

AFRICAN UNION

الاتحاد الأفريقي



UNION AFRICAINE

UNIÃO AFRICANA

**AFRICAN UNION MISSION
TO THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA**

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May, 20th 2008

TO: **H.E Mrs. Elham Mahmood Ahmed Ibrahim,**
Commissioner Infrastructure and Energy

FROM: H.E. Amina Salum Ali
Permanent Representative

SUBJECT: **Dot.Africa Project**

Dear Commissioner,

In May 2003, the African Union (AU) Executive Council directed the AU to actively engage the African Diaspora in the development efforts of the continent. The AU Executive Council defined the African Diaspora as: "the African Diaspora consists of peoples of African origin living outside the continent, irrespective of their citizenship and nationality and who are willing to contribute to the development of the continent and the building of the Africa Union." In this regard, the African Union and African Governments have embarked on a process of engaging the African Diaspora for the continent's development. **This agenda includes six areas of focus:** (i) Economic Cooperation, (ii) Regional Development and Integration, (iii) Women, Youth and Vulnerable Groups, (iv) Historical, Socio-Cultural and Religious Commonalities, (v) Peace and Security, and (vi) Knowledge Sharing and Learning.

As you are well aware, one of the objectives of the African Union Mission in USA is to mobilize the African Diaspora efforts. Towards this end, the AU Mission would like to express support for the “dot.africa” initiative, which is applying for delegation of a regional identifier top level domain – ‘Africa’ from the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN) and then make it available to the Pan-African community.

This will mean that the African continent will follow upon the experience of the European Union and their ‘.EU’ domain, and the Asian continent with their ‘.ASIA’ domain (which became operative in October 2007). We consider this will be a valuable attribute for entities, professionals and corporations active in Africa, empowering those stakeholders who see value in a regional online identity.

The Dot.Africa Initiative

The mission of **Dot.Africa** is to sponsor, establish and operate a regional internet namespace with global recognition and regional significance, dedicated to the needs of the Pan-African and African community. **Dot.Africa** expects to reinvest surpluses in socio-technological advancement initiatives relevant and to operate a viable not-for-profit initiative that is a technically advanced, world-class TLD registry for the Pan-Africa and African community.

The **Dot.Africa** Initiative has been presented at different foras in Africa and has had positive welcomes by many of African Stakeholder organizations including ADB, ITU and the UNECA. This link best describes the status of Africa to date. <http://www.dotconnectafrica.org>.

In conclusion, the African Union Mission in USA would like to get the support of the same from the African Union (AU) Head Quarters in Addis Ababa.