



Internet Exchange Point Launched on 7 March 2014 in Windhoek, Namibia

IXP launch supported by the Internet Society

[Windhoek, Namibia – March 7 2014] The Windhoek Internet Exchange Point (WIXP) was successfully launched on 7 March 2014 in Windhoek, Namibia. WIXP was formally inaugurated by H.E. Hon. Stanley Simataa, Deputy Minister of ICT and H.E. Dr. Elham M.A Ibrahim, Commissioner for Infrastructure and Energy, African Union Commission. Also present at the opening were Mr. Mbeuta Ua-Ndjarakana, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of ICT; Dr. Dawit Bekele, Director African Bureau for the Internet Society; Mr. Frans Ndoroma, Managing Director of Telecom Namibia; Mr. Schalk Erasmus, Chairperson of Namibia's IXP Association and Mr. Nishal Goburdhan from AFRINIC.

It is envisioned that the WIXP will serve as a catalyst for innovation and development of Internet services and applications in Namibia. The IXP will support Government efforts to implement 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.

"Maximizing ICT development must go on. We are only at the beginning...I look forward to the growth of the IXP in Namibia and for it to be at the service of the Namibian citizens," said H.E. Dr. Elham M.A. Ibrahim, Commissioner for Infrastructure and Energy, African Union Commission during the inauguration ceremony.

Accordingly, Hon. Stanley Simataa, Deputy Minister of ICT, noted that "The Namibian public will hopefully enjoy Internet services that are deliberately more secure, affordable and faster and one should applaud to all of the ISPs who took advantage to connect to this IXP. "

In his remarks at the WIXP launch, Dr. Dawit Bekele, Director of the African Regional Bureau of the Internet Society, said, "The inauguration of WIXP brings a great sense of satisfaction for the Internet Society as this is a result of continuous dedication and hard work aimed at building strong communities of practice and at keeping Africa's local traffic local." Dr. Bekele further noted, "IXPs bring additional benefits to the local Internet environment as they are essential to facilitate a robust domestic ICT sector. They help make online services equally accessible to all local users." Dr. Bekele extended his congratulations to the Namibian people and government, including all stakeholders for their concerted efforts in making WIXP a reality.

Ziege Willemse, Chief Systems Administrator, Ministry of ICT, added, "AXIS was not only able to deliver the expertise and guidance that was essential to the realization of this project, but it was also successful in bringing all stakeholders of the IXP to work, which was critical for the successful establishment of WIXP."

WIXP will be managed by the IXP Association of Namibia that was established as a non-profit organisation in order to manage the IXP using the multi-stakeholder process. On the day of the launch 5 Internet Service Providers (ISPs) connected to the IXP and started exchanging traffic among themselves. The remaining ISPs are expected to connect in the coming weeks.

WIXP 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 Namibia from 23-25 October 2012 where 21 experts participated, and a hands-on technical training for 16 engineers, 11-15 March 2013. The Ministry of ICT of the Republic of Namibia hosted the workshops and AFRINIC contributed by providing the facilitator. 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

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