreed 4:

Broadcasters who find that their content has been infringed upon by Pay TV service provider should take appropriate actions.

13.0. IMPACT OF SOCIAL MEDIA

Noted 1:

New media services (social media) namely internet based applications offers a broad spectrum of services, markets and technologies that impact broadcasting in the region.

Noted 2:

Concerns were raised on how to clearly categorise different platforms of new media services and regulate them.

Noted 3:

New media services offer opportunities from which broadcasters can utilize/benefit.

Agreed 1:

The BTTF should conduct further studies on the impact of these services in our region and report to the next congress.

Agreed 2:

The EACO member states are urged to encourage all entities wishing to stream through social media networks (radio, TV, blogs etc) to have a voluntary registration.

14.0. EAC 2012 DEADLINE OF ANALOGUE SWITCH OFF

 Noted 1:

Countries are at different levels of rolling out the terrestrial digital broadcasting networks.

Agreed 1:

The EAC member states resolved to keep the deadline of 31st December 2012 set by EACO in order to keep the momentum of implementation.

15.0.   ADOPTION OF THE REPORT TO THE CONGRESS

The report of the Assembly was adopted for presentation to the 19th EACO Congress.

16.0. AOB

With no other business, the assembly closed the meeting on 30th May 2012.

Déogratias BIZINDAVYI **CHAIRMAN**	**Nancy Ninette MUTONI** **VICE CHAIRPERSON**	**Solange NINGABIRE** **1stRAPORTEUR**	**Apollinaire BIGIRIMANA** **2nd RAPORTEUR**
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Annex II: Agenda of the 19th EACO Assembly of Broadcasters

1. Opening of the Meeting
2. Election of the Bureau
3. Adoption of the agenda
4. Report of the outgoing Chairman
5. Matters arising from the Report of the Chairman
6. Analogue to Digital Migration-Technology Status and Challenges –(Presentation by AFRALTI)
7.   EACO Preparatory position on issues of WRC- 15 (Rwanda)
8. Report of the broadcasting technical Taskforce (BTTF Chairman)
9. Implementation of PAC on analog to digital migration: Tanzania experience
10. EAC's Policy and Regulations Readiness for Digital Broadcasting (EAC Secretariat)
11. Challenges of Content to meet the expected demands of DTT (Kenya)
12. IPTV regulation (Copy right)
13. Impact of social media (Tanzania)
14. EAC Deadline of 2012 Analog Switch off (Experiences)
15. Preparation of the Report.
16. Consideration and Adoption of the Report of the Congress
17. AOB.
18. Closing of the meeting.

Annex III: Report of the Outgoing Chairman

Annex IV:

Annex V: EAC presentation on EAC Policy and Regulations Readiness for Digital Broadcasting