

For Immediate Release
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Contact: Lillian Sharpley
Communications Area Manager
Email: press@afrinic.net

Strengthening the Internet Infrastructure for Research & Education

In recognition of the invaluable potential of Research and Education Institutions in the African region and to further Internet development processes, the Association of African Universities (AAU) and the African Network Information Centre (AfrinIC), have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to support the membership cost of registration for Internet Protocol (IP) resources through AfrinIC. In this agreement, which is now effective, the AAU will cover the remaining 50% of the setup and first year membership fees (up to a maximum of \$5,000 USD per member) for eligible African Academic and Research institutions, as well as Research and Education Networks (RENs) that request IP address resources. These members will then have to make provisions for subsequent year membership fees.

“IP address allocations must be considered critical for universities’ infrastructure in order to improve inter-campus communications as well as increase information sharing for a productive and efficient use of the Internet as a learning tool and for research and development” says Dr. Boubakar Barry, Coordinator, Research and Education Networking Unit, AAU.

This incentive builds on the already existing and permanent benefit that AAU members and other African educational and research institutions enjoy, which is a 50% discount offered by AfrinIC for their annual membership fees for IP Number resource allocations or assignments.

“This new agreement between AAU and AfrinIC is expected to make African universities and academic institutions more visible on the Internet as they can significantly decrease the use of NAT by using publicly routable IP address. Currently, many universities have hundreds of computers and thousands of student devices behind Network or Port Address Translation (NAT/PAT). Universities in our region should lead our effort to fight the myth of NAT and restore the Internet’s end-to-end paradigm. Deploying an infrastructure based on public IP addresses is also a key factor for a smooth transition to IPv6 in such a campus environment” says Mr. Adiel Akplogan, CEO, AfrinIC.

The AAU and AfrinIC wish to thank TENET and its FRENIA program for providing the first grant that allowed the start of this initiative. There are more ongoing discussions to increasing AfrinIC’s training activities within academic institutions. Currently, only 18 countries in the African region have at least one university that has its own assignment/allocation. Additionally, allocations to Education Networks represents six percent (6%) of the total allocation in the African region, with South Africa having 82% of these (most of which are legacy assignments), followed by Kenya and Mozambique, both having four percent (4%), then Egypt with three percent (3%).

For further information please contact renu@aau.org and/or contact@afrinic.net. Additional information on the application process can be obtained at <http://www.aau.org/announce/detail.htm?ai=251>

Additional information about benefits of becoming an AfrinIC member or about the incentives for universities and academic institutions can be found at http://www.afrinic.net/projects/afrinic_aaun.htm.

AAU is the apex organisation and forum for consultation, exchange of information and cooperation among institutions of higher education in Africa. For additional information, visit www.aau.net.

AfrinIC is the Regional Internet Registry of Africa that is responsible for the distribution and management of Internet Protocol resources for the African region. For additional information, visit www.afrinic.net.