Africa Domain Name System Forum to be held in Durban, South Africa, 12-13 July 2013

Co-organized by the Internet Society, AfTLD, and ICANN

Forum will bring together registries, registrars, experts and policy makers to foster cross-border collaboration

[Washington, D.C., and Geneva, Switzerland, 13 May 2013] – The Africa Domain Name System (DNS) Forum will be held on 12 - 13 July 2013 in Durban, South Africa. The event aims to establish a platform for the DNS community across Africa and to advance the domain name industry and domain name registrations on the continent.

Over the years, the Internet Society, AfTLD, and ICANN have supported the continued development and growth of Country Code Top Level Domains (ccTLDs) in Africa through capacity building and technical support. Despite the support, the growth and sustainability of African ccTLDs and adoption of new technologies remains very low as compared to other regions of the world. To identify the bottlenecks that are keeping the industry from growing and the actions that can catalyze its growth, the three organizations determined the need for a forum to discuss these regional DNS issues.

The DNS Forum will foster cross-border collaboration between registries, registrars, registrants, DNS experts, Government representatives, and policy makers. Topics covered during the 1 ½ day event include trends, opportunities, and challenges of the DNS industry; strategies for registries and registrars; legal issues with cross-border domain registrations; ways Governments can support domain name growth; and benefits of standardizing accreditation to attract more cross-border registrars and registrations.

"The Internet Society's African Regional Bureau has been working to strengthen the ccTLDs in Africa by improving sustainability, encouraging the implementation of automation solutions at ccTLDs, and promoting the use of technology such as DNSSEC at registries," said Dawit Bekele, Internet Society Regional Bureau Director for Africa. "We are pleased to join together with AfTLD and ICANN to host this multi-stakeholder forum where participants can share experiences, gain new insights, and establish new business relationships with organizations from within and outside the continent. Such a forum is important to bring growth in the African domain name industry."

Pierre S. Dandjinou, ICANN Vice President of Stakeholder Engagement for Africa, commented, "ICANN is partnering with other players in the region to implement its Africa strategy, which was developed in 2012 by the African community. Thus, this DNS Forum in Durban, as a partnership between AfTLD and the Internet Society and as a pre-conference event to the ICANN meeting, is another milestone that builds on the MIGworks event in Addis in March 2013, which sought to pave the way for the development of the DNS industry in Africa and to empower the African community for an increased accreditation of registrars from the continent. I believe the new gTLD program will help grow this

industry on a global and regional level, and we hope that African business players can be part of this growing industry as much as they can. ICANN will present in this event several programs to support and incubate new business players in Africa to benefit out of the growing potential in this continent."

"By working with and building on our partnerships in running the DNS Forum, AfTLD's objective is to build on our thriving capacity building activities for ccTLDs in Africa so as to improve the DNS in Africa and the sustainability of ccTLDs," said Dr. Paulos Nyirenda, President of AfTLD. "The DNS Forum will present a great opportunity for players in the domain industry to learn and to foster new and established relationships, including those among ccTLDs, registries, registrars, operators, policy makers and end users."

For more information and to register for the Africa DNS Forum, visit: http://aftld.org/afdnsforum

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