

Opening remarks and welcome
Workshop technical AFSEC
August 10, 2010 in Johannesburg

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President AFSEC

**Mr. Director of Infrastructure and Energy Committee of the African Union,
Mr. Executive Director of the African Energy Commission (AFREC)
Mr. Secretary General of UPDEA
Eminent personalities
Distinguished delegates**

Allow me to express the joy I feel, when presiding over the opening ceremony of the first technical workshop AFSEC organized as the operational start of our activities.

Indeed, the technical workshop that starts today is the eve of our second General Meeting. The presence here of participants from several countries in Africa and elsewhere in the celebration continues.

Your presence reflects, eloquently, that it is, on the African continent, a definite advantage to be united in seeking solutions to common problems.

Dear participants of the workshop,

I would now, on behalf of AFSEC welcome you in South Africa, here in the province of Gauteng (Place of Gold) that I hope you are going to get to know, I hope, during your stay here.

It is also the place for me to express to the Executive Secretariat of AFSEC and to Eskom my appreciation for choosing this wonderful setting.

I wish to assure you here, dear participants that you will always find support and seamless cooperation in dealing with AFSEC.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

In Africa, standards are little known and little used. Most of the technicians and leaders do not know the strength of norms [standards].

In March 1992, the Office of Technology Assessment in the Congress of the United States raised a pessimistic outlook on the positioning of U.S. standards at the time: "Many structural changes have emerged in the economy, which raises the question of whether our system can still continue to be effective in the future. Such changes include the development of a highly competitive global economy that the U.S. can no longer hope to dominate. "

The report added: "Some worry that in addition to other countries in the world are more organized and better able to influence the process of adoption of international standards, to the detriment of U.S. trade relations."

Standards precede development.

My participation in numerous technical committees of IEC has shown me that the technical committees are the place for discussions of the industrial policy issues of tomorrow. And yet, in this important debate involving the best experts in the field, Africa was absent even to listen. I was really sick at heart, I tell you. We must think about tomorrow.

Dear participants of the workshop,

For two years, the activities of AFSEC conducted allow us all to measure the important work that should be undertaken in the future. It is urgent to endow the African experts with appropriate standardization toolkits to participate actively in the standardization work.

This workshop is in line with the strategy of AFSEC to better respond to your concerns in support of trade, and African populations.

This workshop is therefore timely to review the following points:

- Experiments on the harmonization of electrotechnical standards in African regional economic communities.
- The need for standardization to achieve integration of interconnected power pools in Africa
- The needs and priorities of electrotechnical standards to be established in Africa
- The proposal for the structure of the initial technical review committee to recommend to the Management Committee AFSEC;
- Nominations for membership on committees of technical studies;
- The proposed appointment of chairmen and secretaries of committees of technical studies.

Dear participants of the workshop,

To make this workshop to achieve its goals, during the next two days, you are going to absorb techniques regarding harmonization of standards so that we can make suggestions.

Experts from the IEC, CENELEC and national electrotechnical committees will make presentations on various topics.

You can therefore:

- Increase your knowledge,
- analyze the situation in Africa,
- share your experiences,
- build relationships,
- assess your needs, prioritize your choices, and
- agree on a common methodology to harmonize standards.

I hope that after this workshop will experience a renewal, you are agents of development of standardization for your colleagues in your various countries, public and private institutions. You will thus constitute a competence centre in matters of standardization, being agents serving AFSEC.

I am assured in advance that your discussions and exchanges of proposals will lead to concrete recommendations to operationalize AFSEC. They are the result of a dynamic and fruitful partnership between the local committees, regional standards and AFSEC.

I cannot conclude without showing my deep and sincere appreciation to the organizing committee, to AFREC / AU and Eskom for technical and financial support for organizing the first workshop AFSEC.

My thanks also go to all the partners present, for their constant and unwavering support.

Distinguished participants

We can move mountains

On this note of hope, wishing every success in your work, that I declare open the first technical workshop of the Technical Committees of AFSEC.

Thank you for your kind attention.

Long live international cooperation,

Viva AFSEC,

Long live South Africa.