



MEDIA STATEMENT

5TH SADC DIGITAL BROADCASTING MIGRATION FORUM

The 5th Southern African Development Community (SADC) Digital Broadcasting Migration Forum was convened from 15th to 17th April 2013 at the Swakopmund Hotel and Entertainment Centre, in Swakopmund, Namibia. The Forum was preceded by the 2nd SADC Digital Broadcasting Migration Implementation Steering Committee Meeting held in the morning on 15th April 2013.

The 5th SADC Digital Broadcasting Migration Forum was attended by Delegates from 11 SADC Member States namely; Angola, Botswana, Kingdom of Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Kingdom of Swaziland, United Republic of Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe. The Forum was also attended by representatives from CRASA, African Telecommunication Union (ATU) and the Radiocommunications Bureau (BR) of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU).

The 5th SADC Digital Broadcasting Migration Forum was officially opened by the Honourable Minister of Information and Communication Technology (MICT) of Namibia, Honourable Joel Kaapanda. In his keynote address, the Honourable Minister reminded Delegates that the development of ICT in the SADC Region is central to regional integration and the fast approaching ITU Digital Terrestrial Television (DTT) Analogue Switch Off (ASO) deadline of 17th June 2015. He expressed his satisfaction that the SADC Region has made notable progress on the DTT migration and having been the first in Africa to: Set up a Regional Implementation Steering Committee; Establish the minimum specifications for low cost free-to-air (FTA) set top boxes (STBs); and Set up a DTT Project Management Office (PMO).

He further encouraged Member States to utilise these institutional frameworks so that the SADC Region can make a smooth and seamless DTT transition and benefit from the Digital Dividend. He wished the Delegates fruitful deliberations during this SADC Forum.

The welcome remarks were received from the Honourable Kleopas Mutjavikua, the Governor of the Erongo Region, who extended a warm welcome to SADC Delegates attending the 5th SADC DTT Forum. He stressed the importance of the DTT Migration and urged SADC Member States to put all their efforts for the sake of the Region for global competitiveness of the SADC.

The SADC Senior Programme Officer (SPO) for ICT and Communications, Mrs. Cecilia Mamelodi Onyadile thanked the ITU for once again availing Experts to guide SADC work on the DTT transition. She expressed her gratitude to SADC Member States who continue to support and guide the work of the SADC Secretariat and making SADC the envy of other Regions of Africa. She noted that SADC is the only Region in Africa that has developed a Regional DTT Roadmap and appealed for continued support for the work of the SADC Secretariat. Lastly, she reminded Delegates at the Forum to take

stock of how SADC has progressed in the area of DTT migration and if SADC Member States will meet the SADC ASO deadline of 31 December, 2013.

A vote of thanks was given by Mr. Martins Langa, a representative from the Chair of SADC, Mozambique, who sincerely expressed gratitude to the Government and People of Namibia through the Honourable Minister of MICT for hosting the 5th SADC Digital Broadcasting Migration Forum.

The main objective of the 5th SADC Digital Broadcasting Migration Forum was to review implementation of the SADC Roadmap in the SADC Member States and address some of the challenges that are facing SADC Member States in the implementation of the SADC Roadmap and in meeting the SADC ASO deadline of 31st December 2013. The Forum discussed the issue of Digital Sound Broadcasting Standards and the 700 MHz Channeling Plan as requested by the SADC ICT Ministers in their meeting convened in November 2012 in Balaclava, Mauritius. A Progress Report shall be prepared for submission to the SADC ICT Ministers Meeting in May 2013, in Maseru, Kingdom of Lesotho.

The Forum also received the status report on the operationalization of the SADC DTT PMO. The DTT PMO shall be a special desk under the auspices of the SADC Secretariat with the primary objective to be the one-stop-shop for advice, co-ordination, monitoring, evaluation and reporting on the implementation of the SADC Roadmap for Digital Broadcasting Migration so as to assist all SADC Member States to meet the SADC ASO deadline or the international deadline for DTT broadcasting migration. The SADC DTT PMO has been identified as an instrumental component of the institutional arrangement for the effective, successful and smooth implementation of DTT broadcasting in the Region. The PMO will be manned by experts seconded from Angola, Botswana and South Africa.

The Forum received the reports from the 11 Member States that were present on their status on the implementation of the SADC Roadmap for Digital Broadcasting Migration. In general, Member States were at different stages of the DTT migration, whilst some Member States have recently made significant strides however challenges were noted and this resulted in slow progress in the roll out of DTT.

The Forum received from the ITU Expert a report on the results of the 25th ITU iteration of the GE06 Frequency Coordination Exercise and presentations on Digital Sound Broadcasting Standards and the 700 MHz Channeling Plan. The Forum also received presentations on the ATU's Perspective on the Migration to DTT in Africa and the Implementation challenges on Digital Transition in Africa, from ATU and Kemilinks International, respectively. The Forum further received presentations on the SADC Technical Meeting convened in Zanzibar, United Republic of Tanzania in October 2012 from CRASA and a presentation on the ITU Working Party (WP-5D) Activities on the World Radiocommunication Conference 2015 (WRC-15) Agenda Item 1.2 from Zimbabwe.

The meeting reviewed the pertinent issues of the Digital Dividend associated with the impending migration in particular the appreciation of the opportunities ushered by the Migration to DTT and made the following recommendations:

- a) That a Progress Report capturing the status of Member States in the implementation of the SADC Roadmap prepared by the Forum be presented to the Ministers Meeting on the 23rd of May 2013 in Maseru, Kingdom of Lesotho.
- b) That the DTT PMO expedites its advisory services to Member States in the implementation of the SADC Roadmap.

- c) SADC Member States shall endeavour to meet the SADC DTT ASO of 31st December 2013 and continue in their efforts to ensure that all Member States migrate to DTT by the ITU deadline of 17th June 2015.
- d) SADC Member State to consider various funding mechanisms. These should include revenue from Digital Dividend licensing, Public Private Partnerships (PPP) and Universal Service Funds (USF).
- e) Stakeholder consultations remain crucial hence the DTT Broadcasting Migration should be seen as a Central Government project of greater public and national interest and should be championed accordingly.
- f) Member States to complete the DTT PMO Questionnaire on the implementation status of the SADC Roadmap by 3rd May 2013.
- g) Member States to send their requests for technical assistance on DTT Broadcasting Migration from the DTT PMO to the SADC Secretariat by the 3rd May 2013.
- h) SADC Member States to duly complete the SADC Digital Dividend Frequency Spectrum Stock Taking (694-862 MHz) Form and submit the same before the 3rd May 2013.
- i) SADC Member States to continue optimizing the spectrum from 470-694 MHz by pursuing the GE06 Frequency Coordination procedures so as to benefit from both Digital Dividend 1 (790-862 MHz) and Digital Dividend 2 (694-790 MHz).
- j) A SADC Sub-Regional GE06 Frequency Coordination preparatory meeting to be convened in June 2013 in Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe in order to complete this exercise so that Member States can finalise their DTT Frequency Plans and formally submit their modifications to the ITU BR.
- k) SADC Member States to continue discussions on the Digital Sound Broadcasting Standards and the 700 MHz Channeling Plan so as to adopt a SADC Digital Sound Broadcasting Standard(s) and a harmonised 700 MHz Channeling Plan. On the 700 MHz Channeling Plan, some guiding principles were developed.
- l) SADC Member States shall endeavour to participate in the upcoming ITU/ATU GE06 Frequency Coordination preparatory meeting to be convened in July 2013 in Nairobi, Kenya.
- m) SADC Member States shall endeavour to create conducive frameworks that will stimulate the creation of local content for DTT broadcasting and to explore technologies for the return DTT path to enable interactive services.
- n) SADC Member States are mindful of dealing with e-waste when it comes to dealing with analogue equipment beyond the DTT migration.

The next SADC DTT Implementation Steering Committee meeting will be held in Zambia in October/November 2013.

Swakopmund Hotel & Entertainment Centre

Swakopmund, Namibia 17th April, 2013