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WORKING GROUP ON REGULATION DEVELOPMENT (WGRD)

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GENERAL SECRETARIAT'S BRIEF ON HOSTING OF 2ND AFRICAN POSTAL REGULATORS CONFERENCE

Agenda item N°4.6

1. Subject Brief on the 2nd African Postal Regulators Conference	2. References/paragraphs Resolution No. 06/PAPU/AC/XLI/2023 on establishment of an African Postal Regulators Conference;
3. Decision expected <ul style="list-style-type: none">Take note of the proposed theme;Make any relevant comments and/or observations	

I. INTRODUCTION

The first ever African Postal Regulators' Conference, held in Dakar, Senegal, from 23 to 24 June 2023, enabled participants to discuss important postal regulatory issues and come up with relevant recommendations. This inaugural event garnered great enthusiasm among PAPU Member States.

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In view of the satisfactory results of the maiden edition of the said conference, the Administrative Council, meeting in its 41st Ordinary Session from 29 to 30 August 2023 in Arusha, United Republic of Tanzania, adopted Resolution no.06/PAPU/AC/XLI/2023 establishing the Conference of African Postal Regulators.

Pursuant to this Resolution, the General Secretariat is responsible for organizing the African Postal Regulators Conference. This document is a contribution to the organization of the second edition of this event, to be held in Arusha, Tanzania, on a date to be determined.

II. PROPOSED THEME AND SUB-THEMES

The core theme for this year's event is/ ***“Emerging postal industry and regulation trends in the digital age.”***

The choice of this theme is motivated by the new operating environment in which the postal sector finds itself, shaped by the opening up to the private sector and ever growing demands from postal service consumers. As a result, digital transformation is an imperative if we are to remain competitive in today's highly competitive market. Digital transformation necessarily calls for adoption of ICTs, which provide postal operators with opportunities to develop innovative and carefully-tailored services. In this respect, operators must be in a position to fully seize the opportunities offered by new technologies such as 5G, artificial intelligence, Fintech, the Internet of Things, blockchain, etc. All of which should help the Post to enhance operational efficiency and offer quality services to customers.

However, the use of digital tools not only offers opportunities, it also presents major challenges such as setting up infrastructures, training, cybersecurity, personal data protection, etc. These issues are primarily of concern to operators, but it is up to regulators and ministries in charge of postal services to deploy the appropriate regulatory instruments to resolve them. They must therefore be ready to tackle these challenges by constantly exploring innovative solutions, hence the overriding need for innovative and appropriate postal regulation.

The core theme of the Conference will be unpacked through discussions on the following sub-themes:

- Digitalizing traditional services for operators to facilitate access to products and create value-added services for customers;
- Technical and legal challenges facing postal services digitalization;

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- Postal regulation techniques and methods for efficient postal services digitalization;
- Capacity-building in new lines of expertise.

III. CONCLUSION

The Policy and Regulation Committee is hereby requested to take note of the document and make any relevant comments/observations or proposals.

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