

The eI-Africa project

Karine Valin <karine.valin@sigma-orionis.com>

Abstract

The European Union (EU) and the African Union (AU) have agreed (end of 2007 during their Summit held in Lisbon) on an ambitious “Africa-EU Joint Strategy and Action Plan” (JSAP) paving the way for a partnership of equals based on mutual interest, fully taking into account the increased economic and social development of the African continent and its move towards an integrated area of peace and prosperity.

S&T cooperation on ICT can fully contribute strengthening the relations between the two continents, which has been acknowledged by the implementation of a “Africa-EU Partnership for Science, Information Society, and Space” (the 8th Partnership).

e-Infrastructures (eI) are expected to play a key role in the development of this cooperation, benefiting from the “EU-Africa Partnership on Infrastructure” (2007), the AfricaConnect flagship project, the recently launched FEAST study (Feasibility Study for African/European Research and Education Network Interconnection), etc.

It will soon be necessary and strategic to organise an e-Infrastructures Summit in Africa, so that the various stakeholders involved in the development of this cooperation on e-Infrastructures can:

- * Exchange views and information, and identify synergies to increase the impact of each of their activities,

- * Further support policy dialogues, apprehend medium to long term perspectives and agree on an overall and coherent vision,

- * Develop awareness and promote the use of e-Infrastructures under development, encouraging the emergence of early adopters, of flagship projects in terms of applications,

- * Give the highest visibility to the European initiatives aiming at supporting the development of NRENs (National Research and Education Networks) in Africa and their interconnection to GEANT2 (the high-bandwidth, academic Internet serving Europe’s research and education community).

The organisation of this important Summit is the main objective of this 18-month eI-Africa project.