

Keynote address by Dr. Naomi Katunzi, permanent secretary ministry of communications, science and technology delivered at the official opening of the Tanzania Network Information Centre (tzNIC) offices on 13th May 2008 at Peacock Millennium Tower hotel, Dar es salaam.

Professor John Nkoma, Director General of TCRA,
Members of the tzNIC Policy Advisory Committee (PAC) and secretariat,
Representatives of various ICT institutions,
Media practitioners,
Distinguished guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen.

It gives me great pleasure to be with you here for official opening the Tanzania Network Information Centre which is located here at LAPF Millennium Tower building.

This event takes place during the 2nd Information and Communication Technologies week. During this week, various institutions continue to showcase their activities at the Diamond Jubilee Halls.

Today, we are making another history of the ICT industry in Tanzania by opening an office responsible for the management of our Country Code Top Level Domain (ccTLD) and distribution of dot tz (.tz), which is a national asset.

Dear Participants; Ladies and Gentlemen

The adopted theme for this year's ICT week is "**Connecting persons with disabilities: ICT opportunities for all**". This theme is very relevant, appropriate and clearly articulates what Tanzania needs to do; in order to participate fully in the building of the Information based Society. It further, poses a challenge to all stakeholders in designing, developing and innovating various services and facilities that can be utilized by every Tanzanian to enhance their access to information which depends on availability of adequate network addresses. The aim being speeding up the ICT usage and uptake, a goal that our government is aiming at.

At this historical event, conditions are favorable for stake-holders cooperation and for greater capacity for ICT's to remove development impediments. ICTs are increasingly being recognized as tools to improve social and economic development and service delivery. Let this week mark the beginning of strengthening the cooperation among the stakeholders in achieving a common goal of ICT opportunities for all.

Dear Participants; Ladies and Gentlemen

As the tzNIC secretariat has pointed out, the full internet access to Tanzania became a reality in early 1990s.

I'm told that, since then the technical aspects of internet services related to .tz (dot tz) ccTLD have been are still under the technical control of an American internet pioneer Mr. Randy Bush. I'm asking myself, why foreign person manages other national assets. Don't we have technical capability to manage them? What do we miss? It is now

high time to wake up and manage our resources, ensuring security, and should not let anyone temper with our resources.

If we are to take full advantage of what the information era brings in-terms of social, economic, security implications and also for the national sovereignty, it is important that .tz ccTLD be managed by ourselves. The global best practice has repeatedly shown that for local citizens to make use of their country's Top Level Domains, appropriate local institutions should be established and empowered to manage the country code top level domain. Tanzania Network Information Centre (tzNIC), a not-for profit organization has been established for the case of Tanzania to foresee the Tanzanian Domain Name space.

Let us join hand with tzNIC secretariat and tzNIC PAC member in making sure that this effort becomes a reality and sustainable. I request TCRA and Tanzania Internet Service Provider (TISPA) to fully continue supporting this institution in performing its functions.

Dear Participants; Ladies and Gentlemen Country code top level domains are well managed when all relevant stakeholders play their roles. I'm told that .tz TLD is administered by tzNIC which has a board comprising of members from both public and private sectors. This was arrived at not without difficulties but stakeholders realized that the Internet is cross cutting and every citizen deserves to be a member.

Likewise, everyone has a role to play in this arena; for instance the ICT sector has the technical know-how, academic institutions can provide the much-needed scientific research and direction, small & medium enterprises provide a potential for registration of new domain names, the youth and civil society play meaningful ICT advocacy roles, and government has the resources and can provide policy directives and create conducive environment. The combination of these efforts will inevitably enable Tanzania to reach its goals.

The challenge that Tanzania faces in terms of the number of ccTLD's registrations can be attributed to the following factor: lack of knowledge and awareness. Most people do not understand what it means to utilize the country code top level domains. I understand that majority prefers to use generic Top Level Domains e.g. .com, .biz, because they believe that it gives them more credibility. You have a responsibility of educating them to use the dot tz and that it brings to them not only the unique identity but also credibility associated to the country.

It is my sincere hope that this official opening of tzNIC offices and ICT week events in general, will leave a mark and that all attendants will inspire responsible organizations in Tanzania to work together in establishing and strengthening ICT opportunities for all.

Dear Participants; Ladies and Gentlemen

I conclude my remarks by wishing you all the best in commemorating the National ICT week as well as the World Telecommunication and Information Society Day on 17th May 2008.

I hope that our fruitful deliberations and exhibition will sensitize all of us on proper governance of ICT national resources With these brief remarks I'm now happy to declare that Tanzania Network Information Centre (tzNIC) office is now officially opened.