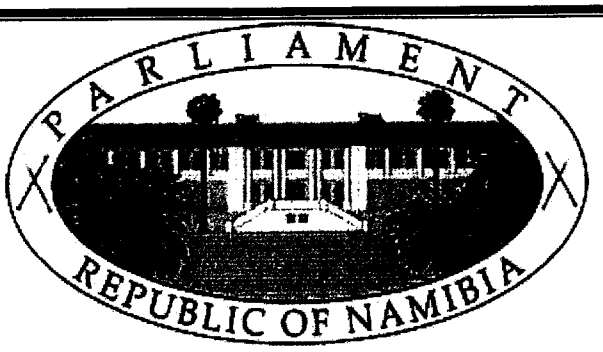

REPORT

BY

THE PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON INFORMATION, COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION

AT

THE COMMONWEALTH TELECOMMUNICATIONS (CTO) ANNUAL FORUM 2017

"Digital Nations, Digital wealth"

11 – 13 SEPTEMBER 2017,

Maputo, Mozambique

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(i) ACRONYMS

CTO	Commonwealth Telecommunications Organization
ICT	Information and communication technologies
INCM	Regulatory Authority of Mozambique
E-governance	Electronic governance
M2M	Machine 2 Machine
IoT	Internet of Things
PPP	Public Private Partnership
MSPs	Multi-Stakeholders Partnerships

1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

The Parliamentary Standing Committee on Information, Communication, Technology and Innovation (ICT & I) as part of its consolidation of international relationships with ICT stakeholders, received an invitation from CTO, to attend the Commonwealth Telecommunication Organisation's annual forum from 11-13 October, subsequently the Council meeting which took place 14-15 in Maputo, Mozambique. A delegation comprising of Hon. Bernadette Jagger and Hon. Benson Kaapala, accompanied by Ms. Namasiku Lizazi Chief Parliamentary Clerk attended the Forum.

The Commonwealth Telecommunication Organisation (CTO) Forum is an annual event, held over a period of 3 days, proceeded by the Council meeting which is the organisation's highest decision making body, composed of subscribed and fully paid up member countries. The Forum is represented by 21 member countries and this year's forum was attended by 150 delegates from across commonwealth countries. Over the 3 days of the forum, different topics were deliberated on which were all aimed at the development of the Commonwealth sustainable development goals, experiences where shared as well as best practices aimed at contributing to the capacity building of different commonwealth countries. All countries agreed to contribute towards the ICT developmental gap with the tone set for collaboration within industry members linking towards the theme and event contributing more towards the relevance of the forum. An overview and discussions into the following topics were discussed: The digital nations, Universal broadband, ICT applications, Regulating virtual environments, Digital economy, Machine to Machine communication, Security and Privacy, Data protection in cloud age; and the Investment gap.

This year's forum was organized by CTO, and hosted by the Regulatory Authority of Mozambique (INCM) under the auspices of the Republic of Mozambique's Ministry of Transport and Communication with the year's theme being "Digital Nations, Digital Wealth".

2. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

The report intends to provide a summary of what transpired at the summit and to identify possible best practices that could be used in the Namibian context.

3. DISCUSSIONS

Setting the tone for discussions topics which contributed towards the theme and relevance of the forum were discussed in detail and case studies narrated where necessary.

3.1 DIGITAL NATIONS

The journey to digital future was both individual and collective because collaboration and cooperation was seen to be very crucial to close the gap between countries and contribute to the achievement of the 17 set goals by the year 2030, and by so doing it shall increase people's access to ICTs. The virtual reality was one of the highlighted factor seen to change humanity for positive change forever, however, this was not possible alone but regulations and technology are needed for connectivity and the fast pace of the dynamic ICT world to keep pace with the rest of the world. All members shared the same sentiments, in that it was inevitable to face reality and by so doing member countries shall adhere to the changes & eliminate the fear of the impact that these changes can bring to families and societal dynamics. It was also said that it is crucial for countries to create regulations to govern challenges which are being fast created by artificial intelligence to enhance the digital ecosystems and their adoption to the new digital future. More so the need to balance open data with privacy while dealing with artificial intelligence was overemphasized as well as creating more agile regulation framework which must move at the same pace as technology.

UNIVERSAL BROAD BAND

There is great need to align the definition of universal broadband with the true meaning of the word. Many people/countries were keen to have hybrid solutions (mobile/satellite) and in the absence of actual implementation, piloting of applications and systems must be allowed to reach more locations. Of recent broadband development were rated as one of the top contributing factor to economic growth, it would also contribute to will contribute to people's empowerment but this cannot be achieved in isolation from strategies.

Strategies must be created to ensure adequate usage of broadband and governments are urged to support the development of social economic policies to allow for digital revolution. To achieve this different determining factors must be zoomed in, such as the development of coordinated strategies, skill development, neutral policies and regulations need to be drafted. However, intense investments are reasons to justify the slow pace of access of equal connectivity to rural areas. Regulators are bodies that need to understand what new trends in technologies are both locally and internationally in order to use the right trend in their respective countries. The need to have the knowledge on the Why and What of technology in order to create conducive conditions to allow for competitive and liberalized markets. They also need to encourage investment, particularly in rural areas by making services affordable and having

policies which compel investors have a social responsibility towards any community they wish to invest in an area.

ICT APPLICATIONS

ICT applications are aimed at access to the practical application of technology like (E-Government/mNutrition), ultimately it is about how ICTs can be used to support individual countries' development. The digital divide is real and needs to be addressed by such platforms by engaging citizens one tends to reap more benefits than not. Moreover, there seem to be a clear lack of resources to cover these needs including cloud computing.

REGULATING VIRTUAL ENVIRONMENTS

All in attendance were in agreement that the future lies in digital. But the big question was "How are regulations prepared to deal with it"? Regulators tend to regulate within borderlines. How is the new reality going to be regulated? However, many answers linger but the big challenge is the diversity of the African continent is itself, which poses to be of a challenge than its people and lacks a harmonious answer. There is E-Friction in many bilateral laws and how to overcome the challenge becomes even more of a challenge. It was in principle agreed that by investing in infrastructures, providing affordable services to consumers and promote digital literacy might alleviate the many challenges surrounding the e-friction of trans-country laws.

In whatever each country finds or attempts to find a solution, broadband must be at priority level for all government entities, There is a need for all government office to adopt a strategic approach in dealing with artificial intelligence to solve government technological issues, and entities must learn to control something that is controlled by someone elsewhere or remotely or even a machine. The need for global standards and Regional Collaboration (beyond ICT) between developers and policy makers, was overemphasized. A comprehensive strategy and planning must be adopted, regulators should regulate less to allow the tangible impacts of regulation be felt and spoken about. Internet is the new network and very crucial to the survival of this new technology.

DIGITAL ECONOMY

This topic was presented with a case study from Mozambique which goes by Project *Mopa cited as a good example*. Mopa is a municipal garbage collection project which has managed to clear the city of Maputo with a sore sight of dirt and contaminated drums across the city. Most service providers were willing to assist at initial stage but pulled out at implementation stage. Network service providers said initiatives and promises were good but the implementation part was the most difficult part of all, however, in few instances people do overcome

and the Mopa project is one such example. Innovators both from Mozambique and other countries pledged to strive to make internet affordable.

The affordable pricing, distribution channels, banking support systems, and funding should be accessible and affordable to all. Government was urged to create conditions, laws and policy framework to allow for the usage of the digital economy ecosystem. There dire need for citizens to experience secure transactions (cyber security and encounter friendly legislations). Worth note was that the Niches of digital protection does not start from far but it starts even between two people (meaning the two of us).

MACHINE TO MACHINE COMMUNICATION

Machine to Machine (M2M) is the same network connecting many things, it is said to remain in the internet sphere for a very long time to come. It is the way and the technology. Internet of Things (IoT) as the main use of M2M just need the regulatory aspect of it in order to kick start the whole process, however, concerns were that the security of things was not in most government entities' priority, coupled with certification and the privacy perspective to manage spectrum in order to share broadband and open up ways for collaboration as well as spectrum sharing was seen to be very crucial among attendees.

SECURITY AND PRIVACY

The global framework on cyber expertise and social media was prepared to ensure the privacy of customers however, community standards are not the same across the globe and needs to be more representative of the people in whose community they apply. Moreover, representatives of such media and social platform need to be country residents in the countries they operate in (Eg: Facebook/Instagram etc) because there are a lot of incidents that need their attention yet one can never get hold of them due to their absence or distance from country of operation. Social media and online transactions are feared to be insecure and trustworthy. The big question is raised that "are transactions secure and trust worthy".

DATA PROTECTION IN CLOUD AGE

The usage of cloud computing has increase overwhelmingly while and it poses a lot of challenges to society, law makers, regulators and users at large. Therefore, regulators are cautioned to take and consider discretionary measures in exercising their duties. However, for regulations to be effective they require a comprehensive legal framework as the current one are mainly targeting the system or equipment being used and not the market. ICT is very dynamic and

changes almost overnight yet laws cannot keep changing, hence the need to create market related laws to avoid litigations.

There are too many challenges : to ownership of a product, access control is restricted, compliance/ enforcement is complicated as it may lead to litigation due to targeted markets, awareness of consumer rights and products and capacity building to either offer trainers of trainees to impart knowledge and finally both financial and human resources are a rare yet neglected commodity. Location of market and products plays a major role in human resources and commodity. It was noted with interest that Technology and capacity are rare commodities and without them mothering can virtually move as all now depends on Technology basis to deal within set boundaries. But there is no control on human attitude/personality,

INVESTMENT GAP

Infrastructure is always created and found on the basis of any innovation. In order to effectively implement it promotion of IT enabled services should be sensitized and in the absence of implementation first, there should always be a good Regulation Regime with a digital Inclusion introduced on the market, there should be local context. Producers must stop or completely be local content,

4. CONCLUSION

Based on discussions, a few important conclusions can be drawn that:

Countries going digital perceive they all have an edge over their competitors, so that a digital nation becomes the latest beacon of preeminence in the unfolding of hum ingenuity put to productive purposes. To lag in the diffusion of information and communication tools ca be lethal for regions and countries already outside the flow of financial capital and underdeveloped in terms of basic indicators of well-being, such as education and health.

The Integration of Digital Technology dimension measures the digitisation of businesses and their exploitation of the online sales channel. By adopting digital technology, businesses can enhance efficiency, reduce costs and better engage customers, collaborators and business partners. Furthermore, the Internet as a sales outlet offers access to wider markets and potential for growth. A digital nation policy agenda call for a democratic and inclusive media and communication culture, on in which alternative perspectives potentially can become conventional.

The success of ICT partnerships is increased when detailed attention is paid to the local context and the involvement of the local community in partnership

implementation and these partnerships should be built on trust, honesty, openness, mutual understanding and respect. Finally a supportive wider ICT environment needs to be in place, both in terms of policy and infrastructure.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

There are always key elements that need to be in place for successful service delivery, therefore, Government is urged to act as the 'conductor of the orchestra' and play an enabling role, focused on business and education. Although Government tackles many issues through a range of initiatives, their efforts would be more effective if they were better coordinated. The Government needs to take responsibility for leading the country through changes brought about by changing technologies. Therefore, the Committee hereby recommends to the Ministry of ICT that:

- Government should develop an ambitious 'Digital Agenda' for the country, at its heart should be the vision for it to keep up with the best leading digital economies across the board;
- To achieve universal internet coverage and delivery of superfast broadband, Government should implement the Universal Access Fund;
- To realise Namibia's economic potential, Government must accelerate the attainment of digital literacy across the population.
- The rise of the digital economy brings new risks to individuals, businesses and national security. Therefore, the best way to defend against cyber risks and deter attacks is to ensure we train and deploy enough people with the relevant skills and expertise.
- MICT should help support digital education that fosters creativity and innovation.
- An ethical framework that focuses on transparency, and help build trust within players;
- In cases of investment partnership, a local based management office and/or partnership broker that will ensure the day-to-day and effective management and delivery of the partnership.

Hon. Bernadette M. Jagger — 28/03/2018
Date

Hon. Benson Kaapala — 29/05/2018
Date