



## **Internet Exchange Point Launched on 21 March 2014 in Bujumbura, Burundi**

IXP launch supported by the Internet Society

[Bujumbura, Burundi – March 21 2014] The BurundiX Internet Exchange Point (IXP) was successfully launched on 21 March 2014 in Bujumbura, Burundi. The IXP was formally inaugurated by Hon. Tharcisse Nkezabahizi, Minister of Telecommunications, information and Communication and Relations with Parliament and Mr. Philippe Niyongabo, representative of the AUC. Also present at the opening were Dr. Dawit Bekele, Director African Bureau for the Internet Society, Mr. Coppens Pasteur NDAYIRAGIJE, president of the Association of BurundiX A.S.B.L. and Mr. Arnaud Fenioux expert from Lyon-IX.

It is envisioned that the IXP will serve as a catalyst for innovation and development of Internet services and applications in Burundi. The Internet Exchange Point will support Government efforts towards the implementation of E-government services, and lower the cost of developing local hosting and application development. The presence of the IXP will improve local Internet resilience by eliminating the dependence on international connectivity for local Internet services and Internet-based communications.

“Our wish is that the step taken today becomes a promising beginning for the Internet Exchange Point in addition to the Internet Service providers. We would wish that progressively the content providers and the private enterprises, the academicians and the main public administrations do the same“, said Hon. Tharcisse Nkezabahizi, Minister of the Telecommunications, Information, Communication and Relations with the Parliament during the launching ceremony of the first Internet Exchange Point in Burundi.

The representative of the AUC, Mr. Philippe NIYONGABO, added that, “The African Union Commission reiterates its continuous support to African countries in order to take benefit of the technological potential of the information and to find novel and effective ways to put this potential at the service of African citizens in general, and Burundi people in particular”.

In his remarks at the IXP launch, Dr. Dawit Bekele, Director of the African Regional Bureau of the Internet Society, noted, “The Internet Society is pleased by this major accomplishment which has been achieved in a truly multi-stakeholder fashion. This is one great leap forward towards insuring so that no Internet packet leaves Burundi to come back to Burundi. We are proud for having successfully implemented the project and satisfied to see that there are committed people and organizations in BurundiX who will insure a prosperous future for the IXP.”

“In a region where Internet is increasingly becoming accessible, we are committed to continuing supporting the development of a stable and resilient infrastructure in order to sustain Internet growth throughout Africa. The launch of this local IXP will enhance Burundi’s IP infrastructure, and improve the resiliency of its local Internet Infrastructure. It will also go a long way in ensuring that more African Internet traffic is routed locally; an important factor for local content development and affordable transit costs across the region.” says Mr. Adiel Akplogan, CEO of AFRINIC.

BurundiX will be managed by the Association of BurundiX A.S.B.L. All telecommunication operators and all internet providers are members of this Association.

The IXP was established with the support of the African Internet Exchange System (AXIS), a project of the African Union implemented by the Internet Society. AXIS organized an IXP best practices workshop in Bujumbura from 2-4 October 2012 where higher official from the Ministry of ICT as well as more than 20 experts participated, followed by a hands-on technical training to 23 specialists, from 18-22 March 2013. The Ministry of Telecommunications, information and Communication hosted the workshop and Lyon-IX contributed by providing the facilitators. The subsequent collaboration between interested parties has led to this successful initiative, which is expected to lead to positive results for the sector and the country.

The Internet Society’s Africa Interconnection and Traffic Exchange programme has been actively supporting the development of IXPs to boost local and regional interconnection. The programme aims to have 80% of Internet traffic exchanged in Africa by 2020, keeping local traffic local. This objective has been boosted by the appointment of the Internet Society to implement the African Union’s African Internet Exchange System (AXIS) programme.

For more information on AXIS, visit <http://pages.au.int/axis>

### **About the Internet Society**

The Internet Society is the trusted independent source for Internet information and thought leadership from around the world. With its principled vision and substantial technological foundation, the Internet Society promotes open dialogue on Internet policy, technology, and future development among users, companies, governments, and other organizations. Working with its members and Chapters around the world, the Internet Society enables the continued evolution and growth of the Internet for everyone.

For more information, visit [www.internetsociety.org](http://www.internetsociety.org)

Media Contact: Betel Hailu, [hailu@isoc.org](mailto:hailu@isoc.org)