



**ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR AFRICA
COMMISSION ECONOMIQUE POUR L'AFRIQUE**

Date: 13 March 1999

Dear Ms. Salas,

Subject: Application of AfriSpace Inc. for Authority to Launch and Operate a Satellite Sound Broadcasting Transmission System

This letter is to confirm that the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) is fully supportive on the ongoing initiative led by WorldSpace Inc., to develop mechanisms and structures in order to facilitate the broadcast of development content using digital satellite transmission.

The WorldSpace mission, which is predicated upon a vision to deliver life skills and developmental information to as many of the world's people as possible, has been greatly enhanced by the recent launch of AfriStar, the first of three satellites that will mediate digital broadcasting of 100 channels of programming.

We at ECA believe firmly in the democratization of access, and in the bringing of the fore of alternative voices and alternative perspectives. This is why we consider our ongoing collaboration with WorldSpace in the development of an African Learning Channel is so important. More than any other region of the World, Africa can benefit tremendously from information and communication for development.

It is in this context that ECA is leading continental efforts to build a development-serving African Information Society, working with partners under umbrella and the UN System-Wide Special Initiative on Africa. UNESCO is also at the forefront of initiatives to develop educational application of information technology, as well as such fields as Communication for Peace.

Ms. Marjorie Roman Salas
Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
The Portals
445-12th Street, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 205543



Our respective organizations are currently working with WorldSpace as facilitators of a process to encourage participation in the development of the African learning Channel, and in this regard we are planning to convene a Partners Meeting at the UN complex in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, in the second half of 1999. Among other concrete outputs, we expect this meeting to resolve issues of governance for the channel and proposed studio; consolidate and focus fund-raising strategies; and address the need for multiple channels of distribution and redistribution.

We also stand ready to advocate within the United Nations family for enhanced partnership and collaboration with WorldSpace.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'K. Y. Amoako'.

K. Y. Amoako
Executive Secretary