Akoma Ntoso in OASIS

Open Access and Open Standards
www.akomantoso.org
Version 1.9 - 27 September 2011
Draft version

Proponents

Flavio Zeni, Africa i-Parliament (UN/DESA), Kenya

Fabio Vitali, Department of Computer Science, University of Bologna, Italy

Monica Palmirani, CIRSFID, University of Bologna, Italy

Giovanni Sartor, EUI, Florence, Italy

Claudio Fabiani, European Parliament, EU

Kenya Law Reports, National Council for Law Reporting, Kenya

Carlo Marchetti, Senate of Italy, Italy

Michel Moret, Centre des publications officielles CPO, Switzerland

Joao Lima Oliveira, Senate of Brazil, Brazil

Christian Sifaqui, Library of Congress, Chile

South African Parliament, ICT Manager, South Africa

Sylvia Tosar, Senate of Uruguay, Uruguay

Grant Vergottini, California State Legislative ICT Consultant, USA

University of Avairo, Department of Electronic, Telecommunication and Informatics, PT

What is Akoma Ntoso?

Akoma Ntoso[1] is a set of **simple, technology-neutral XML machine-readable descriptions of parliamentary, legislative and judiciary documents** such as legislation, debate record, minutes, judgements, etc. that enables the addition of descriptive structures (markup) to the content of parliamentary and legislative documents. The AKOMA NTOSO schema makes the structural and semantic components of digital legislative documents fully accessible to machine-driven processes thereby supporting the creation of high-value legislative information services. This can greatly improve efficiency and accountability in the

---

[1] "Akoma Ntoso", "linked hearts" in the language of the Akan people of West Africa, is the symbol that represents understanding and agreement. Likewise, Akoma Ntoso represents common XML standards that provide open access to parliamentary documentation and allow Parliaments to exchange information more efficiently, just like "linked hearts".

parliamentary, legislative and judiciary contexts.

This also makes it possible to build software applications to manipulate legal documents in terms of their structure and semantic context rather than simply as plain undifferentiated text. Such contextual access to legislative information makes it easier to use ICT technologies to assist institutions and citizens to become more involved in the legislative process.

Akoma Ntoso has been developed in the context of a project by the United Nations Department for Economic and Social Affairs (UN/DESA) aimed at fostering open access in African Parliaments and its maintenance is currently supported by the Africa i-Parliaments Action Plan of UN/DESA. It is now being adopted or entering as good practice in a number of other countries (e.g., Senate of Brazil and European Parliament) that aim to adopt and/or to adapt it to their legal systems and purposes.

The technical staff is currently developing a modularisation of the full Akoma Ntoso language aimed at extracting sub-schemas focused on particular types of documents:

- **Akoma4Legislative** for marking up legislative documents in any phase of its lifecycle: bill, act, amendments, report of the committee.

- **Akoma4ParliamentaryDocuments** for marking up debates, reports, orders of the day, motions, questions-answers, minutes.

- **Akoma4Justice** for marking up judgements. It defines how to mark up the header, the structure, the metadata, the citations to any kind of judiciary document (law, jurisprudence, judgements, articles, books, etc.) and also to define the permanent identifier (using the W3C URI standard) of these digital resources. It is also possible to qualify the citations by using a derivation of the Shepard classification system adopted, among others, by LexisNexis.

Objectives of the Technical Committee

The objectives of the Akoma Ntoso Technical Committee (TC) are to:

- promote a common legislative and Akoma Ntoso OASIS standard for creating a world-wide best practice that helps in the dissemination of the usage of XML within the Parliaments' document management processes;

- collect the requirements from the community of the stakeholders managing legislative and legal documents (editors, libraries, public institutions, tribunals, publishers, etc.) in order to extend and refine the standard;

- set up a community that supports the stakeholders in order to adopt Akoma Ntoso locally;

- provide technical specifications and documentation in order to support the developers of tools and software applications relying on Akoma Ntoso.

Why a TC on Akoma Ntoso ?

The legislative and judiciary information needs particular attention in order to preserve the legal knowledge when paper is de-materialized into digital resources. Much legal knowledge is embedded in these documents and a specific approach is necessary to prevent losses in the accompanying metadata, which is sometime fundamental for the correct completion of the Parliament processes.

An interdisciplinary virtuous circle is essential, yet often neglected: from the formulation of legislative/judiciary drafting guidelines that support XML standard requirements, to the development of tools that help in applying the XML standard in its day-by-day use, and to the design of all the mechanisms to improve the organization of the Parliaments and Courts and to create innovation, transparency, assessment, and efficacy.

The legal culture, the legislative traditions, the political procedures, the legal principles have to be taken in consideration as the pillars in this domain, particularly as ICT opens new opportunities.
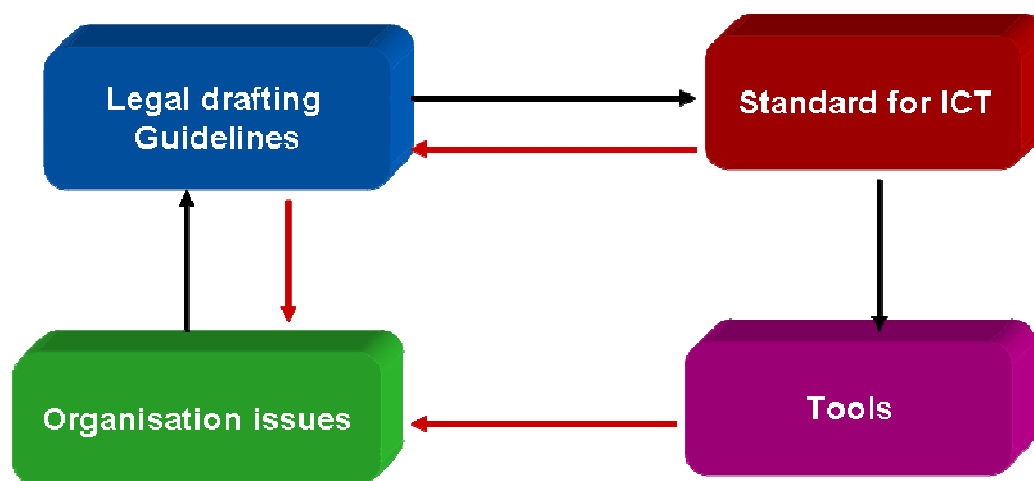

Fig. 1 - Virtuous Circle

For these reasons, we need to set up a technical committee which, departing from the best practices and the legal principles of legislative drafting, aims to model, represent, and manage legal documents as authorial, authentic, valid digital resources persistent over time (e.g. valid also after 100 years).

Parliament ICT team and legislative offices shall not only be end-users, but stakeholders and decision makers in this process. To this end, it is important to apply a bottom-up methodology to design an XML schema using a consensus-building approach, rather than building a pure technical XML schema as a data format or as a protocol for communication.

Make Akoma Ntoso an OASIS Standard: Stability and ROI

Parliaments need to invest in a robust, persistent, non-volatile Akoma Ntoso standard for representing legal documents, legislative and judiciary workflow (e.g. ECF), lifecycle events, legal metadata, modelling relationships with ontology and eventually with rules (e.g. LegalRuleML initiative).

For this reason, based on the success of Akoma Ntoso several Parliaments have an urgent need to use a standardized format inside a well-controlled workflow, endorsed by a strong management procedure, within an accredited standard organization like OASIS.

This process of accreditation will allow adopters and users of Akoma Ntoso to develop and produce an environment of software tools specifically for Akoma Ntoso (e.g. editors, web services, open data set, etc.). It will also increase the interest of the tech-industry sector and permit Parliaments to make long-term investment plans on the standard with a reasonable

return of benefits.

Without standardization and endorsement by a standards body and availability of tools is not possible to practically produce XML in the legislative workflow and as a result the Parliaments are not encouraged to use Akoma Ntoso (e.g. versus PDF) nor are they willing to invest in terms of organization management, personnel training, tools customization, etc.).

The interoperability is another positive side effect expected from this TC, especially in the supra-order legislative system (e.g. European Institutions) or between the Member States in Europe or among the Federate States (e.g. Brazil, USA, etc.) towards a particular format.

Goals of Akoma Ntoso

The AKOMA NTOSO framework is underlined by the following strategic goals:

To create a **common** legal document standard for the interchange of parliamentary, legislative and judiciary documents between institutions anywhere in the world.

To provide a format for **long term storage** of and access to parliamentary, legislative and judiciary documents allowing search, interpretation and visualization of documents.

To create a **common data and metadata model** so that experiences, expertise, and tools can be shared and extended by the participating peers, be their Courts, Parliaments or Governments.

To create a **common mechanism for naming and linking resources (URI)** so that documents produced by Parliaments and Courts can be easily cited and cross-referenced by other Parliaments, Courts or individual users.

To be **self-explanatory**, that is to be able to provide any information for its use and meaning through a simple examination of schema or example documents, without the aid of specialized software.

To be **extensible**, that is it to allow modifications to the models within the AKOMA NTOSO framework so that local customisation can be achieved without sacrificing interoperability with other systems.

Functional Requirements of Akoma Ntoso

LEGAL AND LEGISLATIVE ORIENTATION. The Akoma Ntoso standard provides a representation of the main structures of legal documents using a legal approach that provides the best combination of technological excellence and sophisticated juridical competency. In this context, XML has to capture the relevant legal metadata of the single act (law, decree, etc.), along with the metadata of the whole publication per se. The legislative documents express and embed cultural values, legal principles, a territory's sovereignty, the political management class' intellectual occupations, and historical traditions. For these reasons it is incumbent upon us to represent all this knowledge in the best way, so as to preserve the legal values for the next generation.

DESCRIPTIVENESS. The Akoma Ntoso standard preserves the document's original description and avoids an excessive generalization of the elements. That helps the back-office mark-up phase to recognize the correct application of the tags, and it helps also the document's external application by making it self-explanatory. The tag vocabulary guides the users to understand the meaning (e.g., article tags obviously represent the basic normative unit; block tags are too general and ambiguous).

PRESCRIPTIVENESS. The Akoma Ntoso standard implements rules and constraints directly drawn from the legal domain, and they can be used to increase the quality of available legal information (e.g., by supporting local legal-drafting rules). The rules embedded into the XML schema improve quality and provide a grid that the authors, editors, and documentalists must use in achieving harmonization over time.

STRUCTURE MODELING. The Akoma Ntoso standard fully describes the document's original structure when expressed in XML. The proper attention is given to the textual content and to the metadata associated with it, so as to respect the author's subdivision of the document. The official gazette's cover page is no longer a subsidiary part of the gazette: it is the expression of a procedural step, representing a precise lawmaking provision.

STRONG SEPARATION OF LEVELS. The Akoma Ntoso standard strongly separates all the layers of the semantic Web: content, structure, metadata, ontology, and rules.

STRONG NAMING POLICY. The Akoma Ntoso standard adopts at all levels a syntax based on URIs that can be used to precisely refer to the concept being sought. This makes it possible to correctly and specifically support a large class of references, including static legal references, dynamic legal references, data-level object inclusion, and ontological references.

STRONG TEMPORAL MODEL. The Akoma Ntoso standard correctly represents the temporal model underlying the concept of a legal document's dynamicity over time. Based on the naming policy, it makes it possible to represent versions, variants, and documents containing a plurality of versions, as well as static and dynamic references.

STRONG WORKFLOW MODEL. The Akoma Ntoso standard includes a mechanism for expressing workflow events connected as well with a strong context ontology.

INTERCHANGE DOCUMENT FORMAT. The Akoma Ntoso standard provides a data-interchange format from one standard to another, as well as between legacy systems, application layers, and different data formats. It is both an interchange and interoperability standard.

HOMOGENEOUS PUBLISHING FORMAT. The Akoma Ntoso standard provides an open document infrastructure for publishing heterogeneous collections of legal resources, independently of the type of legal document and legal system, and independently of jurisdiction.

Technical Requirements of Akoma Ntoso

The technical requirements are as follows.

NEUTRAL AND OPEN DOCUMENT FORMAT. The Akoma Ntoso standard provides a homogeneous infrastructure for representing the structure of heterogeneous legal resources. The standard should be public, open, well documented, and distributed across the community. A closed and proprietary XML standard will not help any Open Government Initiatives, even if the data format becomes the vogue.

RELIANCE ON EXISTING STANDARDS. The Akoma Ntoso standard completely and correctly makes use of, and is based on, Web standards: XML, URIs, XML Schema, XML Namespace, RDF, OWL, etc.

METADATA MODELLING. The Akoma Ntoso standard associates documents with a rich set of meta-data elements, designed for providing not just values, but the semantics associated with them, and providing a principled framework for reasoning on and comparing abstract and concrete concepts the documents and their content.

MINIMAL REQUIRED METADATA SET FORMAT FOR QUERIES. The Akoma Ntoso standard guarantees a minimal metadata set for the interoperability of queries within heterogeneous

collections of legal documents expressed in different local and national standards. It increases interoperability between different document databases. Initiatives such as N-Lex or Eur-Lex could take ad-vantage of those requirements to manage all legal sources coming from different countries with the same data software architecture and tools without the need to have the actual data format converge into a single one.

PATTERN DESIGN ORIENTED. The Akoma Ntoso standard is designed to respect classes of patterns [4]. In other words, we define classes of tags with properties in line with a certain content model, which identifies the structure allowed within the element. Most of the elements in the Akoma Ntoso standard have very similar structural descriptions. These structural descriptions (the patterns) are seven, and any other tags in the schema belong to them. The advantages of this approach are the modularization of the schema, flexibility with respect to extensions, and the consistency of behaviours for each class of elements. Especially this last feature favours the development of tools.

The Akoma Ntoso standard is designed to enable all the aforementioned characteristics; and this gives us an advantage in achieving the goal of long-term preservation. Still, we want to analyse now how an XML file could acquire legal binding proprieties, and how it is possible to keep these properties as a stable requirement for preserving authenticity, integrity, and validity over time in the face of technological change.

First of all, the properties we refer to must be given new definitions on a legal-informatics approach. There are four definitions in particular:

AUTHENTICITY in this context consists in having certain elements for declaring that the document is endorsed by an empowered authority, through an official chain of power and roles, and that the content is compliant with the document's original version, meaning the version the authors, acting through their sovereign powers, wanted and decided to issue.

INTEGRITY consists in being able to detect any changes that may have intervened between the document's individual digital items (physical copies) and the original master file. Also, any alteration or graphical transformation could modify the human cognitive perception of the normative and legal content, and so integrity is not confined to guaranteeing the correctness of the hash-algorithm control, but is also meant to preserve the layout form, which is as well an instrument for communicating the correct interpretation of the law.

VALIDITY is achieved once all the normative rules are applied (including the signature) with which to produce an enforceable and legal binding document.

PERSISTENCY consists in storing the document in the long run, and in archiving all the connected information concerning the XML standard's entire logical schema, the history of the document and how it is produced (e.g., hardware, software, etc.), the different layers of annotations, and the various persons in charge during mark up. In other words, persistency consists in having information with which to trace the document 's whole lifecycle.

Akoma Ntoso Schedule and Plan

The schedule is defined as follows, distributed over four years:

First Year	Publication of the draft standard specification document for the 30-days public review Collection of the comments Consolidation of the draft version Publication of the draft standard specification document for the 30-days public review Collection of the comments OASIS Standard Candidate, Public Review (60-days) and Ballot

Second Year	Add new functionalities to the standard Maintain the standard Disseminate and exploit the standard Support applications and tools based on the standard

Third Year (and following)	Maintainf the standard Disseminate and exploit the standard Support applications and tools based on the standard

First year roadmap

WP	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
First round	1. Specifications definition 2. Documentation 3. Publication of the draft standard specification document for the 30-days public review			
Second round		1. collection of the comments 2. consolidation of the draft version 3. Specifications definition 4. Documentation 5. Publication of the draft standard specification document for the 30-days public review		

Third round			1. Pilot Cases candidature 2. OASIS Standard Candidate, Public Review (60-days) and Ballot	
Fourth round				1. Standard fixed 2. Documentation 3. Pilot Cases documentation

References

[1] Arnold-Moore T., Jane C.: Connected to the Law: Tasmanian Legislation Using EnAct. Journal of Information, Law and Technology 2000(1).

[2] Arnold-Moore T.: Automatically Processing Amendments to Legislation. ICAIL 1995, pp. 297-306, 1995.

[3] Barabucci G., Cervone L., Di Iorio A., Palmirani M., Peroni S., Vitali F.: Managing semantics in XML vocabularies: an experience in the legal and legislative domain, Balisage 2010.

[4] Bekiari, C., Doerr, M. and Le Boeuf, P.: International Working Group on FRBR and CIDOC CRM Harmonization. 2008. FRBR object-oriented definition and mapping to FRBRER (v. 0.9 draft). Accessed 20 August 2009 http://cidoc.ics.forth.gr/docs/frbr_oo /frbr_docs/FRBR_oo_V0.9.pdf.

[5] Bing J.: The Policies of Legal Information Services: a Perspective of Three Decades, Yulex 2003, ISBN 82-7226-077-8, pp. 35-57, 2003.

[6] Boer A., Radboud W., Vitali F.: MetaLex XML and the Legal Knowledge Interchange Format, in Computable Models of the Law, Springer, 2008.

[7] Boer, A., Vitali, F., Palmirani, M., Retai, B.: CEN Metalex workshop agreement, 2009.

[8] Breuker J., Boer A., Hoekstra R., Van Den Berg C.: Developing Content for LKIF: Ontologies and Framework for Legal Reasoning, in Legal Knowledge and Information Systems, JURIX 2006, pp.41-50, ISO Press, Amsterdam, 2006.

[9] Breuker J., Casanovas P., Klein M. C. A., Francesconi .E.: Law, Ontologies and the Semantic Web - Channelling the Legal Information Flood IOS Press 2009.

[10] Bruce T., Martin P. W.: The Legal Information Institute: What Is It and Why Is It?, Cornell Law Forum 2-6, 1994.

[11] Dattolo A., Di Iorio A., Duca S., Feliziani A. A., Vitali F.: Structural Patterns for Descriptive Documents. ICWE 2007: pp. 421-426, 2007.

[12] de Oliveira Lima, A., Palmirani, M., Vitali, F.: Moving in the Time: An Ontology for Identifying Legal Resources (2008)

[13] Di Iorio A., Schirinzi M., Vitali F., Marchetti C.: A Natural and Multi-layered Approach to Detect Changes in Tree-Based Textual Documents. ICEIS 2009, pp. 90-101, 2009.

[14] Duranti, L, and Preston, R., eds.: International Research on Permanent Authentic Records in Electronic System, 2008.

[15] EU Publications Office, Access to legislation in Europe, 2009.

[16] Gordon Thomas F.: Constructing Legal Arguments with Rules in the Legal Knowledge Interchange Format (LKIF). Computable Models of the Law, Languages, Dialogues, Games, Ontologies 2008, pp. 162-184.

[17] Greenleaf G.: Jon Bing and the History of Computerised Legal Research – Some Missing Links' in Olav Torvund and Lee Bygrave (Eds) Et tilbakeblikk på fremtiden ("Looking back at the future") pp. 61-75, Institutt for Rettsinformatikk, Oslo, 2004.

[18] Hietanen A., Report on Electronic publishing of legislation – towards authenticity, 4th Euroepan Forum of Official Gazettes, June 2007, Tallinn.

[19] IFLA: Study Group on the Functional Requirements for Bibliographic Records, Functional requirements for bibliographic records: final report, 1998.

[20] Inter-Parliamentary Union, *Guidelines for Parliamentary Websites*, Geneva, 2009.

[21] Kelsen H.: Reine Rechtslehre, Wien 1960; trad. it., La dottrina pura del diritto, Torino, 1966.

[22] Kock, N., Petersen, K. E., Lianee, O., Tucker, H.: LexDania: An XML Meta-schema for Legislative Documents, 2003.

[23] Lupo C., Vitali F., Francesconi E., Palmirani M., Winkels R., de Maat E., Boer A., and Mascellani P.: General xml format(s) for legal sources - Estrella European Project IST-2004-027655. Deliverable 3.1, Faculty of Law, University of Amsterdam, Amsterdam, The Netherlands, 2007.

[24] Marchetti, A., Megale, F., Seta, E., Vitali, F.: Using XML as a means to access legislative documents (2002)

[25]   Palmirani M., Cervone L., Vitali F.: Legal metadata interchange framework to match CEN metalex. ICAIL 2009: pp. 232-233, 2009.

[26]   Palmirani M., Contissa G., Rubino R.: Fill the Gap in the Legal Knowledge Modelling. RuleML 2009: 305-314.

[27]   Palmirani, M. "Time Model in Normative Information Systems." In proceedings of the workshop The Role of Legal Knowledge in eGovernment, ICAIL2005.

[28]   Palmirani, M., Benigni, F.: Norma-System: A Legal Information System for Managing Time, 2007.

[29]   Presutti, V., et al.: A Library of Ontology Design Patterns, 2008.

[30]   Proceedings of the International Symposium on XML for the Long Haul: Issues in the Long-term Preservation of XML, Belisage 2010, August 2, Montréal, Canada, 2010.

[31]   Sartor G.: Legal Reasoning: A Cognitive Approach to the Law. Vol. 5. Treatise on Legal Philosophy and General Jurisprudence. Berlin: Springer, 2005.

[32]   Sartor G., Palmirani M., Francesconi E., Biasiotti M., Legislative XML for the Semantic Web, Springer, 2011.

[33]   United Nations, Inter-Parliamentary Union, Global Centre for ICT in Parliament, *World e-Parliament Report 2008*, New York, 2008.

[34]   United Nations, Inter-Parliamentary Union, Global Centre for ICT in Parliament, *World e-Parliament Report 2010*, New York, 2010

[35]   Vitali F., Zeni, F.: Towards a Country-Independent Data Format: The AkomaNtoso Experience. Proceedings of the V Legislative XML Workshop, 67–86. European Press Academic Publishing,2007.

[36]   Vitali F.: Akoma Ntoso Release Notes. [http://www.akomantoso.org]. Accessed 20 August 2010.

CIRSFID

Centro Interdipartimentale di Ricerca in Storia del Diritto,
Filosofia e Sociologia del Diritto e Informatica Giuridica "G. Fassò - A. Gaudenzi"

To LegalXML Steering Committee

<u>To whom it may concern</u>

On behalf of the CIRSFID, University of Bologna, I herewith confirm our interest to participate in the above metioned Akoma Ntoso initiative and in particular to open a specific Technical Committee inside of the LegalXML member section.

My institution is active e in the field of the above mentioned Akoma Ntoso community since 2006. Monica Palmirani is a technical member of Akoma Ntoso Technical Committee and she is legal designer of the standard with Fabio Vitali, professor of the Computer Science of the same Bologna University and member of the CIRSFID doctoral board.

CIRSFID has been involved since the beginning to the creation of Akoma Ntoso standard. It promoted tools (e.g. Norma-Editor), legislative drafting guidelines compliant with Akoma Ntoso, developed teaching documentations, proof-of-concept of the usage of Akoma Ntoso.

CIRSFID organizes, with the help of a network of excellence (summerschoollex.cirsfid.unibo.it), every year, since 2007, the Summer School LEX (Legislative XML) for promoting and disseminating Akoma Ntoso into the academia and public administration bodies.
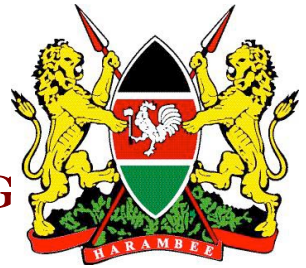
Monica Palmirani

Bologna, 25 September, 2011

Letter of interest

TO: LegalXML-OASIS Steering Committee

The National Council for Law Reporting is a state corporation in The Judiciary of Kenya. Its mandate is to publish the official reports of the judicial opinions of the courts of Kenya, to revise, consolidate and publish the Laws of Kenya and to compile such other related publications. The Council's website – www.kenyalaw.org - is one of the Africa's leading public legal information portals.

On behalf of the National Council for Law Reporting (Kenya), I herewith confirm our interest to participate in the above mentioned LegalXML intiative and in particular to open a specific Technical Committee inside of the LegalXML member section.

The National Council for Law Reporting is active in the field and in the Akoma Ntoso community since 2007, as a partner of the United Nations Department for Economic and Social Affairs under the Africa i-Parliaments Action Plan in the implementation of Akoma Ntoso and its tools in managing and deploying parliamentary, legal and judicial information in Kenya.

Our role in the initiative will be to apply and promote the use of Akoma Ntoso and its tools in managing and providing access to public legal information in Kenya.

Sincerely,

Michaelmurungi

M.M. Murungi
CEO/EDITOR

SENATO DELLA REPUBBLICA
———

SERVIZIO DELL'INFORMATICA

Roma, 29 settembre 2011
Prot. n. 939

To:
OASIS (Organization for the
Advancement of Structured Information
Standards)
LegalXML-OASIS Steering Committee
To whom it may concern

Subject: letter of interest in Akoma Ntoso standardization initiative

On behalf of the ICT Development Office of the Italian Senate, I herewith confirm our interest to participate in the above mentioned Akoma Ntoso initiative, and in particular to open a specific Technical Committee inside of the LegalXML member section.
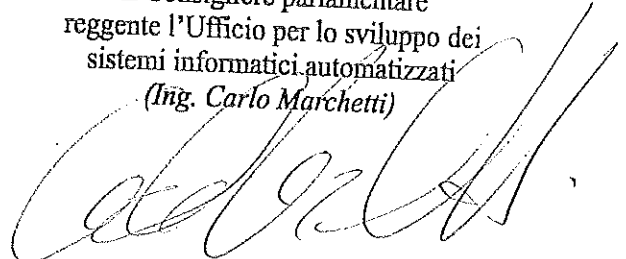
The mission of the ICT Development Office is to design and develop ICT solutions for the Italian Senate, for improving work processes, and contributing with excellence in order to fulfill Senate's institutional role.

As a consequence, the Office I direct is active in the field of the above mentioned Akoma Ntoso community since 2008.

Our role in the initiative will be technical, contributing to the discussion of Akoma Ntoso standardization, as well as of mentoring.

Yours sincerely,

Il Consigliere parlamentare
reggente l'Ufficio per lo sviluppo dei
sistemi informatici automatizzati
(Ing. Carlo Marchetti)

Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
Confederazione Svizzera
Confederaziun svizra

Federal Chancellery FCh

Centre for Official Publications COP

<u>**CH-3003 Bern, FCh, mo**</u>

To LegalXML Steering Committee
To whom it may concern

Reference:
Your reference:
Our reference: mo
Bern, 30 September 2011

Akoma Ntoso Initiative

On behalf of the Center for Official Publications of the Swiss Federal Chancellery, I herewith confirm our interest to participate in the above mentioned Akoma Ntoso Initiative and in particular to open a specific Technical Committee inside of the LegalXML member section.

Our institution is active in the field of the above mentioned Akoma Ntoso community since 2010.
In particular the mission of our institution is to publish weekly the swiss federal legislation since 1849. We will renew our ICT-systems during the next 3 years and are interested to base our new systems on Akoma Ntoso if it becomes an official international standard.

Our role in the initiative will be technical, contributing to the discussion of Akoma Ntoso standardization.

Best regards.

Michel Moret
Head, Centre for Official Publications

PRODASEN
Via N-2 Norte
Anexo C do Senado Federal
Brasília – DF – Brazil
70.165-900

September 28, 2011

To: LegalXML-OASIS Steering Committee
Subject: **Akoma Ntoso TC Proposal**

On behalf of PRODASEN (IT Department of the brazilian Federal Senate),
I herewith confirm our interest to participate in the Akoma Ntoso initiative
and in particular to open a specific Technical Committee inside of the
LegalXML member section.

My institution is active in the Akoma Ntoso community since 2007.

In particular, PRODASEN's mission is to provide and manage information
and communications technology solutions to the Federal Senate, as well as
improving work processes, contributing to fulfill Senate's institutional role
for the benefit of brazilian society.

Our role in the initiative will be technical, contributing to the discussion of
Akoma Ntoso standardization.

Sincerely,

João Alberto de Oliveira Lima
Analista de Informática Legislativa

To LegalXML Steering Committee

To whom it may concern

On behalf of the Chilean Library of Congress, I herewith confirm our interest to participate in the above metioned Akoma Ntoso intiative and in particular to open a specific Technical Committee inside of the LegalXML member section.

My institution is active in the field of the above mentioned Akoma Ntoso community since 2010.

In particular the mission of the Chilean Library of Congress is to serve the National Congress of Chile, promoting the activities carried out by the Senate and the Chamber of Deputies, to update legislation and to collect and provide all citizens with the information gathered from multiple sources. The Library provides knowledge and information in public policy issues to MP's, and actively collaborates as a link between Parliament and civil society. The Library has a very important role in providing up to date legislation and promoting the comprehension of the laws to all citizens, and provide support to Congress in oversight, legislative representation activities. The Library is responsible of the historical information about the legislative process.

Our role in the initiative will be technical contributing to the discussion of Akoma Ntoso standarization

Christian Sifaqui
Jefe de Sistemas y Servicios de Información en Red
Biblioteca del Congreso Nacional de Chile

Valparaíso, 28 September 2011

Biblioteca del Congreso Nacional de Chile

To: The Legal CML-OASIS Steering Committee
From: MIS manager, Parliament of South Africa

Letter of interests: Participation in the LegalRuleML initiative

On behalf of the Parliament of South Africa, I herewith confirm our interest to participate in the above mentioned LegalRuleML initiative and in particular to open a specific Technical Committee inside of the LegalXML member section.

My institution is active in the field of the above mentioned Akoma Ntoso community.

In particular the mission of the Parliament of South Africa is: "As the freely elected representatives of the people of South Africa, Parliament's mission is to represent and to act as the voice of the people, in fulfilling its constitutional functions of passing laws and overseeing executive action."

Our role in the initiative will be to assist in advancing an overall industry standard information reference framework to improve collaboration between Parliaments and contributing to the Akoma Ntoso standardization

JJ Pieterse
(MIS Manager)

Cape Town, 2011/09/30

⟨Xcential/⟩

841 Second Street
Encinitas, CA 92024
Voice: 760-632-1400
Fax: 760-632-1404

September 28, 2011

To: LegalXML-OASIS Steering Committee

Letter of Interest

To whom it may concern,

On behalf of the Xcential Group LLC, we herewith confirm our interest to participate in the Akoma Ntoso initiative and in particular to open a specific Technical Committee for a legislative schema inside of the LegalXML member section.

Our business has been active in the field of legal informatics since 2002. In particular, our mission is to provide legislative solutions based on XML and publishing technologies. We developed the XML schema in use by the State of California as well as their bill drafting and publishing solutions. Our products have been in production use by the California Office of the Legislative Counsel since 2004. In addition, we developed a second XML schema for our public facing bill tracking application for presenting and analyzing California bills by the public at large.

We have been working with Akoma Ntoso since 2010 and have integrated Akoma Ntoso into a technology prototype at http://legix.info. This site publishes all available California Bills and Statutes in Akoma Ntoso.

Our role in the initiative will be technical, contributing to the discussion of Akoma Ntoso standardization.

Bradlee Chang & Grant Vergottini
Owners, Xcential Group, LLC

Letter of interests

To: LegalXML-OASIS Steering Committee

Subject: **Akoma Ntoso TC Proposal**

On behalf of the Department of Electronics, Telecommunications and Informatics of University of Aveiro, Aveiro, Portugal, I herewith confirm our interest to participate in the above metioned LegalXML intiative and in particular to open a specific Technical Committee inside of the LegalXML member section.

My institution is active in the field and in the Akoma Ntoso community since 2011.

We have been working with the Portuguese Parliament since 1999 and with Ministry of Justice of Cape Vert since 2009.

Our role in the initiative will be a technical role and research supervision to thesis and research works, contributing to the Akoma Ntoso Standard.

Aveiro, 2011-09-29

Professor Joaquim Arnaldo Martins
(Head of Department)