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Plan Receives Enthusiastic Support of CEO and Board Chair

Toronto, Canada… Leaders of Africa's Internet community have unveiled a comprehensive plan designed to dramatically increase African involvement in ICANN's multi-stakeholder model.

The initiative was presented to ICANN during the organization's 45 th public meeting in Toronto, Canada by the Africa Strategy Working Group (ASWG). It was formed after ICANN's new President and Chief Executive Officer, Fadi Chehadé encouraged a stronger voice from the African continent in ICANN's multi-stakeholder model.

"When we met three months ago at the ICANN meeting in Prague, I felt a sense of frustration at our inability to come together and move the Africa agenda forward," said Chehadé. "It's incredible what this working group has achieved in such a short period of time by engaging with many concerned groups and individuals through the multi-stakeholder process."

"We employed a bottom-up, open and public process in developing this initiative," said Nii Quaynor of Ghana, a well-respected Internet leader in Africa and Chair of the ASWG. "We think this plan will lead to dramatically increased African participation in ICANN and greater presence for the organization on the African continent."

The plan was written with the input and broad support of ICANN's African community, Africa's Regional Registry for Internet Number Resources (AFRINIC) and other influential African organizations involved in the Internet ecosystem.

"We are taking a new approach to Africa," said Tarek Kamel, a Senior Advisor to the ICANN President. "This plan is based on capacity building, business development, specifically developing the Domain Name System (DNS) business in Africa and insuring inclusion."

The three year initiative, entitled ICANN's New Approach to Africa, lays out clear goals and milestones and an action plan for the first 12 months. It is a collaborative effort by AFRINIC, Africa's Regional Registry for Internet Number Resources and the ICANN community. The initiative will now be posted for public comment.

Currently, African internet users represent only 6 per cent of Internet users worldwide. This initiative is designed to dramatically increase that number.

- To review the presentation of ICANN's New Approach to Africa, go to: http://toronto45.icann.org/meetings/toronto2012/presentation-aswg-icann-africa-strategy-v1.1-16oct12-en.pdf.
- To download high resolution photos during the unveiling of the Africa Initiative, go to: http://www.flickr.com/photos/icann/sets/72157631779093929/

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About ICANN: ICANN’s mission is to ensure a stable, secure and unified global Internet. To reach another person on the Internet you have to type an address into your computer - a name or a number. That address has to be unique so computers know where to find each other. ICANN coordinates these unique

identifiers across the world. Without that coordination we wouldn't have one global Internet. ICANN was formed in 1998. It is a not-for-profit public-benefit corporation with participants from all over the world dedicated to keeping the Internet secure, stable and interoperable. It promotes competition and develops policy on the Internet's unique identifiers. ICANN doesn't control content on the Internet. It cannot stop spam and it doesn't deal with access to the Internet. But through its coordination role of the Internet's naming system, it does have an important impact on the expansion and evolution of the Internet. For more information please visit: www.icann.org.

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