

His excellencies, ladies and gentlemen

We have been on a long journey to unleash the talents of our people through technology, education and research

We are pleased that Wacren is finally on the verge of exchange of live information traffic among our members and are honored by the presence of his excellency the Prime Minister of Togo, to witness and officially give us his blessings through the public launch of the Wacren network

We thank you for the total commitment of Togo and hope that your example will inspire your colleagues in Ecowas and beyond to take urgent steps to benefit from this wonderful networking opportunity

We could not have built a network of this extent without having established an active and engaged community in the countries

We have learned in the decade old struggle that we cannot do this without the support of governments and community

If it had been as simple as laying cables and putting equipment together, our task would have been trivial given the number internet Pioneers in Wacren. However, this is about bringing diverse communities and disciplines together, to work to achieve a common dream. That had to take time and was a real test for all of us. We are successful and should congratulate ourselves

The commitment of Togo through the honorable minister of higher education and research, Prof Broohm, a real champion of Wacren, is highly commendable

It is our wish that African Research and education community will join their colleagues in other regions in global research collaborations

With Africa Connect 2, we make our first effort to collaborate with researchers in Europe

We look forward to deepen our research collaboration with Europe while we seek further partnerships with Wacren to extend research collaborations to North and South America as well as to Asia, thereby removing barriers to global research collaborations

Many have sacrificed for this achievement and trust that we will make meaningful use of what we have for the advancement of our people. Please, take care of the network. It is not a property to keep but one to share; a service to community which is much more rewarding. Remember that a networks value increase with quality usage so we must hurry to bring as many researchers on board as we can

Long live Wacren long live AfREN

Thank you very much for your attention