Anfog chix keynote
June 2019

Ladies, mes dame and gentle women,

I am so very pleased that at the 20th anniversary of
AfNOG in 2019 I have the honor of saying a few words to
your distinguished community. As you'll know we Africans
love and respect our mothers very much; this would
remain true in the new cyber space we creating together

[As a side cultural comment, the worst thing anyone can
do in Africa is to insult someone's mother]

The African Network operators group is a capacity
development and community building organization. Over
the past 20 years we always looked or ways to help
incubate related organizations addressing Africa's
technical needs. We are obsessed with eliminating all
technical barriers facing Africa's Internet development.
We are committed to the techno liberation of Africa and
avoid lack of technology know how becoming a means of
further colonization of our people. This is even more
concerning in these times with the persistent threats to
one internet and other technology fragmentation we see
building up. We will not succeed in techno liberation
without our most important half, our women

AfNOG is pleased with the advances of AfNOG chix and Afchix and are glad to have been part of incubation of your community. We appreciate the effort of Dorcas Muthoni and others in the process. Some of the other communities AfNOG proudly incubated include Afrinic, AfTLD, AfricaCert, REN.Africa Operators and others. We have also served as a point of engagement of African technical communities with global organizations such as internet society and icann. The African internet summit (AIS) organized by Afrinic and AfNOG continues to serve as an annual meeting place for sharing and coordinating our joint efforts

Given my publicly known views in the multi stakeholder approach to governance of self organized communities I make these comments

I am not the founder of AfNOG. I am one of Conveners of participants to events. AfNOG is determined to liberate Africa in the Internet technical realm. If we were to name true founders of AfNOG you'll be surprised they are also active in AfNOG chix. The secretariat of AfNOG was founded by Joan Scott, Allen Mirembe and Nancy Dotse. These brave African ladies must be congratulated for keeping us well organized and without making any claims of ownership. You are true stewards of the Internet in Africa.

In this regard we appreciate the work of notable women in Afnog including long time contributions of…
AFNOG Women in Tech Alumni :
Ndeye Maimouna Diop, Khoudia Gueye - Senegal,
Isatou Jah & Anna Saine, Gambia,
 Fanta Bouba - Chad,
Ruth Kapanga, Chimwemwe Sichali, Malawi,
Mary Jonah, Maude Ashong -Elliot, Ghana
Evelyn Namara, Isabel Odida, Sarah Kiden , Uganda
Sara Hassan, Manhal Mohamed - Sudan,
Eucharia Nwachukwu, Bukola Oronti - Nigeria
Dorcas mutoni, Irene Misoi, Michelle Opiyo - Ke

We thank you for your contributions in techno liberation

From the work of Ada Lovelace in 1800s on mechanical general purpose computer, the Analytical Engine proposed by Charles Babbage, to the work of African American women doing technical computation for NASA, including Katherine Johnson, Dorothy Vaughan and others in 1960s, first programmers of ENIAC, your community has role models with much to emulate

I cite the work of two other ladies in computing who had impact on me during my graduate school days in the 70s in the USA.

I had an opportunity to listen to a seminar by Grace Hopper, inventor of the programming language COBOL

commonly used in business programming at the time which has survived till date. In her very exciting presentations she surprised everyone by showing the distance signal travels in copper wire in a nanosecond which was effective in demonstrating need for parallelism in cpu design at the time

I also studied the work of Barbara Liskov, a computer science professor at MIT who was known for several contributions in operating systems, databases and programming languages one of which was CLU, a language which embodied several of modern concepts of abstractions

As we'll all agree, contributions of women in computing globally has been enormous and we have great hope the AfNOG chix and Afchix community would be equally impactful in your endeavors in our region

During the AfNOG day you'll have a chance to listen to Lynn St. Amour, a former President of ISOC who championed AfNOG chix

We hope that in addition to advocacy and mentoring gains, your community would make further and deeper breakthroughs in computer science and technologies

We wish you a successful meeting and thank for your attention