



PRESS RELEASE

NEPAD e-AFRICA COMMISSION AND THE GLOBAL DIGITAL SOLIDARITY FUND SIGN MOU



Mr Alain Clerc, Executive Secretary of the DSF (left) and Dr Henry Chasia, Executive Deputy Chairperson of the NEPAD e-African Commission after signing the MOU.

Johannesburg, South Africa, April 17, 2008. The NEPAD e-Africa Commission and the Global Digital Solidarity Fund (DSF) signed here today, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to collaborate in bridging the digital divide between Africa and the rest of the world and within the continent. The MoU was signed by Dr Henry Chasia, Executive Deputy Chairperson of the NEPAD e-African Commission and Mr Alain Clerc, Executive Secretary of the DSF.

The MoU creates a framework for the two parties to collaborate in supporting activities related to ICT development and will contribute to the building of an Information Society by promoting and facilitating an equitable and affordable access and use of ICTs in Africa for everyone.

Says Dr Henry Chasia, “both the Commission and DSF have made history that will have a positive impact in bridging the digital divide in Africa. The Commission will definitely benefit from DSF by increasing its resources base to concretize its various ICT undertakings”



It is expected that the MoU will result in substantial support from the DSF to the NEPAD e-Schools Initiative, which is now going into the roll-out stage.

Says Alain Clerc, Executive Secretary of the Global DSF, “Specifically, the Global Digital Solidarity Fund is looking at

helping the NEPAD e-Africa Commission in the areas of ICT infrastructure development; e-services and applications; and human capacity building. The NEPAD e-Schools Initiative is definitely one of the key areas where strong collaboration could be developed”. The Commission and DSF will identify common projects in ICT development mentioned areas.

The Commission and DSF shall collaborate in fundraising activities, by facilitating contact with regional stakeholders (governments, development banks, local authorities and companies) for the purpose of realization of the projects agreed upon by both parties.

The Commission and the DSF will also jointly explore innovative financial mechanisms to reduce the digital divide, including the promotion of the DSF “1% digital solidarity principle”. This innovative financing mechanism, which may be adopted voluntarily, is a 1% contribution on public ICTs procurement contracts.

The NEPAD e-Africa Commission is the ICT Task Team of the New Partnership for Africa's development (NEPAD), mandated by the NEPAD Heads of State and Government Implementation Committee to develop policies, strategies and projects at continental level as well as manage the structured development of the ICT sector in the context of NEPAD. More information about NEPAD e-Africa Commission can be got from www.eafricacommission.org .

The Geneva-based Global Digital Solidarity Fund is a global financing foundation which strives to reduce the digital divide, to put Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) at the service of human development and to build a solidarity-based and inclusive information



society. It was created during the Geneva Phase of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) in December 2003, following a NEPAD proposal. More information about Global DSF can be got from www.digital-solidarity.org

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