

Task Force Chair Report:

Technical Task Force Meeting on African Regional Space Programme

Background

During the Second Session of the African Ministerial Conference on Meteorology (AMCOMET), that took place from 26 - 28 May 2014 in Harare Zimbabwe. Task Force Chair and Rapporteur of the three Task Forces established in AMCOMET-2 meeting held in Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe from 15-19 October 2012, were nominated as follows

- **Tanzania** was elected Chair of the Task Force on the African Regional Space Programme, with **South Africa** as the Rapporteur; and -----as Members.
- **If you recall the joint meeting held with AUC SWG where Mr.HambaniMasheleni** from the AUC-Human Resource and Science and Technology provided an overview of the genesis of the space policy and strategy. He also indicated that there is a growing need in Africa to develop its own space programme to enable the continent to exploit space commerce in a more harmonised and coordinated manner. As various Ministerial Conferences and Councils requested the development of a Space Programmes, the AU Summit of Heads of States, in January 2014, decided to establish a Joint Task Force on an African Regional Space Programme to be led by the African Ministerial Conference on Science and Technology (AMCOST) under the African Union Commission of Human Resources and Science and Technology (AUC-HRST).
- **Dr.Valanathan Munsami**, Chair of the Space Working Group (SWG), established by the AMCOST, presented the background, rationale, goals, objectives and

principles of the draft Space Policy, which was presented to AMCOST in April 2014. He said, The draft Space Policy will also be presented to the AMCOST Bureau Meeting in Sudan expected to take place in September 2014, and eventual approval by the African Union Summit in January 2015. He also mentioned that the SWG is in the process of drafting the Space Strategy.

The following agreement were reached

- The meeting agreed that AMCOMET and AMCOST need to work closely together to support the development of the African Space Policy and the African Space Strategy.
- The meeting also noted that African Ministers already decided on the establishment of a Regional African Space Programme, therefore relevant institutions need to facilitate the implementation of this decision.
- The meeting reviewed the document on African Space Policy and proposed amendments.
- The Task Force of the Joint African Space Programme:
 - a. Recalls the African Union decision on the need for an African Space Programme;
 - b. Welcomes the draft African Space Policy and adopts the amendments by the AMCOMET Task Force;
 - c. Requests the Chair of the Task Force to present the Draft African Space Policy to the Bureau for consideration during the Third Session of AMCOMET **(Which was done)**;
 - d. Takes note that the AMCOMET Bureau Chair has reached out to the AMCOST Bureau Chair with a

view to fully engaging in the process and requests the AUC and AMCOMET Secretariat to facilitate engagements of the Chairs of AMCOMET and AMCOST in order to strengthen synergies and ensure a mutually beneficial approach throughout the entire process of developing an African Regional Space Programme **(This is also done We have been invited)**;

- e. Requests the AUC Space Working Group (SWG) to ensure inclusive participatory process in the development of the African Space Strategy to adequately address sectoral needs; (**Validation Meeting included Meteorologists from NMHSs**)

Major Developments

After the meeting, through Task Force Chair AMCOMET joined African Space Working Group (SWG) established by AMCOST in developing African Space Policy and Strategy documents, as recommended by the meeting that AMCOMET and AMCOST need to work closely together to support of the development of the African Space Policy and the African Space Strategy.

The first joint AMCOST and AMCOMET African Space Working Group (SWG) met in Cairo, Egypt 27-30 August to discuss and incorporate the inputs from AMCOMET. The following documents were produced during the meeting:

1. "Draft of African Space Policy" where inputs of Meteorology were in - cooperated.
2. "First draft of African Space Strategy" Meteorological Issues were also in - cooperated.

SWG also conducted a validation workshop that took place in Congo-Brazzaville from 8-10 December 2014, whereby scientist across Africa were invited to make their contribution

on the Draft of African Space Strategy in four space thematic areas namely:

1. Earth Observations
2. Navigation and Positioning
3. Communication and
4. Astronomy and Space Science

Meteorologist from various NMHS attended validation workshop and made huge contribution to in-cooperate Meteorological issues.