

## Chair's Welcome Remark

Salutations

ICANN Board of Directors here present

ICANN Staff/Management

Invited Guests

Local Host - AAU

AFRALO ALAC members

AFRALO RALO Leadership

AFRALO Members

Ladies and Gentlemen,

First let me recognise one of Africa's internet champions, Pierre Ouedraogo who passed away just a few days ago. He was a major contributor to Internet development in the region, especially within the Francophone community. He will be greatly missed! May his soul rest in peace.

It is an honour to welcome you all to the 5th AFRALO General Assembly held here in the beautiful city of Accra. I would like to thank ICANN leadership, the Board, Staff members and our partners for their support towards the hosting of this event.

The AFRALO General Assembly is a periodic event where members of AFRALO (i.e ALSes and Individual members) meet to discuss matters of interest to the growth of the RALO, At-Large, and ICANN as a whole. The event which has historically been held every 3 years as a side-event at ICANN public meetings could not be held in the last 6 years because Africa has not had the opportunity to host an ICANN public meeting.

However, I am glad that after the 4th General Assembly which was held during ICANN59 in Johannesburg South Africa in June 2017, we now have the opportunity to meet again and I would like to once again thank everyone involved in the planning of this event. Since the 4th General Assembly, AFRALO has recorded growth in various aspects; our ALSes has increased by over 20% and we now have individual membership that is fast growing. AFRALO has also developed over 14 statements on various topics of interest since the last GA. I am happy to also report that AFRALO is one of the RALO with a high number of new faces (new blood as we call it) participating within our processes.

This General Assembly themed "Generating a strong and sustained AFRALO voice within ICANN" aims to further improve our participation within ICANN. Considering it's been a long time we meet, our objectives of the 5th Assembly includes the following:

- To review and approve the AFRALO Members performance metrics towards an improved AFRALO voice within ICANN
- To Re-establish strong connection amongst RALO members towards creating informal member/mentee relationships
- To establish better understanding of the AFRALO operating principles and suggest improvements to the rules as applicable.
- To build capacity of our members on topic of interest within the RALO
- To Recognise and/or reward some members of our RALO

Members and colleagues, we have a 1.5 days ahead of us and thanks to our General Assembly organising committee, we have a full packed agenda to help us achieve our main theme and objectives of the meeting. We will also have the opportunity to participate in parts of the Africa Engagement forum sessions that will commence after our General Assembly. Let's take advantage of the few days to discuss and engage one another towards increasing the AFRALO Voice within ICANN.

Once again welcome to AFRALO 2023 GA!

Seun Ojedeji  
Chair AFRALO