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ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR AFRICA

Fourth Meeting of the Committee on
Development Information (CODI-IV)

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
23 – 28 April 2005

**Report of the Second Meeting of the AVLIN Advisory
Committee**

**ECAC
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**AFRICAN VIRTUAL LIBRARY AND INFORMATION NETWORK
(AVLIN)
AVLIN ADVISORY COMMITTEE (AAC)**

Introduction

1. The African Virtual Library and Information Network (AVLIN) Advisory Committee (AAC) held its second meeting on Sunday, 24th April 2005 from 15:00hrs to 18:00hrs at the UNECA Conference Centre, Caucus Room 10. The following members of the Committee were present:

- Mr. Felix Ubogu - Chairman
- Ms Ellen Tise
- Prof. Anaba Alemna
- Dr Justin Chisenga - Rapporteur

2. The following individuals attended the meeting as observers:

- Mrs Petrina Amoono – ECA Chief Librarian & AVLIN Project Leader
- Mr. Abraham Azubuike, Systems Librarian, ECA Library
- Mr. Matthew Baker, Associate Librarian, ECA Library
- Professor Kingo Mchombu, University of Namibia, Namibia
- Dr. Stephen Akintunde, University of Jos, Nigeria

Business of the Meeting

3. The business of the meeting was to discuss and review the following:

- i. AAC Membership
- ii. AVLIN activities and AVLIN Business Plan since CODI III meeting
- iii. Discussions of the AVLIN Meeting of 24th April 2005

AAC Membership

4. The meeting noted the following:

- i. Due to financial constraints, some AAC Members had been unable to attend this second meeting. To avoid this situation in future, the Committee **recommended** that UNECA should incorporate funding for AAC meetings in the AVLIN work plan.

- ii. The Committee's two-year term of office was to come to an end at the start of May 2005. The Committee **recommended** that UNECA should re-constitute the AVLIN Advisory Committee for the term 2005 – 2007.
- iii. Prof. Edward O. Ako had indicated that due to other commitments he would no longer be available to serve on the Committee.
- iv. Due to various reasons, some AAC members had been inactive.

AVLIN Activities since CODI III

5. The AAC noted that the following activities had been carried out since the CODI 3 meeting held in May 2003:
 - i. Capacity Building: In line with the recommendations made at the 2003 AVLIN technical workshop, the AVLIN Secretariat organized several capacity building workshops and these included a workshop for African UN depository libraries (October 2004) the *KnowledgeWorks I* workshop for reference and research staff from ECA and its Sub-Regional Offices (SROs) (2004), and an adhoc Expert meeting on *New Trends in Digital and Virtual Libraries* (April 2005).
 - ii. AVLIN Website: The AVLIN Website had been developed and would be launched soon.
 - iii. AVLIN African Librarians Advocacy Group: An online-forum to facilitate professional discussion among librarians and other information professionals on advocacy for libraries and information services at the highest level in Africa had been established.
 - iv. Promotion of AVLIN: Promotional papers, posters and brochures have been prepared and distributed at conferences and meetings.
6. The meeting further noted that the following key activities had not been carried out largely due to lack of funds to hire the appropriate experts or due to lack of capacity at the AVLIN Secretariat and this had a huge impact on the progress of AVLIN:

- i. Recruitment of an AVLIN Coordinator (*The AAC noted that a P3 post had been established and the recruitment process would be initiated very soon*)
 - ii. Implementation of a baseline survey
 - iii. Development of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) that would be signed between the ECA and the participating member institutions
 - iv. Implementation of the pilot phase of the project
 - v. Development of the copyright framework under which AVLIN would operate
 - vi. Preparation of a document outlining the responsibilities of the AVLIN Secretariat
7. To accelerate the implementation of AVLIN, the Committee **recommended** that:
- i. Although the process to employ a coordinator for AVLIN is already in progress, it should however be accelerated.
 - ii. In the absence of a coordinator, the AVLIN Secretariat should conduct the baseline survey urgently, and in this regard the AAC offered to develop the instrument for the survey and this should be ready by the end of May 2005.
 - iii. ECA should seriously consider developing a MoU to be signed between the ECA and the potential participating member institutions as soon as possible and proposed that the AVLIN Secretariat should initiate the process. This document is critical to the start of the pilot phase of the project.

Review of Discussions of the AVLIN Meeting of 24th April 2005

8. The AAC reviewed the discussions of the AVLIN meeting that had been held in the morning, and endorsed the discussions. The Committee also

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adopted the following decisions that were made at the meeting. The AVLIN Secretariat should:

- i. Convene a task group, to work with the AVLIN Coordinator, and review FAO's Information Management Resource Kit (IMARK) on *Digitization and Digital Libraries* to see whether it would be relevant for use on AVLIN's capacity building activities. The following individuals volunteered to work on the task group, and in addition the AVLIN Secretariat would also nominate one or two people from Addis Ababa:
 - Prof. Anaba Alemna
 - Prof. Kingo Mchombu
 - Ms Patricia Sampson
 - Dr Justin Chisenga
 - Mr. Abraham Azubuike

 - ii. Develop a detailed AVLIN project proposal to be shared with potential strategic partners and to be used in fund raising activities. The following individuals volunteered to work on the on the project proposal:
 - Ms. Ellen Tise
 - Mr. Garoma Daba
 - Prof. Kingo Mchombu
 - Mr. Felix Ubogu

 - iii. Develop a one-page document outlining the AVLIN's vision, mission, and key areas stating AVLIN's direction.
9. The AAC also **recommended** that AVLIN should seriously focus on capacity building activities in member states, as highlighted in the OIC of DISD's opening remarks at the AVLIN meeting.

