



## Conference report

### INET Africa Abuja

May 4, 2007

INET Africa held in Abuja, Nigeria on May 4, 2007 is the 4th of the INET conferences organized by ISOC, in Africa. The attendees were around eighty people from all over Africa and the world and represented a plethora of organizations that include government, NROs, civil society, academia and telecommunication and internet organizations.

The conference focused on security related issues in the morning and internet governance in the afternoon. The security session focused on the increasingly important issues of unwanted traffic over the Internet and cyber security. The Internet governance session enabled a large number of users, policy makers, and technologists to discuss on the various issues of internet governance and to propose priorities for the continent.

The meeting was launched with an opening speech by Engr. Ali, deputy president of Nigerian Society of Engineers, who appreciated the choice of Nigeria and Abuja for the organization of INET. Then, Giandomenico Massari, chairman of ISOC Nigeria chapter, welcomed the participants to Nigeria and gave a brief overview of the activities of ISOC Nigeria in the past few years. In particular, he talked about the John Postel centers that were opened by the chapter throughout Nigeria, and that enabled many people to have Internet access for the first time in their lives.

[The second presentation was that of Dawit Bekele](#), Manager of ISOC's African regional bureau. After giving an overview of ISOC in Africa and the world, he informed the participants about the relationship of the bureau with the chapters and other organizations. He then briefly stated ISOC's activities in the areas of education and policy in Africa. He finished his presentation by highlighting the bureaus plan for the coming months.

The next presentation was by Mirjam Kühne and consisted of a brief overview of the ISOC IETF fellowship program that was formally launched a few months ago. Two Africans, Jimmy M. Kimanzi from Kenya and Hichem Maalaoui from Tunisia, were amongst the five people who received the fellowship to participate at the IETF 68



meeting that took place in Prague last April. The program has already a lot of interest from the Internet community.

After the break, the technical educational session started with the presentation of Loa Anderson, co-chair of MPLS working group of IETF and member of IAB. The timely presentation entitled “Reflections on Unwanted Traffic After the IAB Workshop” started by explaining what unwanted traffic is and indicated that the trend of unwanted traffic is on the increase and not on the decrease and that the economic loss is also growing. Anderson then said that the evolution of the threat is from “worms and viruses that simply did wreak havoc on the network” to “malware that propagates, compromises hosts and enables command and control infrastructure and services platforms for malicious activity”. The evolution is also from simple denial of service attacks to major threats with economic and even religious and political motivations.

It is considering this evolution that the IAB called the workshop on unwanted traffic. The rather stunning conclusion of the workshop was that there is an underground economy that drives the majority of unwanted traffic. According to the findings of the workshop, because of these economic motivations, the situation will worsen dramatically unless serious measures are taken. The underground economy is well organized and the monetary incentives are huge. What is more frightening is the current lack of meaningful deterrence and proactive actions. Anderson then showed some example of vulnerabilities and their solutions. He said that it is not that solutions do not exist but that they are not properly deployed and that the competence of network operators and users is insufficient. Finally, he warned that the situation will deteriorate unless we act and gave a medium and long term solutions for the problem.

Details about the presentation and the unwanted traffic workshop can be found in the full [presentation](#) and the [report of the IAB workshop](#).

The next presentation in the technical education session was the highly appreciated presentation on Framework for Cybersecurity in Nigeria by Basil Udotai, Esq., Director of the Directorate for Cybersecurity. The presentation gave a good overview of the efforts undergoing in Nigeria to fight cybercrime. Then, Mr. Udotai presented the reasons why we should be worried about cybercrime. He said that mission critical systems such as telecoms, energy and financial services are at risk of being attacked and that “their impairment would have a direct and expansive negative impact on the overall economy and wellbeing”. He then elaborated about the concept of critical system security and cybersecurity and the critical measures that can be taken including legislation, capacity building and public enlightenment. He finished his presentation by presenting what Nigeria has done since 2004 to fight cybercrime in the areas of legislation, capacity building, awareness and global cooperation.

The whole afternoon was dedicated to Internet governance. The first session of the afternoon was a panel discussion on the state of play. The session enabled three speakers, [Dawit Bekele](#) of ISOC African Regional Bureau, Adiel Akplogan of AfriNIC and Pierre Dandjinou of UNDP, to discuss the importance and value for Africa of the Internet governance discussions that were occurring at the international level in meetings such as the Internet Governance Forum. The session was moderated by Nii Quaynor of AfNOG.

At the end of the panel discussion, there was a tacit consensus on the need to localizing the internet governance debate to Africa, the importance of “localizing” Internet governance and the importance of multi-stakeholder processes at the local level.

The next session was the expert session on access. The speakers on that panel discussion were [Mike Jenson](#), an Independent Consultant, Michuki Mwangi of KENIC, Nii Quaynor of AfNOG and [Titi Akinsanmi](#) of Global Teenager Project. It was moderated by Pierre Dandjinou of UNDP. The various speakers suggested that much can be done locally to address access issues, particularly in the area of encouraging regulatory reforms that will foster a more conducive and lower cost access environment. A range of possible local actions were discussed and supported from the implementation of Internet Exchange Points and national backbones, incorporating fiber into national infrastructure projects, encouraging trans-border traffic and regional traffic, encouraging competition among service providers, to creating the right kind of regulatory and enabling environment. The speakers also pointed to the importance of creating an environment that drives change in access costs through increasing the demand for and use of communications and the Internet. The access discussion also considered the importance of “access to access”, in other words, access to the knowledge and skills that will enable one to actually benefit from access to the Internet.

The final session of the day provided a unique opportunity to engage in an open microphone discussion to identify some Internet governance related priorities for Africa. The informal findings rated access as the most important issue for those at the INET meeting, followed by security and diversity.

The detailed report of the internet governance session can be found [here](#).