

**Electronic Commerce Strategies for Development:
Promoting an International Dialogue**

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ICT in SADC – From policy consensus to strategic actions

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From the SADC policy perspective, there is unanimous consensus that member states should act now in formulating e-commerce legislation. The SADC Heads of States of the 14 member states made a Declaration on ICT in August 2001 whereby the same commitment was again emphasized. Following the recommendations of an ICT task force last year, the SADC Secretariat was asked to develop Model Legislative Provisions to facilitate ICT in the region.

The impact of the internet should be assessed in terms of: - facilitating trade regionally and globally, reviewing security and privacy issues, accessing relevant content on the internet, addressing financial issues such as secure payment and the prevention of fraud. Finally, there is a need to harmonize local, regional and continental laws governing electronic transactions so that they reflect international standards and consensus.

Government in member states has a leading role to play in initiating e-commerce, as government in most SADC countries is the biggest enterprise. Currently in the SADC region, the Republic of Mauritius and the Republic of South Africa already have such legislation in place. Both countries have made provisions for e-government in their respective legislation.