Cartagena Statement of the
African ICANN community about the
Support for new gTLD applicants

Following ICANN Board's resolution 20 in Nairobi meeting whereby "*The Board requests stakeholders to work through their SOs and ACs, and form a Working Group to develop a sustainable approach to providing support to applicants requiring assistance in applying and operating new gTLDs .*"

- We, members of the African Community, consisting of AFRALO and AfrICANN, at the ICANN meeting in Brussels, jointly welcomed the Board resolution 20 and expressed our gratitude to the Board members for their consideration of the community concerns about the cost of applying for new gTLDs that might hinder applicants, especially those from developing countries.

- We adopted a statement in which we expressed the expectations of the African Community from the so-called resolution 20, which statement was sent to the ICANN Board and the JAS Working Group which was formed for the purpose.

In its retreat in Trondheim (Norway), the ICANN Board decided late September 2010 that Support to applicants will generally include outreach and education to encourage participation across all regions, but any direct financial support for applicant fees must come from sources outside of ICANN. It also decided that the fee levels currently in the Applicant Guidebook will be maintained for all applicants.

- While we welcome the decision of providing outreach and education support to applicants who require assistance, we, members of the African Community, in Cartagena express our deep concern regarding the non-consideration of the fee reduction that we, and the JAS Working Group, proposed.

- We consider that without application cost reduction, the developing countries, and especially those of the African region, as well as the

disadvantaged communities willing to apply for a cultural, linguistic or ethnic gTLD will be excluded from this new gTLD program, that the resolution 20 wanted it to be inclusive.

- We strongly believe that assistance should be provided to the needy applicants at the upcoming first round of application, and not at some possible future round, because:
    o Without assistance for applicants needing support, all of the most obvious names, including IDNs, will be taken by rich investors, leaving little opportunity to local community institutions and developing country entrepreneurs
    o Even if it is intended to open a second round, its date is at best uncertain regarding the experience of the 2001's round.
- We strongly support the milestone report of the JAS Working Group, and look forward to the consideration of its recommendations by the ICANN Board.
- We are supportive of all on-going work as per the recommendations of the JAS WG Charter.