

FACILITATION OF INTRA-AFRICAN TRADE – ARSO STRATEGY

BY

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ON THE JOINT OCCASIONS OF GOLDEN ANNIVERSARY OF

**EOS ESTABLISHMENT, MEMBERSHIP OF ISO AND 2ND INTERNATIONAL
CONFERENCE AND EXHIBITION ON QUALITY AND EXCELLENCE**

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1. THESE OCCASIONS

Jointly:

- testify to the positive commitment of EOS to bring to the citizenry the optimal dividends accruing from the science, technology, innovations of consensus undertakings.
- highlight the resolve of the Government and the people of Arab Republic of Egypt to effectively participate in both national regional, continental and international undertakings aimed at the transformation of varied quality criteria and/or standards diversity into riches for trade-driven sustainable growth.
- appreciate global platform for performance improvement as a necessary socio-economic undertaking to enhance competitive impetus.
- recognise and amplify standardisation as the foremost economic undertaking to facilitate the development and implementation of the “state-of-the-art” competitive tools.

❖- **Standardisation in Arab Republic of Egypt through EOS has come of age.**

ARSO commends EOS on its 50 years of standardisation for collective good both nationally, regionally, continentally and internationally.

ARSO is proud to participate in this multi-function Golden Anniversary of EOS organised by EOS.

ARSO presents its complements to the Government and the peoples of the Arab Republic of Egypt for their support to EOS.

2. WHAT ARSO IS

2.1. **ARSO:** African Organisation for Standardisation

- Inter-governmental Service Organisation.

2.2 **Responsibility:**

- Co-ordination of Standardisation in Africa

2.3 **Development objective**

- To improve intra-African and global trade.

2.4 **Purpose objective**

- To evolve an efficient and effective ARSO, strategically positioned to meet the challenges of continental value addition to stakeholders and self.

2.5 **Legal framework**

- ARSO Revised Constitution 2007.

2.6 **Service Delivery Methodology**

- Principle of shared responsibility facilitated by frog leap, collaboration, co-operation, co-ordination and mutual recognition.

3 FACILITATION OF INTRA-AFRICAN TRADE

- A necessity for wealth creation facilitated by standardisation.

3.1. African Market Integration.

- CAMI 17 Egypt 2006 observed:
“Lack of Common Quality Level is the greatest hindrance to intra-African trade”.

3.1.1 ARSO's Actions

- Constitution of RECs-based and International Experts Work Group to evolve African Standards Harmonisation Model (ASHAM)
- ASHAM was evolved, Egypt 2007.

- ASHAM is African consensus standardisation tool for, among others:



- + conversation of standards diversity inherent in AU member States' standards into consensus Africa Standards (ARS) or common quality level.
- + harmonisation of conformity assessment procedures to facilitate recognition of Quality Marks among AU member States.
- + alignment of ARS with international standards.
- + creation of conducive standards-regulation environment to empower the implementation of “Reference to Standards Principle” and “International Technical Harmonisation Model” in Africa.

- These are inputs for reducing TBT and impacting positively on, for instance:
 - poverty reduction
 - ISO Action Plan for Developing Countries
 - beyond-the-border trade in Africa
 - consumer protection
 - competitiveness of African products globally
 - the challenges of the UN Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)
 - industrialisation of Africa

- The theme of the January 2008 Summit of AU Heads of State and Government is “Industrialisation of Africa”.

3.2 **Implementation of ASHAM.**

- Bringing dividends to the ultimate consumer
- ARSO Technical Management Committee Constituted based on RECs and ISO representation.
- ASHAM is recommended by Senior Officials' Report in the just concluded 1st Extra-Ordinary Conference of AU Ministers of Industry (CAMI), September 2007 Republic of South Africa for adoption and implementation in the continent.
- The 16th ARSO General Assembly, 5-10 November 2007 is expected to ratify ARSO ASHAM.

3.3. **Promotion of African Products**

- Adoption of African unique standards as international standards
- ARSO facilitates the development of product standards on unique products by respective NSBs of member States.
- Applies ASHAM to make such standards African Standards (ARS).
- Advocates the adoption of such ARS as international standards.

3.4. The Support



- Optimising AUC-RECs-ARSO Co-operation
- African Advisory Committee on Competitive Tools (AACCTs) inaugurated, AUC, Addis Ababa, July 2007.

AACCTs is ARSO Committee for:

Promotion of consensus African standardisation roadmap to facilitate African Market Integration and build competitive advantage.

✓ AACCTs is Composed of:

- + **Chair:** Head of Trade, AUC Department of Trade and Industry.
- + Two representatives each from the eight Regional Economic Communities (RECs) and AUC.
- MoU between AUC and ARSO being finalised.
- ARSO-RECs MoUs being revised to accommodate recent programmes aimed at facilitating co-operation in Market Integration.

3.5 ARSO-Donor Partnership in Capacity Development of African Standardisation

- Necessity for continental improvement of trade
 - Multi-stakeholder prioritized needs of African standardisation developed and programmed for implementation.
- “Train-the-trainers” Training topped the list.

3.6. Re-engineered ARSO has MoU with:

- ISO
- CEN
- SIS

4. WHAT ARSO IS NOT

- ARSO is not an accreditation body
- + The organisation will encourage, assist in the co-ordination of activities for the establishment of African Accreditation body.
- ARSO is not a Certification/Conformity Assessment Agency
- + The organisation harmonises conformity assessment procedures as African Standards to facilitate/encourage recognition of Quality Marks among AU member States.

Thank You For Your Kind Audience. Remain Blessed.



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