



# Report on AfricaCERT Day

***Alisa Hotel***

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Hosted by CERT-GH

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## 1.0 Background

The AfricaCERT day was held on 1 October 2015, with 10 countries present including Egypt, Tunisia, Ghana, Cameroun, Lybia, Cote D'Ivoire, Senegal, Nigeria, Burundi, and Ethiopia all with operational CERTs or planning to establish one. In all, there were over 50 people attended the program.

## 2.0 Opening Ceremony

The event began with a welcome remark from the CERT-GH, the Local host of the Event. Mr. Eric Akumiah, who represented CERT-GH gave a brief background to the CERT, highlighting that even though it was established barely a year ago, the team had benefitted from capacity building programs and much learning is taking place to bring the CERT up to an appreciable standard.

Executive Director of AfricaCERT Jean Robert Hountomey made a welcome remark on behalf of AfricaCERT. He was delighted at the strides AfricaCERT was making and saw the program as an opportunity for further discussion among the CERTs present and how each could benefit from each other.

The keynote was delivered by Prof. Nii Quaynor, Chairman of council of Elders of AfricaCERT. He traced the evolution of the AfricaCERT from 2010 when with the cooperation of JPCERT, a regular training workshop on CERTs during the annual Africa Internet Summit meetings. He mentioned the need for AfricaCERT to be constructive in its operations and build consensus which is critical to the community. He concluded on highlighting on the need for members to engage more in order to run AfricaCERT, which he described as a voluntary venture.

## 3.0 Panel Discussion on Regional CSIRT Coordination

The session was made up of ITU's Serge Zongo, JPCERT's Koichiro 'Sparky' KOMIYAMA and CERT-FR's Olivier Caleff and a number of matured Africa CERTs mostly from Northern Africa was moderated by Eric Akumiah of CERT-GH. The panelists made presentations on what they are doing on collaboration and coordination as far as their CERTs were concerned.

### 3.1 ITU

ITU continued to harp on the importance of bridging the technical gaps through organizational capacity building as well as establishing a regional international framework for to increase information sharing and experience on cyber security. It cited its cyber drills in Africa as a good way for coordination and collaboration

### 3.2 JPCERT/CC

Koichiro 'Sparky' KOMIYAMA shared JPCERT's experience in handling incidents with KrCERT which did not have national friendly relations due to historical antecedents but collaborated and coordinated incidents handling that was beneficial to both countries.

### 3.2 Experience from Other African Countries

Lybia, Egypt and Tunisia also shared their experiences on collaboration and coordination. They highlighted the importance of CERTS being open so that they would be supported by other CERTs when the need arises. Egypt gave the example of how their CERT helped Uganda overcome a cyber-security situation. Another issue mention was that AfricaCERT should serve as a forum for CERTs in African to build their capacity to be able to respond to emergencies. Reference was made to the cyber security index used to measure the performance of the state of a country's cyber security capabilities that it was bias and resulted in a big gap between developed and under developed countries. It was

recommended that the Africa Cert should spear the drive to assess the African countries in this regard.

### 3.4 CERT-FR

Olivier Caleff from CERT-FR (a member of FIRST) threw more light on the types of CERTS coordination and collaborations possible with examples from the European region and how CERT-FR collaborated one-on-one with some other CERTs. He stated that cooperation was a prerequisite to the success of any CERT, stressing on the importance of information sharing as a first step of operational cooperation.

He explained that for cooperation to exist, there needed to be trust, responsiveness and willingness among the CERTS. He identified various types of cooperation, namely: one-to-on; bilateral; MoUs; cooperation agreements.

The Executive Director of AfricaCERT gave an update report on what AfricaCERT was doing after collaboration session. The full list of operation documents of AfricaCERT was unveiled, shared and discussed and applications process for all CERTs who had not yet registered opened.

### 3.5 Open Mic Session

During this session, emphasis was made for a collaboration of CSIRT and AfricaCERT.

## 4.0 AfricaCERT AGM

### 4.1 Acceptance of AfricaCERT Working Documents

The first AfricaCERT Annual General Meeting (AGM) was called to order. After a detailed presentation of the annual report the Executive Director who went through all the operational document that AfricaCERT intends to use for its operations. After discussion on the floor, the chair of the Council of Elders motioned for the adoption of the report as a working document, which was duly accepted by all CERTs present.

### 4.2 Membership Drive

The fully registered members of AfricaCERT were announced and a call made to all CERTs present to formally join the AfricaCERT as members. Ghana announced that its membership application was almost complete pending approval by the Ministry of Communications. CERT-FR mentioned it would be training AfricaCERT as supporting members.

### 4.3 Election of Board Member (Council of Elders)

By popular acclamation, the Executive Director was retained for his excellent work on developing AfricaCERT.

A board was elected to steer affairs. Members of the Board are as following:

1. Prof. Nii Quaynor (Chair)
2. Pierre Ouedraogo (Vice Chair)
3. Lybia CERT
4. Tunisia CERT
5. Mauritius CERT
6. Egypt CERT
7. Jean-Robert Hountomey (Executive Director)

To conclude the session, the Board Chair remarked that the annual report could be used as a working document, while board members fine tune it.

## 5.0 The Way forward

There was an open forum on the way forward for AfricaCERT. The following are some of the discussions that emerged and recommendations made:

- That the meeting was a historic one
- That AfricaCERT should organise more of such meetings.
- That there was the need for cooperation among Africa CERTs
- That AfricaCERT had come of age and it as the of members hope that other African countries will establish their CERTs and join AfricaCERT.
- That measures should be taken to sustain the operations of AfricaCERT so that it does not fizzle out.
- That CERTs should be proactive and provide services and solutions in their various countries so that when the community meets again, there could be share experiences
- That the impact of the work of the CERTs must be measured
- That Africa CERTs should support research initiatives, i.e. the National Research Networks (NRENs) to protect the networks

The day ended with a closing comment from Prof. Nii Quaynor, chairman of the Council of Elders of AfricaCERT, encouraging further collaboration among Africa Certs.