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**DEPARTMENT OF HRST
MEETING OF AU SPACE WORKING GROUP
27-29 AUGUST 2014, CAIRO EGYPT**

REPORT

INTRODUCTION

1. The Department of Human Resources, Science and Technology co-organized with the Arab Republic of Egypt the 6th meeting of the African Union Space Working Group in Cairo Egypt from 27-29 August 2014. The National Authority for Remote Sensing & Space sciences (NARSS) hosted the meeting. The objectives of the meeting were to:
 - Incorporate the inputs from other user sectors and AU policy organs into the draft African Space Policy,
 - Commence drafting of the strategy for the implementation of the draft policy, following the workshop of African space experts held in December 2013 in Johannesburg, and
 - Consider the African Space Governance framework.

ATTENDANCE

2. The following attended the meeting:
 - Working Group¹ Members from: *Congo Brazzaville, Egypt, Ghana, Kenya, Namibia, Nigeria, South Africa, and Tanzania,*
 - Organizations/institutions represented: *African Ministerial Conference on Meteorology (AMCOMET), Tunisian ICT Association, NEPAD Planning Agency, and UNECA*
 - The AUC was represented by representatives from the following Departments: HRST, DIE and PS.

OPENING SESSION

3. The Chairman of NARSS Prof. Medhat Mokhtar, in his opening remarks expressed deep appreciation for the efforts by the AU Space Working Group in the on-going process to develop holistic and inclusive African Space Policy and Strategy. He underscored Egypt's readiness to support this initiative alongside other African countries and the conviction that Africa will soon emerge as a potential global player in space sciences and applications due to its vast natural resources. Space offers African countries a unique opportunity to cooperate and share the capital intensive space programmes.
4. In his opening remarks Dr. Mahama Ouedraogo, Head of Science and Technology (AUC/HRST) thanked the government and the people of the Arab Republic of Egypt for their warm hospitality and the logistical support provided by NARSS in hosting this important meeting. On behalf of the Commissioner HRST, he thanked the chair of the Working Group, and welcomed all the participants to the meeting. He highlighted that the draft policy was already presented on different platforms including AMCOST and AMCOMET. He urged the Working Group to reflect on the sustainability of an African space programme and the

¹ Composition of Working Group: Algeria, Egypt, Ghana, Nigeria, Kenya, Tanzania, Namibia and South Africa, Cameroon and Republic of Congo

resources that will be required to roll out the implementation of the strategy as an African driven and led process. He also thanked the countries that have so far financed the development of the policy and the strategy i.e. South Africa, Nigeria and now Egypt.

5. Dr Valanathan Munsami, Chief Specialist, Astronomy and African Space Science, and the Chair of the Working Group also thanked the host and the Members of the group for their dedication in the development of the African space policy and strategy. He gave a brief history of the work done so far and what still remains to be done. The current focus was to finalise the draft policy, start drafting the strategy and define a clear space governance structure. These three outcomes will be submitted for consideration by the relevant AU policy organs.
6. The chair invited round table introductions and the adoption of the agenda and programme of work.

CONSIDERATION AND DISCUSSION OF THE INPUTS FROM AMCOMET

7. The African Ministerial Conference on Meteorology (AMCOMET) in their June 2014 meeting made pertinent input proposals to the draft African Space policy so that the concerns from weather and climate services are included in it, particularly the development of a regional African Space Programme.
8. The Working Group welcome the inputs from the AMCOMET and adopted them with some changes that are in line with the TORs for the development of a high-level goal-based holistic and inclusive African Space policy that is capable of satisfying all users sectors across the spectrum that includes earth observation, satellite communications, navigation and positioning. Space is a cross-cutting theme.
9. The Working Group noted the following:
 - The need for AMCOMET and AMCOST Bureau Chairs to meet as per the request of AMCOMET to facilitate the sectoral engagements in order to strengthen synergies and ensure a mutually beneficial approach.
 - The need to present the draft policy and strategy to AMCOMET 3
 - The request to jointly explore and ensure a linkage with existing initiatives with the WMO Space Programme and other on-going programmes in Africa.
 - Noted the postponement of the CITMC Ministerial meeting to February 2015, where both the draft and policy and strategy will be presented.

CONSIDERATION AND DISCUSSION OF THE DRAFT STRATEGY

10. The workshop of African space experts held in December 2013 in Pretoria, looked at the technical and user requirements essential for drafting of strategy to guide the implementation of the African Space Policy. The outcome of this workshop formed the basic foundation for the drafting of the strategy. The Working Group created various breakaway sessions to work on the structure of the strategy, and content of various topics such as strategic goals and key priorities, thematic focus areas (Earth Observation, Navigation and Positioning, Satellite Communications, and Space Science and Astronomy), implementation framework, functional and support platforms. The meeting produced a first draft of the strategy which the members of Working Group will consolidate electronically.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

11. The Working Group agreed to:

- a) Continue working electronically focusing on consolidating various chapters, revision and definition of indicators in the week of September, 2014 and will be circulated to all members of the Working Group.
- b) The policy document will continue to be presented to other sectoral conferences for their inputs.
- c) Draft a motivation document comprising of a cost benefit analysis of space science and technology for Africa taking into consideration both tangible and intangible assets. Such motivation will be brought to the attention of the policy makers.
- d) Convene a final meeting of the space Working Group back to back with a validation workshop for both space policy and strategy during the first week of December, 2014 in Brazzaville. This meeting will also facilitate the consultations between the sectoral chairs of AMCOST, AMCOMET, and CITMC and will address the issues of joint implementation and economic models.

CLOSING

12. The representative of the host, AUC and the chair of the Working Group gave their closing remarks and outline the next steps before taking the document into the final AU processes.