

EuroAfrica-ICT Manifesto

*For a strengthened EU-Africa strategic partnership
on ICT under FP7*



Brussels

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This document has been inspired by the activities developed by the EuroAfrica-ICT project (see www.EuroAfrica-ICT.org), funded by the European Commission (Directorate General Information Society and Media) and aiming at supporting a deeper and broader S&T cooperation on ICT between the European Union (EU) and sub-Saharan Africa under the 7th EU Framework Programme for Research and Development (FP7).

The EuroAfrica-ICT project has developed a high number of activities (workshops, conferences, expert panel meetings, technical visits, bilateral meetings, public consultations, etc.) over the last twelve months, involving the main European, African and global organisations (public institutions, large corporations, SMEs, universities, NGOs, etc.) active in - or interested in - S&T cooperation on ICT between the EU and sub-Saharan Africa.

These activities have led to the following conclusions shared by all the individuals and organisations listed at the bottom of this Manifesto. They expect that their conclusions are duly taken into consideration in the ongoing revision process of the FP7 Work Programme related to the ICT theme.

EU-Africa relations are already very close today: Africa receives 60% of its development assistance from Europe (€15 billion per annum); 85% of all agricultural goods exported from Africa are bought by Europe; 65% of the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria are provided by Europe.

At a time when Africa is changing politically and economically and is rapidly entering a true new phase in its development history, Europe and Africa may forge an even deeper future.

We can therefore only praise the decision of the EU and of the African Union (AU) to go beyond donor-recipient arrangements, to enter a genuine “partnership of equals” based on mutual interest, and to agree on an ambitious Joint Strategy to be adopted at their Summit of December 2007 in Lisbon.

In the past years, Africa has also recognised that Science and Technology (S&T) and Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) are key vectors for bridging the scientific and digital divides, for reducing poverty and ensuring socio-economic development, for reaching the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), and, eventually, for supporting the sustainable evolution of Africa towards a peaceful, integrated and prosperous continent, a full actor of the global community.

The Africa Science and Technology Consolidated Plan of Action formulated by the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) and the African Union, the creation of the African Ministerial Council on Science and Technology (AMCOST), and the African Regional Action Plan on the Knowledge Economy (ARAPKE), are only some of recent examples of Africa's determination to rely on S&T and ICT to achieve its growth and development objectives.

Progress is indeed being made today in Africa concerning institutions, policies, regulatory frameworks, infrastructures, capacity building, etc., and the African ICT research community - even if still limited - is already offering interesting skills and is rapidly expanding.

Meanwhile, in their determination to ensure Europe's global leadership in ICT and in line with their i2010 initiative, the EU Member States have earmarked a total of €9.1 billion for funding ICT research over the duration of FP7, a programme including an important international dimension, being open in particular to the participation of sub-Saharan African organisations.

In this context, a strengthened S&T cooperation between Europe and Africa on ICT is of mutual strategic interest to the European and African research organisations and industries, and can efficiently contribute to implementing the new EU-AU Joint Strategy. It is therefore not surprising that one of the expected deliverables of the Lisbon EU-AU Summit is the approval of a specific Partnership on Science, Information Society, and Space.

However, the FP7 Work Programme for the ICT Theme, in its present version covering the period 2007-2008, pays a very limited attention to Africa when compared to other regions of the world. There is indeed a true paradoxical gap between - on the one hand - the political vision and roadmap, the determination of European and African organisations to cooperate (among them the ones endorsing the present Manifesto), and - on the other hand - the opportunities offered by the FP7 ICT Work Programme.

Taking the above into consideration, the individuals and organisations having endorsed this EuroAfrica-ICT Manifesto recommend that, in the ongoing revision process of the FP7 ICT Work Programme (to cover the period 2009-2010), the strategic nature of EU-Africa cooperation can be duly taken into account so that:

- an increased participation of sub-Saharan African organisations in FP7 proposals is positively assessed during the evaluation process of the proposals,
- specific actions (sectorial 'Coordination and Support Actions' - CSAs, 'Specific International Cooperation Actions' - SICAs, etc.) based on European and African mutual interests, are included in the revised FP7 Work Programme for the ICT Theme.

On this last point, many of the individuals and organisations that endorse the EuroAfrica-ICT Manifesto have suggested such actions and are ready to provide further information to the relevant Units of the European Commission's DG Information Society and Media.

Individuals and organisations endorsing the EuroAfrica-ICT Manifesto

in alphabetical order

The Abdus Salam International Centre for Theoretical Physics, Italy ● **The Academy of Sciences for the Developing World (TWAS)**, Italy ● **Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei**, Italy ● **Advanced Information Technology Institute - Kofi Annan Centre for Excellence in ICT (AITI-KACE)**, Eleanor Afful, Network Engineer & Research Fellow, Ghana ● **AFFOJ-TICE (Training ICT Association for Youth)**, Marcelline Djeumeni Tchamabe, Cameroon ● **Africa Digital**, Salomon Salumu Zahera, General Manager, Democratic Republic of Congo ● **African Axis**, Belgium ● **African Institute of Mathematical Sciences**, Francis Allotey, Director, Ghana ● **African Languages Technology Initiative (Alt-i)**, Tunde Adegbola, Executive Director, Nigeria ● **Africanscan Media AB**, Christer L. Pettersson, President & CEO, Sweden ● **AICO Software GmbH**, Kar Kosal, Information Officer, Austria ● **Ajayi Crowther University**, Nigeria ● **ARCIN**, James Ngugi, Executive Director, Kenya ● **The ARTEMIS Industrial Association (ARTEMISIA)**, The Netherlands ● **Associazione Italiana di Bioingegneria (AIB)**, Italy ● **Associazione Italiana di Telemedicina e Informatica Medica**, Italy ● **Audiovisual Technologies, Informatics and Telecommunications (ATiT)**, Belgium ● **Bantu**, Bwalya Mwali, Director, Belgium ● **Boniface Technology Systems**, Boniface Atosona, Ghana ● **Botswana CBTL**, Frank Metschies, eLearning Consultant Africa, Germany ● **Botswana Technology Centre**, Resego Morakanyane, Assistant Computer Engineer, Botswana ● **Cameroun-sansfil Association**, Gerard Philippe Mbouyap, President, Cameroon ● **Cape Peninsula University of Technology (CPUT)**, Melius Weideman, Head of Research Development, South Africa ● **Caribbean Academy of Sciences (CAS)**, Tara Dasgupta, President of CAS, Jamaica ● **Center for Media Studies and Peacebuilding**, Calixte S. Hessou, Programme Manager, Liberia ● **Centre Africain d'échange culturel**, Schombe Baudoin, Coordinator, Democratic Republic of Congo ● **Centre de Formation, d'Etudes et de Recherches pour le Développement (CFERD)**, Joseph Nkonga, Director, Democratic Republic of Congo ● **Centre de Promotion et de Vulgarisation de l'Informatique en RDC**, Arnold Mulenda Yamukandu, Programme Officer, Democratic Republic of Congo ● **Centre for Healthcare modelling and Informatics, University of Portsmouth**, Adesina Iluyemi, Researcher, United Kingdom ● **The Christian Centre**, Zwide Mbulawa, Senior Consultant, Botswana ● **Club des Hommes et Femmes d'Affaires du libre en Afrique (CHALA)**, Christian Roland, General Secretary, Senegal ● **CNOTINFOR**, Secundino Correia, Chief Innovation Officer, Portugal ● **College of Medicine, University of Lagos**, Olayinka O. Ayankogbe, Senior Lecturer, Nigeria ● **Commonwealth Network of I.T. for Development**, Henry Alamango, Executive Director, Malta ● **Computer Aid International**, Hillar Addo, Southern Africa Programme Officer, United Kingdom ● **Computer Frontiers Senegal**, Coura Fall, General Director, Senegal ● **Connect Africa**, Dion Jerling, South Africa ● **Consiglio Nazionale delle Ricerche**

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