



National Communications Authority

- Press Release

NCA DIRECTOR GENERAL OPENS ATU ONLINE REGIONAL FORUM ON OVER THE TOP SERVICES AS PART OF 3RD AFRICAN PREPARATORY MEETING FOR WTSA 2020

Accra, 27th July, 2020: The Director General of the National Communications Authority (NCA), Mr. Joe Anokye has opened an Online Regional Forum on Over the Top (OTT) services ahead of the 3rd African Preparatory Meeting for the World Telecommunication Standardisation Assembly (WTSA) 2020.

The Online OTT forum or webinar was under the theme “Cooperation and Collaboration frameworks: Building Sustainable Partnerships with OTTs”.

In his welcome address, Mr. John Omo, Secretary General of the African Telecommunications Union (ATU), said the global ICT landscape especially in Africa has experienced noticeable changes in connectivity and access to online media over the last decade. He reiterated that the key factors that enabled such changes include the acceleration of the deployment of broadband mobile networks which has contributed to increase in internet penetration and proliferation of OTT services.



- *Secretary General of ATU, Mr. John Omo, giving his welcome remarks*

He added that though social media networks and OTT platforms have now become essential for communication, advertising, formal and informal businesses, some OTT platforms

facilitate the spread of false information as the cyberspace is accessible for all including children and vulnerable people.

With this in mind, Mr. Omo said the objective of the discussions, therefore, was to identify the main issues and challenges facing African States with regard to OTTs. This, he said, would enable Africa to choose the best path to follow in building a secure and safe digital ecosystem in accordance with legal frameworks and regulations in Africa, while collaborating with all stakeholders and integrating future trends into the new ICT landscape.

Giving the opening remarks, Mr. Joe Anokye noted that during this pandemic, OTTs have become very popular and useful to consumers and all industries with figures from various sources showing an increasing use of several OTT tools for health, education, business, entertainment, family, social, religious and many other purposes.



- ***Director General of NCA, Mr. Joe Anokye, participating in the ATU webinar***

Speaking further, Mr. Anokye stated that it has now become imperative for Governments and Regulators to determine how to effectively ensure the benefit of OTTs for all whilst acknowledging the questions of its use in terms of revenue, ensuring the adherence of local laws and the cooperation of Regulators, OTT Developers, Operators and other stakeholders.

He commended the ATU for making use of OTT platforms and traditional communications services during this COVID-19 pandemic phase, to engage with governments and stakeholders.

Bringing his speech to a close, Mr Anokye was hopeful that the meeting will have engaging, enlightening, empowering and progressive conversations that will feed into existing knowledge and an eventual policy and regulatory interventions that will be beneficial to all stakeholders.

The ATU, a specialised telecommunications agency of the African Union, is set to commence its 3rd African Preparatory Meeting for the World Telecommunication Standardisation Assembly (WTSA) 2020. The meeting which starts from Tuesday, 28th July, 2020 is expected to end on Friday, 31st July, 2020.

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Date –27th July, 2020

About ATU

The African Telecommunications Union (ATU) was founded in 1977 as a specialised agency of the Organisation of African Unity, now African Union, in the field of telecommunications. It took its present name in 1999. This led to the transformation of the agency into a partnership between public and private stakeholders in the information and communication technology (ICT) sector.

ATU provides a forum for stakeholders involved in ICT to formulate effective policies and strategies aimed at improving access to information infrastructure and services. In addition, the Union represents the interests of its members at global decision-making conferences and promotes initiatives aimed at integrating regional markets, attracting investment into ICT infrastructure, and building institutional and human capacity.