



News Release

Masambu elected ITSO chief

KAMPALA: October 14, 2016: Ugandan national Eng. Patrick Francis Masambu has been elected Director General for International Telecommunications Satellite Organisation (ITSO). The elections took place on October 13, 2016 during the 37th ITSO Assembly of Parties (AP-37) meeting scheduled for Washington DC from October 12-14, 2016.



Mr Francis Patrick Masambu

During the second round of elections, Masambu polled 72 votes, beating France's Yvon Henri who got 43. Masambu had also won the first round with 59 votes, while Henri polled 33 and Jose Manuel Leceta Garcia from Spain got 23. At least 115 countries participated in the voting.

The 149-member state organisation, ITSO is an intergovernmental organisation charged with overseeing the public service obligations of Intelsat, Ltd. With its headquarters in Washington, D.C., USA, ITSO has offices in various parts of the world to provide telecommunications services to all areas of the world.

ITSO is headed by a Director General who serves as the Chief Executive and legal representative of ITSO. The DG, is eligible for re-election, is appointed for a four-year term.

The Government of Uganda is a signatory to the ITSO Agreement that was initially opened for signature by governments at Washington, D.C. on August 20, 1971 and entered into force on February 12, 1973. The signing of this agreement resulted from consideration by the States Parties of the principles set forth in Resolution 1721 (XVI) of the General Assembly of the United Nations that

communication by means of satellite should be available to the nations of the world as soon as practicable on a global and non-discriminatory basis.

As a member state, Uganda has collective responsibility alongside other partner states to discharge treaty functions and responsibilities attributed to the Assembly of Parties within the Agreement. Through this role, Uganda is able to participate in, and, contribute to the policy setting as well as regulatory oversight related to the governance and provision of global satellite communications.

More importantly is the fact that this opportunity enables the country to ensure that its needs and interests in the area of ICTs delivered through satellite technology are properly addressed; given the strategic importance of satellite communications to Uganda as a landlocked country.

Masambu, 64, who has been the body's Deputy Director General, will replace Dr Jose Manuel do Rosario Toscano (Portugal), whose term expires in July 2017. He has also been ITSO's Director of Technical Affairs - responsible for overseeing ITSO's technical affairs and also contributing to critical satellite industry initiatives and concerns involving the organisation.

As a developing country, Uganda has greatly benefited from the satellite connectivity of the global intelsat network through access to the following services:

- Broadband data especially in hard to reach areas with no existing telecommunications infrastructure.
- International telecommunications connectivity
- Television broadcasting; for both Direct to home (DSTV, ZUKU and AZAM) and connectivity of the rural sights to the SIGNET Kololo DTT site.
- Air navigation control,
- Emergency management and disaster recovery, amongst others.

The Minister for ICT and National Guidance, Hon. Frank Tumwebaze, who led the Ugandan delegation to the AP-37 meeting, stressed the importance of Masambu's win. "This win is a demonstration of the confidence the international community has in Uganda. This is attributed to the high political profile under the political leadership of President Yoweri Museveni, the development of Uganda's communications sector, our country's active participation in international fora as well as our significant contribution to the global community at many levels," he said.

Hon. Frank Tumwebaze further said: "I am immensely grateful to the competent team of staff from Uganda Communications Commission, Ministry of ICT and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, among other players that ably backed me on the ground here to execute the campaign."

The executive director of UCC, Godfrey Mutabazi, said Masambu's win was a collective effort. "This journey, which started two years ago, has come to fruition. This win is a result of a protracted strategy by UCC and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, among others," Mutabazi said. He said Masambu was endorsed by the Cabinet of Uganda, East African Community, African Union and the Commonwealth Telecommunications Organisation (CTO), among others.

A telecommunications engineer, Masambu has more than 30 years of experience at senior and international levels that have included positions in both the public and private sector. As Deputy Director of ITSO, Mr Masambu was instrumental in ensuring that Uganda's host the 35th ITSO Assembly of Parties. It was held at the Serena Conference Centre from July 3-6, 2012 - the first time such an ITSO Meeting was held in Africa.