

AfTLD applies to manage .africa

JOHANNESBURG: The Africa Top Level Domains (AfTLD) organisation on Wednesday, 9 March 2011, announced its decision to seek a mandate from the African Union Commission (AUC) and to apply to ICANN to manage the .africa registry.



AfTLD, after undertaking a detailed assessment of the new gTLD landscape and making a commitment to work with the AUC, ICANN and others to secure a mandate to run .africa, has commenced its work on being awarded the mandate to run .africa.

"We are not just interested in .africa only, but we want to also take on .afrique, which is the French version of .africa. It's only natural for us to do this because at least 50% of Africa speaks French," says Vika Mpisane, AfTLD's chairman and GM of .ZA (South Africa). "We also intend to have an internationalised version of .africa as well because we have significant Arabic Africa population, but we will start definitely with .africa first."

"As a regional TLD, .africa must primarily serve the African market and should be run from within Africa. Even though some sacrifices might need to be made at the beginning to ensure that .africa takes off in the best possible way, such as using external expertise to start up the registry, it is good to see the strong conviction within AfTLD to operate the .africa registry in Africa, utilising and further developing African registry management skills. That should happen as soon as possible," says Dr. Paulos Nyirenda, an AfTLD excom member and head of the Malawi .MW ccTLD.

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