First Internet Exchange Point in The Gambia Launched in Banjul

Internet Society Supports IXP launch

[Banjul, the Gambia– 22 July 2014] The first Internet Exchange Point (IXP) in The Gambia was successfully launched on 12 July 2014 in Banjul. The Serrekunda Internet Exchange Point (SIXP) is expected to serve as a catalyst for innovation and development of Internet services and applications in the country. The establishment of the IXP was supported by the African Internet Exchange System (AXIS), a project of the African Union implemented by the Internet Society.

SIXP 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.

The IXP was formally inaugurated by Hon. Bala Garba Jahumpa, Minister of Information and Communication Infrastructure; H.E, Dr. Elham Mahmoud Ahmed Ibrahim, African Union (AU) Commissioner for Infrastructure and Energy; H.E, Sarjo Jallow, Ambassador of Gambia to Ethiopia and permanent representative at the AU; Mr. Lamin Camara, permanent Secretary Ministry of Information and Communication Infrastructure; and Mrs. Isatou Jah, Chairperson of the IXP committee.

Hon. Bala Garba Jahumpa, overseeing Minister of Information and Communication Infrastructure, commented during the launch ceremony, "*…The Gambia is the fourth country in Africa supported by the AUC to establish an exchange point… I wish to seize this opportunity to thank you, Madam Commissioner, your department and the Internet Society (ISOC) for the great initiative and foresight to make this dream come true*."

H.E Dr. Elham Mahmoud Ahmed Ibrahim, AU Commissioner for Infrastructure and Energy, added, "*I am pleased that the collaboration between the Ministry of Information, Communication Infrastructure of the Gambia and the African Union Commission has culminated to this milestone to launch the Internet Exchange Point in The Gambia.*"

In her welcoming remarks at the IXP launch, Mrs. Isatou Jah, Chairperson of the IXP committee noted, "*…the stakeholders in the ICT community in the Gambia, under the leadership of the Ministry, and through support of African Union Commission, ISOC, WARCIP, and other international partners, have been working tirelessly to make this dream of establishing an IXP a reality in the Gambia. We are here today to reap the fruits of this collective effort.*"

Through the AXIS program, the Internet Society organized an IXP best practices workshop in Banjul from 16-18 October 2012 where higher officials from the Ministry of ICT as well as more than 39 experts participated, followed by a hands-on technical training in February. The Ministry of Information and Communication Infrastructure hosted the workshop and AfriNIC (Nishal Goburdhan), AfNOG/Uganda (Patrick Okui) and the Internet Society (Michuki Mwangi) facilitated the capacity building workshops. "*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,*" said Dr. Dawit Bekele, Africa Regional Bureau Director of the Internet Society.

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 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. It is also the organizational home for the Internet Engineering Task Force (IETF). 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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