



BROADCASTERS TEAM WITH ITU TO CONNECT AFRICA

International Telecommunication Union and World Broadcasting Unions declare support for African Union of Broadcasters exchange network

World Electronic Media Forum WEMF-V, Accra, Ghana, 16–18 November 2011. The International Telecommunication Union (ITU) and the World Broadcasting Unions (WBU) have declared their support for establishment of a satellite broadcast network for TV & Radio contribution and exchange services for members of the African Union of Broadcasters (AUB), which brings together national public service and commercial broadcasters throughout Africa.

AUB is the African member of the WBU, which also includes the European Broadcasting Union (EBU), the Arab States Broadcasting Union (ASBU), the Asia-Pacific Broadcasting Union (ABU), the Caribbean Broadcasting Union (CBU), the International Association of Broadcasting (IAB/AIR), the North American Broadcasters Association (NABA) and the Organización de Telecomunicaciones Iberoamericanas (OTI).

"We recognise the significant support from the International community for our efforts to provide Satellite TV & Radio content services to all African national broadcasters. This will provide significant advantages to the entire continent and will be one of the key enablers to the digital migration of African TV & Radio," said AUB Secretary-General Lawrence Atiase.

Based on ASBU's MENOS (Multimedia Exchange Network Over Satellite) system, the AUB system is aimed primarily at enabling professional broadcasters to share video and audio material across the African continent. It will enable the exchanges between the 48 active member broadcasters of the AUB and also exchanges between African broadcasters (both public & private) and the rest of the world of news, culture, sports and other programmings. The project will also address the technological and economic challenges faced by the AUB members concerned in implementing the project.

"We have seen the demonstrable benefits of the MENOS platform to our members in the MENA region and are committed to providing our operational capability, expertise and content to assist the AUB in its aspirations," said Mr. Slaheddine Maaoui, Director-General of ASBU.

ASBU MENOS is an award-winning IP (Internet Protocol) system which enables the exchange of video and audio material in a fully-automated and cost-efficient way. It has been operational in the Middle East and North Africa since 2009.

"The creation of an African exchange of news and programming will bring Africa back into the world network of satellite exchanges such as Eurovision and Asiavision, allowing all broadcasters of the world to access and exchange contents on a mutual and cooperative basis," said EBU Director General Ingrid Deltenre. *"It will enable the African continent to be seen and heard by the world, and we look forward to working with the AUB as it enters the digital era."*

With backing from some of the WBU members, the ITU and AUB will seek development funding for the project over the coming months from world and regional donors.

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