

### **Africa and the Information Age.**

One of the reasons for the setting up of the International Network for Television and Radio Advancement is to help media practitioners and would be practitioners to be active participants and not just consumers of the products of the rapidly changing world of this information age.

Africa is trying to find its place in the new information society. The world is in the midst of rapidly evolving information revolution, and in order for Africa to be a part of this revolution African media houses must develop and actively pursue a properly articulated set of goals to be able to enter the information age as a participant and benefit from it. In the information age, information is development, portrayed through services, technology and a skilled labor force.

For Africa to come up to speed and keep up on the information highway it is not enough to be a passive consumer; she must also play a decisive role in the sophisticated technology of today's world.

The Internet is different from past human inventions in that unlike other inventions, this one deals exclusively with the human intellect instead of the body. The Internet is the tool of the future, and has fully become an intrinsic part of all aspects of our everyday life, whether private or professional. Today's global community is no longer inhibited by language limitations and knows no boundaries. It is predicted that by 2047, there would be four billion Internet users globally.

The political angle of the information revolution has become so apparent with the recent developments in North Africa and the Middle East.

African media practitioners must also gear up to the premise of intellectual confrontation; hence is the information revolution, a form of Western cultural imperialism? New Media affords the

## EDITORIAL

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African media practitioners an avenue to get their message out there. It is for this reason that we have to become skilled in all facets of this information age and its technologies so as to be able to play a decisive role in the new media space.

It will be an under statement to say that the government's role in media is receding as a natural outcome of the evolution of the information age. Suffice it to say then that those in charge of government media must come up to speed in their skills to face the new challenges posed by the information age.

How should we go about making sure we face up to this challenge?

Your comments and contribution to this month's editorial are welcome.