

**Nairobi Declaration on Fostering a Connected and Empowered Africa Joint
Statement by African Digital and Tech Ministers**

We, the Ministers in charge of Technology in Africa, having convened at the Ministerial Exclusive Round Table Forum at Connected Africa 2024 under the leadership of CS Eliud Owalo, have deliberated extensively on harnessing the potential of digital technologies for the advancement of our continent.

We have engaged in dialogue with esteemed representatives from across our diverse continent, as well as guest countries and international organizations such as the African Union, the United Nations, and the World Bank Group, to forge a path towards a more interconnected Africa.

We reaffirm our dedication, as outlined in our meetings, to propel Africa into a digital future marked by equality, inclusion, sustainability, transparency, accountability, diversity, and respect for human rights, including privacy.

Emphasizing the centrality of digitalization and digital infrastructure to modern economies, we pledge to harness digital infrastructure and technologies to drive inclusive economic growth of at least 5% annually within the next decade. We envision Africa as a leading force in the realization of a Society 5.0, integrating technological advancements with human needs.

In pursuit of these goals, we endorse the establishment of new collaborative mechanisms with measurable objectives to advance our shared vision for a digitally empowered Africa by 2030.

Measurable Objectives:

To ensure we are making tangible progress towards a digitally empowered Africa, we have established measurable objectives that will serve as benchmarks for our collective efforts. These objectives focus on two critical areas: expanding internet access and equipping the next generation with the skills needed to thrive in the digital world.

By tracking our progress against these clear metrics, we can hold ourselves accountable and ensure we are on track to achieve our ambitious goals.

1. Increase internet access rates across Africa by 20% within the next five years.
2. Train one million young people in digital skills by 2027 through the capacity-building mechanism.

Implementation Strategies:

To achieve the ambitious goals outlined in this declaration, we must translate vision into action. The key implementation strategies that will guide our collaborative efforts focus on securing the resources and developing the programs necessary to empower Africa's youth and bridge the digital divide.

1. Establish a task force dedicated to identifying and securing funding mechanisms for infrastructure development, exploring public-private partnerships, and fostering innovation in financing models.
2. Develop specific training programs and online learning platforms for the capacity-building mechanism, focusing on in-demand digital skills.

We further acknowledge the need for diversified funding sources to achieve our goals. We will explore:

1. Public-private partnerships
2. International aid
3. Innovative financing mechanisms

We are committed to operationalizing these frameworks and reporting on our progress towards achieving these goals within the next three years, at subsequent ministerial meetings and forums.

To further strengthen this digital transformation, we commit to:

1. **Harmonize Legislation and Regulations on ICT** across Africa to ensure a consistent and predictable regulatory environment that fosters innovation and investment.
2. **Enable Cross-Border Data Transfer** to facilitate trade and information sharing across regional blocs, unlocking the full potential of the digital economy.
3. **Promote Knowledge Sharing on AI through Benchmarking** to enable African nations to develop effective strategies, policies, and frameworks for harnessing the transformative power of Artificial Intelligence.
4. **Harmonize Taxation on ICT** to incentivize investment in the sector, leading to faster infrastructure development and broader access to digital technologies for all citizens.
5. Foster establishment of continental **Digital platforms** to facilitate e-commerce, financial inclusion and other aspects of Africa's digital economy.
6. Collaborate towards ensuring that Africa participates in the manufacture of **semiconductors and affordable digital devices**.
7. **Collaborate on data centres** towards promoting investments in data centre infrastructure and cloud services in Africa so as to propel Africa's digital transformation and innovation.

We are also proud to announce the establishment of the Africa Cybersecurity and AI Council to enhance the continent's capacity and capability to address emerging risks of accelerated digitalization. This council will serve as an advisory entity, driving policies that align with our shared values and developmental goals.

Call to Action:

We call upon all stakeholders to join us in building a digitally empowered Africa for the benefit of all our citizens.

We extend our sincere appreciation to our partners and stakeholders for their expert contributions to our endeavours. We are committed to realizing a prosperous, digitally connected Africa that reflects our shared values.

SIGNED BY:

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