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Created for change, capacity strengthening and movement support. We are powerful when we stand together .

EATHAN (05.02.2020) - <https://bit.ly/2OHChVn> - Trans and gender diverse persons speaking for themselves, united as a collective, generating knowledge and advocating for inclusion at continental level had not happened effectively. This has rapidly changed over the last decade. There has been a vast growth of trans-specific organising that has led to strong regional movements on the continent with agendas focusing on health, legal & policy reform, movement building, and data collection & research.

At a convening in Nairobi, Kenya on 31 January and 1 February 2020, a task team comprising of the Southern African Trans Forum, East Africa Trans Health & Advocacy Network and the West African Trans Forum, engaged in discussions and agreed collectively to create the African Trans Network. ATN will be composed of trans-led regional and national networks. This proposal will be taken back to all sub regional networks for further deliberations. We believe that we have made a bold decision that is in the best interest of African Trans persons, our movements and our well-being, in our building of healthy movements. The African Trans Network (ATN) will be led by an 6-8 person Interim Governing Body (IGB) comprised of at least 2 members of each sub-regional network. The IGB has agreed to seek out funding to support the establishment of the ATN and agreed that Iranti will act as fiscal host in this interim period.

In recognition of the fact that not one small number of people can make decisions for an entire continental trans movement, the interim governing body is committed to ensuring that all decisions made at this convening shall be put forward, for validation, buy-in and adoption, by African trans led networks who wish to join the ATN.

We aim to host the first ATN conference in 2020 where ratification of all decisions will take place.

The network aims:

- To stimulate communication and coordination among trans-led and trans-focused movements across the continent.
- To strengthen its partnerships with other regional networks and international trans-led organisations.
- To enhance trans leadership capacity in our region by channelling support to the work of its member regional networks/organisations.
- To maintain members' autonomy, not imposing other priorities, and refraining from being a sub-regional or national program implementer.

The Network has identified the following ten priority areas that it would like to start focusing on:

1. Convene a regional trans movements and human rights annual/biennial conference to track and engage on the progress of our advocacy gains.
2. Create a community crowd sourcing/community philanthropy model to support poor trans individuals with access to hormone replacement therapy and or affirming surgeries, as well as educational scholarships aimed at creating a wellbeing approach to individual self-care.
3. Fostering capacity building exchanges amongst the regional networks and its partners/members.
4. Regional advocacy derived from the focuses of the regional networks.
5. Securing emergency funding for trans persons facing violence and displacement.
6. Create an African accredited training programme focused on the human rights of trans persons, human rights systems and accountability mechanisms. For this programme to be hosted by an academic institution.
7. Education and Economic Empowerment Programming to build sustainability and to seek out ways to alleviate poverty based on transphobia and exclusion from mainstream economies.
8. Creation of a central African Trans Database and an App for information sharing on medical and human rights content.
9. Amplifying the voice and visibility of its members through the creation of messaging and campaign development.
10. Expanding the ATN to reach Northern & Central African Trans Movements.

These priorities shall be developed into an action plan that the ATN Interim Governing Body will present to its network stakeholders and aim to implement over a 3-5 year strategy.

The ATN is open to trans networks wishing to become members of the network. At this stage in the life of the ATN we will not be accepting membership request from individual organisations. A membership strategy and protocol will be developed as we consult and research comparative models and have deeper consultations within the region.

We are committed to providing solidarity to and joining trans-specific advocacy initiatives for change at a continental level and global level.

The Interim Governing Body (IGB) is currently comprised of:

Theo Dongmo – WATF
Jamal Venance – WATF
Deyonce Naris – SATF
Jabu Pereira – SATF
Barbra Wangare – EATHAN
Alesandra Ogeta – EATHAN
Shema Djamali – EATHAN

Voluntary coordination is managed by Akani Shimange.

We are grateful for the support of the ITF, UHAI and CoC for bringing our sub regions together. Without this support it would have been incredibly difficult to meet and engage in our region.

For more information, kindly email: africantransnetwork@gmail.com
