

Report
of
The 11th AfICTA (Virtual) Summit
On
December 14 - 16, 2023
by
AfICTA Secretariat

December 20, 2023

Summit Sponsored By



**BUSINESS
CONSTITUENCY**



CleanDNS



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CHAPTER 1

1.0 About AfICTA

Africa Information & Communication Technologies Alliance - AfICTA is a concerned private sector led alliance of ICT Associations, Multi-national Corporations, Companies, Organisations and individuals in the ICT sector in Africa.

Vision

Our vision is to fulfil the promise of the digital age for everyone in Africa.

Mission

Our mission is to encourage multi-stakeholder dialogue fostering accelerated and ICT enabled development in Africa and the use of cutting-edge innovative technologies including mobile, computing and satellite technologies to achieve an Information society in Africa.

Objectives

1. Organise non-government ICT stakeholders in Africa for effective local and continental advocacy
2. Be the focal point for Africa ICT advocacy in the global digital economy.
3. Promote constant improvement in African digital literacy in collaboration with stakeholders.
4. Create partnerships with the African Union and all the regional economic commissions towards realizing global sustainable development targets for Africa
5. Support effective dialogue between members and policymakers.
6. Mobilise the core leadership of African ICT professionals and experts in the business community, academic and technical community and civil society to be fully engaged in the global Internet Governance multi-stakeholder dialogues.
7. Promote business partnerships between members and their associations' members.
8. Contribute to capacities development by promoting best practices, encouraging regional projects, sharing data (skills, expertise, events, business announcements, exhibitions, seminars),
9. Organize an annual regional summit for knowledge sharing and cross-African advocacy.

CHAPTER 2

2.0 About Summit 2023

The 11th AfICTA Summit was held virtually from Wednesday 14-15 December, 2023 and themed “Transforming Africa’s Economy through Digitalization for Sustainable Development”.

2.1 Overview

In recent years, Africa has made significant progress in the digitalization of its economies, leading to increased economic opportunities and sustainable development. As the wave of the 21st century is gaining momentum, which is undoubtedly an era of digitalization, African countries must keep pace with the rapid changes brought about by technological advancements in areas such as economy, finance, healthcare, education, agriculture, and e-commerce.

As the world becomes increasingly digital, Africa must embrace digital technologies to achieve sustainable development. Smart cities can play a key role in this transformation by using digital solutions to improve the quality of life for citizens. However, cybersecurity is a critical issue that must be addressed to ensure the safety and security of digital infrastructure and users. The responsible use of Artificial Intelligence and other emerging technologies is also essential as much as digital skills acquisition to ensure that all citizens benefit from the digital revolution. The core of Digitalization holds the key to unlocking Africa's full economic potential. By embracing digital technologies and fostering an ecosystem of innovation, the continent can leapfrog into a sustainable future, empowering its people and creating a vibrant, digitally connected economy for the benefit of all.

Despite the progress that has been made, Africa still faces several challenges in its efforts to achieve digital transformation. One major challenge is the lack of a unified digital payment solution across the continent, which makes cross-border transactions more difficult and costly. In addition, the prevalence of cyber-attacks, the lack of infrastructure, and limited digital literacy pose significant barriers to progress. However, with the right policies and investments, these challenges can be overcome and Africa's digital [Read more](#)

2.2 Summit Webpage

<https://aficta.africa/summits/summit-2023>

2.3 Programme Outline

<https://aficta.africa/summits/summit-2023#agenda>

CHAPTER 3

3.0 The Summit Report

3.1.0 Introduction

The 11th AfICTA Summit Day-1 started as planned with the Opening Speech delivered by the Chair of AfICTA, **Mr. Thabo Mashegoane**. In his opening remarks he mentioned how nations of the continent still find it difficult to benefit from the dividends of the digital age and how most African nations fail to measure up with achieving the global standards such as the Sustainable Development Goals - SDGs. He however stressed the need for a quick intervention as the deadline is eminent. In his statement, Africa is so fortunate to have a innovative youthful population and technology at its disposal, the resources he mentioned to be an enabler for the continent to fully leapfrog into the digital era.

He explained how technology has helped improve various aspect of our lives ranging from healthcare, finance, agriculture, education, communication etc., and added that the fact that the meeting could hold virtually and yet people from different part of the world could join is another innovation. Finally he encouraged that everyone maximizes the opportunities to rob minds and ensure all recommendations from the summit are transformed into an actionable form. His appreciation went to the summit organizing committee, sponsors, facilitators, panelists, and the audience for the critical role they have played so far.

We welcomed the Comperes, **Dr. Adebunmi Adeola Akinbo**, Founder & President, DNS Africa Media and Communications who welcomed everyone and provided a formal introduction to the 11th AfICTA Summit in terms of the theme, date, the rules of engagement and the list of sponsors. He would serve as the master of summit for the two days. Dr. Akinbo ushered in Ms. Ulandi Exner, the Chair of the Summit Committee for her opening remarks.

Ms. Ulandi Exner, AfICTA Vice Chair, Southern Africa expressed her excitement to have attendees from all over the world with decision makers, regulators and policy makers sitting together in one room of 11th AfICTA Summit to chart way forward on how digital technologies can transform Africa's economy and society. She appreciated all the sponsors of the event, **ICANN - Africa** (Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers), **Business Constituency of ICANN**, **Clean DNS**, **Afenoid Enterprise Ltd** and **Kontemporary Konsulting**. Finally, he thanked all the resource persons, the attendees, the committee incharge of the summit and the secretariat for the thorough job done.

Still at the opening ceremony, we welcomed the Sponsored Keynote Speeches from all our sponsors as rightly mentioned above.

3.1.1 Summit Sub Themes

- The Effect of Technology on the Environment and Climate Change
- Sustainable Urban Planning and Smart Cities, Challenges and Prospects
- Artificial Intelligence & Ethics, and their Responsible Use
- ICANN -BC Outreach to African Business Owners
- Cyber Security Strategies for Emerging Technologies
- Digital Skills & Bridging the Digital Divide

3.2.0 Day 1

3.2.1 Keynote Session [Watch the Recording here](#)

Mr. Mason S. Cole, ICANN-BC Chair



As a proud sponsor of the Summit, Mr. Mason Cole appreciated AfICTA for the opportunity to interface with businesses and the decision makers in Africa and made a short presentation to recount on the activities of the Business Constituency - BC, its responsibility to businesses and their strategic plans for the year 2024. He gave a brief background information about BC-ICANN membership base which consists of over 80 good-standing members from all over the world and that the BC represents providers of business, services and e-commerce in an effort to promote consumer confidence and interest on the Internet.

He further highlighted the role of the BC to businesses as 1. Focus on issues important to business users of the Internet, their customers, and the companies that keep us online 2. Focus on matters of building consumer trust and confidence in the digital world and as well highlighted the constituency's priorities for the coming year to be 1. Ensuring the Usability of the RDRS - Registration Data Request Service, a new system put in place to legitimately access the WHOIS Database 2. The need to develop more tools to deal with DNS Abuse, an issues the BC-ICANN has been very active on for the past 5 years. Other items of priorities includes gTLD expansion, NIS2, Fixing" WHOIS.

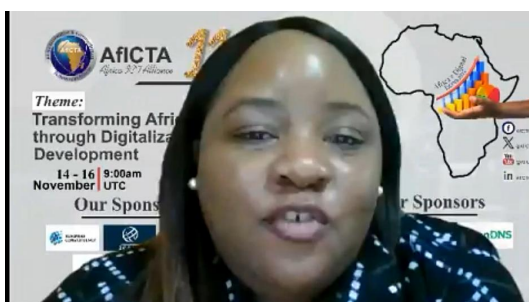
He concluded the presentation by mentioning some aspects where BC-ICANN needs the cooperation of African Businesses as 1. Share with one another objectives for progress on policy and other matters through out 2024, 2. Establish and foster a productive relationship, 3. Build relationships in Africa that contribute to DNS stability and safe e-commerce, 4. Insist on a strong ICANN compliance function 5. Bring African perspective to BC outreaches.

Mr. Mike Akana, Business Development Manager, CleanDNS



Mr. Mike Akana, Business Development Manager, Clean DNS lauded BC-ICANN's interventions that are aimed at ensuring drastic reduction to DNS abuse. He hence complemented the discussion by also mentioning some of their digital tools in CleanDNS which is been deployed and utilized by industry players in Africa for the same purpose. He said there are only handful of solutions to curtailing DNS abuse on the continent. However, CleanDNS has a digital tools that allows easy reporting of DNS abuse cases

Dotshima Dapo Oyewole, Business relationship manager, Afenoid Enterprise

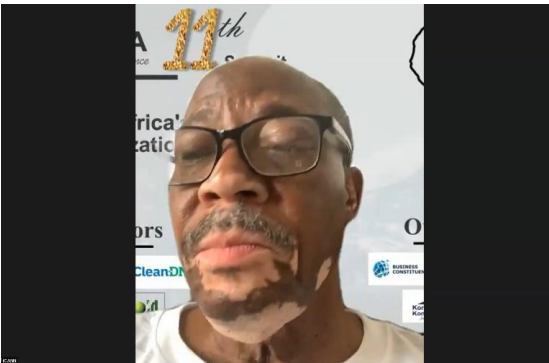


As the Silver Sponsor of the Summit, she appreciated AfICTA for the platform and as well congratulated the planning committee for a successful summit ahead. She gave an insight of the services provided by Afenoid to individuals, businesses and other actors in the ecosystem and mentioned all their partners that

help them in delivering a cutting-edge innovative solution such that the promise of the digital age is delivered to everyone in Africa. Ms. Dotshima aligns with the theme of the summit “*Transforming Africa’s Economy through Digitalization for Sustainable Development*” and that digitalization provides a platform for inclusive economic growth by breaking down traditional barriers of entry and providing support for startups and small businesses to scale and as well access the global audience. Digitalization is the tool that helps with job creation, and fast-track growth and economic prosperity of nations.

She concluded by mentioning their partners PCI, PCB, ISACA... etc and wished AfICTA a successful summit and deliberation.

Mr. Pierre Dandjinou, Vice President, Stakeholder Engagement ICANN Africa



Mr. Pierre Dandjinou appreciated the long standing relationship the ICANN Africa has built with AfICTA and provided the audience with the background information on what ICANN is responsible for such as the coordination of the unique identifiers of the Internet, domain names, IP address, root servers and policy development issues around the unique identifiers. He agreed with other speakers on the crucial need to discuss the theme of the summit and that it is very relevant to Africa.

Furthermore he opined that technologies has greatly impacted our way of life with Internet serving as an enabler to its automation. He however expressed his dissatisfaction to the fact that there are digital divides across various demography, most especially the gender parity. He said Africa is under utilizing its humongous resources through marginalization and that solutions should be proffered to manage the situation.

As part of ICANN Africa’s roles, he also spoke expressly on digital infrastructure which plays a pivotal role to accessibility. He shared with the audience what ICANN Africa is doing and their strategy which was developed by Africans to empower Africans in terms of DNS Abuse, capacity development, operation of DNS and security. He further touched on how it is important to ensure the inclusiveness of the Internet. In is submission he said “out of over 1 million domains registered on the continent, over 200,000 comes from South Africa alone and that in terms of IPV6 adoption, it’s only Africa that hasn’t completed its allotted poll”. He encouraged for more push for the adoption of national digital identities such as .ng, .na, .ks etc...

His other area of concentration included issues around IXP - Internet Exchange Point, Universal Acceptance and Internationalized domain names. He finally called out for collaboration with AfICTA and Africa businesses and as well seek for their participation in ICANN meetings for cross-fertilization of ideas.

The keynote session was concluded with a vote thanks from Dr. Jimson Olufuye, the Founder, fm. Chair and Chair of the Advisory Council AfICTA, who appreciated all the keynote speakers for their excellent speeches and for partnering with the 11th AfICTA Summit.

3.2.2 First Panel Session

<p>The Effect of Technology on the Environment and Climate Change</p> <p>Watch the Recording here</p>	<p>Moderated by Dr. Adebunmi Adeola Akinbo, Founder & President, DNS Africa Media and Communications</p> <p>Speakers:</p>
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	<p>Mr. Waddah Fadul, Founder and President, Institute of Tomorrow</p> <p>Ms. Senele Goba, Founder, 4IR Innovation and Founder, Ososayensi Education Advancement</p> <p>Mr. Maxwell Beganim, Climate Advisor to Pan African Youth Union Secretary General</p> <p>Dr. ELSayed Sabry M., CEO / ECCSCO consultancy firm for Environment, Climate change and Sustainability</p>
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Introduction:

Dr. Adebunmi Adeola Akinbo, in the absence of the session moderator took up the responsibility of opening the session with the introduction of all the seasoned speakers. He also provided an insight into what is expected from the session ranging from 1. The potential of new technologies to mitigate the effects of climate change, 2. The impact of technology on resource consumption, 3. The challenges and opportunities of digitalization for climate change action and 4. The role of the technology industry in addressing climate change.



Ms. Senele Goba, is the Founder, 4IR Innovation and Founder, Ososayensi Education Advancement and also the president of the Institute of IT Professionals South Africa - IITPSA and Chairperson of the board. In her submission, Ms. Senele mentioned how the session topic was never of great concern to Africa until very recent. She shared her experience as an educationist who works among children and how she's been able to

create awareness among them to understand the positive impact of technology and its challenges. She also made mention of the work being done by the IITPSA as a professional body to ensure technology delivers more of its dividends rather than the adverse effect. She opined that to curtail the negative impact of the technologies in our society and its effect to the global climatic degradation, there has to be more campaigns and awareness to stop the indiscriminate dumping of electronic waste.

She recommended that e-waste must be properly and ethically managed and government with the support of other relevant and concerned group should ensure there are digital tools to put the effects on check also the creation of depots with easy access for people to recycle their e-wastes with some profits.

Mr. Waddah Fadul, is the Founder and President, Institute of Tomorrow who is also a transformation consultant. His focus was on the potential of the new technologies to mitigate the effects of the climate change. He firstly examined the correlation between the technologies and our environment. In his submission, technology has greatly enhance our livelihood (from transportation, communication, health etc) and with its wide spread and acceptance, it's obvious that technology is here to stay. Although it is of great impact to the imbalance climatic situation and contribute to the green houses emission which has a huge negative impact on our well-being, food supply, land, water and weather. He also recounted that the tech companies are known to emit the substantial amount of the carbon mono-oxide - CO that brings about great threat to our planet, hence, he made a presentation from which a solution called PRAAS was introduced.

PRAAS is a solution that helps to cushion the effect of climatic change in the aspect of land degradation and desertification. As it is well known in Africa, there is a huge conflict between the farmers and herders and the conflict keeps getting brutal on daily basis due to competition for the scarce resources such as land and water. Sudan, Lake Chad and Nigeria are the countries that are

more impacted by this in Africa and it has led to loss of lives, properties and displacement of people from their ancestral lands. The situation is also of great impact on the economic advancement of Africa as it becomes scary to carry out business in the areas where it is more prevalent. In conclusion, Mr. Waddah lead us on how the technology helps to provide enough amount of data to predict the possibility of conflict ahead of time.



Mr. Maxwell Beganim, Climate Advisor to Pan African Youth Union Secretary General, he spoke expressly on the opportunities and the challenges that the technologies has on our climate. Also in his submission, he identified triple plenary crises, such as climate change, pollution and biodiversity law. He said the issue of climate change has become more important as the change is now happening very fast due to anthropogenic emission, the emission that is

caused by human-induced activities.

In his submission, the Global North contributes the huge chunk of the global emission while we in the global South however face and leave with the consequences. He said although Africa and the middle east share in the emission as our little activities like sending mails, chatting on Whatsapp/Facebook, powering our enterprises with fossil fuel, indiscriminate disposal of e-wastes etc. also are contributing factors to the emission. Although there was a study that shows that Africa is a dumping ground for electronic wastes from Europe and America, recording a skyrocketed increase in e-waste annually.

He sought for more people's involvement and the need to start making a lot of conversations and sharing of opinions in line with how to liberate our environment from the damages cause by the climatic change. He believes there are two major approaches to responding to the already escalated climatic situation, 1. Mitigation and 2. Adaptation. He said ability to leave with the problem while it's been solved is termed adaption and mitigation is putting all efforts into resolving and ensuring there is no re-occurrence of the situation.



Dr. ELSayed Sabry M., CEO / ECCSCO consultancy firm for Environment, Climate change and Sustainability. Dr. Sabry who made a presentation titled "Technology Impact on Environment and Climate Change" categorized pollution into two, 1. Air pollution and 2. Water pollution. He also further distinguished between the Environmental Pollution and Climate Change while mentioning few of the green technologies such as renewable energy, smart technology, electric vehicles and DAC sensors as options that could be adopted to reduce the carbon emission.

There are important statistics shared by Dr. ELSayed Sabry regarding efforts made to reduce the emission ranging from the innovations that enables us to convert renewable energy such as wind and sunlight into electricity or heat by many ways as solar panels. He said in 2015 coal was the second most used source of electricity but now renewable energy produce more than 20% of electricity in the UK and UN targets to increase it to more than 40% by 2030. Additionally, the cost of renewable energy is dropping as the government increases their investment in it for example in Australia, the rooftop solar panels installment has increased from 4600 households to 1.6 million between 2007 and 2017.

3.2.3 Second Panel Session

<p>Sustainable Urban Planning and Smart Cities, Challenges and Prospects</p> <p>Watch the Recording here</p>	<p>Moderated by Mr. Paul Rowney, AfICTA Deputy Chair</p> <p>Speakers:</p> <p>Dr. Isa Ibrahim Jalo, The Chief Executive Officer, Abuja Geographic Information System (AGIS)</p> <p>Mr. Aro Leonard, Broadcast Media, Development Communication, and Social Transformation Expert</p> <p>Ms. Cristina Bueti, Counsellor on Metaverse & Smart Cities, International Telecommunication Union, ITU, Geneva</p> <p>Ms. Melissa Sassi, Partner & Chief Evangelist, P3 Network</p>
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Introduction: The moderator, **Mr. Paul Rowney**, Deputy Chair, AfICTA commenced the session by inviting all his session speakers with brief introduction as above. Mr. Paul set the direction for the session, speakers were given time to give their short interventions and then policy questions were treated accordingly.



Dr. Isa Jalo, (Rtd.) The former Chief Executive Officer, Abuja Geographic Information System (AGIS) shared a paper on the topic of the session with in-depth analysis of Urbanization Trends, a speculation of how 60% of our population would be living in the cities by the year 2030. According to him this is an odd trajectory given the fact that rural dwellers have from time in memorial constitute the higher percentage of the entire

population with critical role of providing raw materials for all production in the cities. He hence said with the rapid growth of the population in the cities, measures must be put in place to ensure the cities are smart and green to manage the influx and ensure there is no negative impact on the climate. In his presentation, Dr. Isa Jalo emphasized on the competition that already exist in the urban area as people fight to survive for little resources and social amenities available.

Other aspects he provided intervention is on waste management, congestion management, improved service delivery and reduction in cost of service. All these require the utilization of cutting-edge technology and smart infrastructure to ensure the city is safe and conducive for the dwellers. According to ITU, smart city is an innovative city that uses ICT's and other means to improve quality of life, efficiency of urban operation and services, competitiveness and it must meet the present and future generations requirements. He also added that the fact that Africa is a developing continent positioned us rightly such that as we develop, we ensure the usage of smart infrastructure to manage electricity, water and those infrastructure should be responsive to all the needs of the populace so as to leapfrog us into being a smart economy.



Mr. Aro Leonard, Broadcast Media, Development Communication, and Social Transformation Expert, in his intervention, he explained what it takes for a city to be smart, citing Abuja as an example. He mentioned

how Abuja was named the first city in the world where roads were constructed before houses were built, he said many other amenities and infrastructures followed suit, making Abuja the most planned city in the world as at 1990. Although this modern day technologies weren't available by then, yet Abuja was a smart city since smart city is defined as a city or place that is efficient and self sustaining.

Mr. Leonard said in our efforts to ensure our cities are smart in the modern day definition, there would be need to adapt technologies from the western world due to our limited solutions, hence, we must be sure that we adapt them such that they meet our situations and not generate further bottlenecks for us in the nearest future. Furthermore, he defines smart cities as cities that are remotely controllable either from your phone, laptop or other related devices and that with the advent of the new technologies like robotics, artificial intelligence, big data, block-chain etc, there are huge data being generated. He however raised the issue of security and usage as major concerns regarding the data being generated.

Mr. Aro Leonard emphasized purposeful deployment of technologies to the users' and cities' advantage. He disagreed on the reality that a city is smart only when expensive technologies are deployed, city's smartness should be tailored towards affordability, situation and/or people's primary needs.



Ms. Cristina Bueti, Counsellor on Metaverse & Smart Cities, International Telecommunication Union, ITU, Geneva, agreed with the previous speakers on their interventions most especially the need to ensure the adaptation of technologies to Africa's unique challenges. She engaged on the opportunities that are abound for Africa in terms of smart cities in the digital and information society. She said smart cities are found not

only in the developed world but also in developing nations. Ms. Cristina said the utilization of smart technologies for evaluation and progress monitoring brings transparency, responsibility and accountability. She touched on the importance of getting it right with the legislation and policies formulation and the need to engage these technologies to set realistic targets, explore how data, technologies and tools could be engaged to have an informed decisions, city-centric engagement and solutions.

Ms. Cristina also advised that technology available to the people should be affordable and should be tailored to their basic needs and that Africa can leverage on the achievement of the developed world and learn from their mistakes. Additionally, she mentioned the need to leverage international standards to ensure data that are being gathered are not left in silos and positively utilized toward cities that are safe, secure, sustainable and seamless. She enlisted the role of ITU and their interventions over the years in helping nations of the world achieve their deserved city transformation.



Dr. Melissa Sassi, Partner & Chief Evangelist, P3 Network, presented a document that expressly examined the steps needed to take towards achieving a scalable and sustained smart city. She stated that tech-enabled, sustainable and efficient cities focused on improving how people live, work and play. Therefore, she touched

on Affordable Housing, viable employment, Land Management, Waste management, Water & Utilities, Telecommunications, Access to Government Services etc as some of the factors to consider when planning a sustainable smart cities.

Dr. Melissa answered the question “How do we ensure the smart cities transformative agenda protects the data of humans inline with law enforcement directives?” She said cities around the world should not only be concerned about how the law enforcement agencies protects its citizens data but also how the citizens ensure it is protected from challenging situations that could arise due to privacy and policy concerns. She supports the need for the provision of technical solutions to ensure bad actors do not access citizens’ information.

Third Session (Artificial Intelligence & Ethics, and their Responsible Use)

Artificial Intelligence & Ethics, and their Responsible Use Watch the Recording here	Moderated Ms. Ulandi Exner , Chair and Vice Chair, Southern Africa, Africa ICT Alliance - AfICTA Speakers: Dr. Robinson Tombari Sibe , Co-Founder, CEO & Lead Forensic Examiner Digital Footprints Nig. Ltd Dr. Mafuwafuwane , Practice Manager Security Solutions & Strategy Logicalis SA Dr. David Njoga , Head of Cybersecurity Policy and Standards, National computer and cybercrimes Coordination Committee, ISACA.
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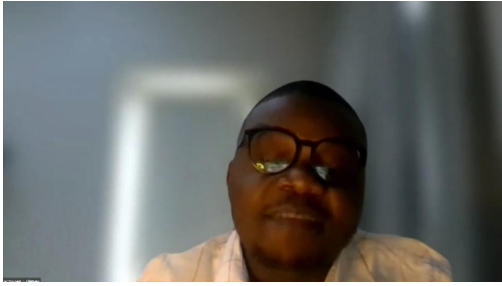
Introduction



Ms. Ulandi Exner provided a historical overview of AI, spanning over 60 years, emphasizing its integration into daily life. She highlighted AI's pivotal role in predicting outcomes, automating tasks, solving complex problems, and assisting human life. After her introduction, she introduced the panelists, commencing the session and allowing them to discuss AI's role and ethical considerations.

The panelists unanimously emphasized the rapid evolution of AI across diverse sectors, particularly its recent advancements and reliance on data quality for generative AI. They collectively stressed the importance of responsible AI usage, emphasizing the need to address bias and privacy risks to ensure ethical considerations guide AI's growth. Additionally, there was a consensus regarding the swift pace of digital transformation in Africa and the increasing demand for tech solutions due to the emergence of AI.

Policy Question: *What do you think are the ethical implications of artificial technology and how do we ensure the human dignity and privacy is preserved within these flooding of generative AI?*



Dr. Mafuwafuwane focused on AI's ethical implications, specifically regarding data control, security, and privacy risks due to extensive data handling. He emphasized the importance of accountability in machine interactions, leveraging data control to uphold human dignity, and the need for ethically appropriate information in AI tools.

Q & A: Who drives the regulation in terms of responsible use of AI?

Dr. Mafuwafuwane highlighted existing laws promoting human rights in guiding responsible AI use, citing the Cybercrime Act as a potential avenue to address online human rights violations.

Regarding AI in academia, panelists emphasized embracing AI as a tool, advocating aligning educational systems with AI advancements. They stressed adapting curricula and teaching methods to integrate AI concepts and skills, ensuring students are prepared for AI's evolving landscape in academia and future careers.

Q & A Can you actually rely on law to determine the negative effects of generative AI?



Dr. Robinson Tombari stressed the challenge of relying solely on law to address negative impacts of AI, emphasizing the need for informal regulations and government-private sector collaboration. He highlighted AI testing's importance to safety, psychological well-being, and privacy adherence as crucial factors influencing human behavior. Dr. Tombari emphasized the need for evolving laws and

collaborative efforts between policymakers, technologists, and ethicists for comprehensive AI regulation.

Additionally, Dr. Tombari underscored AI's potential for job creation in Africa, emphasizing the continent's readiness for this transition. He emphasized leveraging Africa's data resources, proactive preparation, efficient market models, and strategic planning to harness AI's benefits.

Q & A: How can Africa best ready itself for AI adoption?

Dr. Robinson Tombari Sibe emphasized the significance of education and initial awareness initiatives. He stressed the importance of crafting awareness campaigns tailored to Africa's diverse linguistic and cultural landscape. Additionally, he highlighted the necessity of revising curricula at all educational levels, starting from foundational education to tertiary institutions.



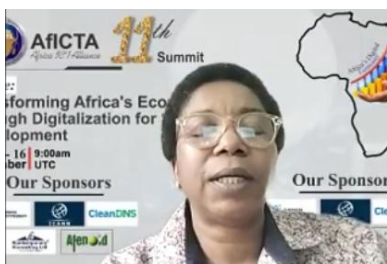
Questioned about how Artificial Intelligence can advance the African economy for sustainable development, **Dr. David Ujoga** highlighted Africa's progress in smart growth initiatives. He referenced numerous projects such as autonomous vehicles, renewable energy initiatives, and the utilization of big data for predictive climate analysis, all of which are underway in Africa. Additionally, companies in the

manufacturing sector are employing AI to enhance operational efficiency.

Fourth Session

ICANN OUTREACH SESSION	Moderated by Ms. Arinola Akinyemi , CEO DigiSphere Investments Ltd
<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ The role of new gTLDs in promoting Innovation and Competition➤ Outreach to African Businesses	Speakers: Dr. Jimson Olufuye , CEO, Kontemporary Konsulting Ltd & Founder/fmr Chair, AfICTA; Mr. Lucky Masilela Chief Executive Officer ZA Central Registry NPC, Mr. Bob Ochieng , Senior Director, TLD Program, ICANN Africa, Mr. Yaovi Atohou n, Director, Stakeholder Engagement and Operations, ICANN Africa
Watch the Recording here	

Introduction



The BC session led by **Ms. Arinola Akinyemi**, CEO of DigiSphere Nigeria Ltd and a member of the Business Constituency, aimed to engage African business owners and highlight the potential of new gTLDs in fostering innovation and competition. The session emphasized the transformative power of these domain extensions in reshaping the digital landscape for African businesses. Experts on the panel discussed leveraging new

gTLDs to revolutionize online brands, enhance market presence, and promote healthy competition, offering valuable insights to stimulate growth and competitiveness within the African business sphere.



Bob Ochieng discussed the inception of new gTLD phases within ICANN since 2015, emphasizing Universal Acceptance and Internationalized Domain Names for comprehensive Internet access and communication. He highlighted the adaptability of domains like .org, .com, and .net to diverse scripts, promoting inclusivity in Internet access. Ochieng stressed that the new gTLD applications aim to enhance

diversity, competition, and utility in the Domain Name System by accommodating various languages, cultures, and scripts for a more inclusive digital landscape. Additionally, he underscored the new gTLD program's diverse opportunities in tailoring domain extensions to different audiences, fostering a more inclusive Internet presence across various entities, such as businesses, brands, communities, cultures, and governments.

Policy Question One: How can stakeholders in the African business community collaborate to tackle the challenges related to affordable access to new gTLDs and their associated services?

Bob Ochieng highlighted the Applicant Support Program's goal for a revenue-neutral approach in assisting applicants by offering up to an 85% discount on application expenses. He suggested innovative funding sources, proposing a pooled fund within the business community to create an investment portfolio accessible to African applicants, aiding them in securing additional funding for new gTLDs.



Mr. Lucky Masilela addressed regulatory challenges and opportunities regarding new gTLD in Africa, emphasizing the need for African business owners' active engagement in ICANN's policy-making process. He stressed the importance of incorporating African perspectives into ICANN's Applicant Guidebook and highlighted the necessity of Africa's active participation

and positioning in the ongoing stages of new gTLD development, implementation, and policy review. Masilela emphasized strategically positioning Africa within the implementation phase for the continent's benefit.



Dr. Jimson Olufuye addressed how African governments could promote new gTLD adoption and support youth innovation. He highlighted the significant gap between population and domain numbers in Africa, stressing the need for government intervention and private sector advocacy for digitalization and transparency in domain registration. Dr. Olufuye suggested a review of past rounds and proposed new

domain extensions for various communities, emphasizing the importance of grants for these initiatives. He recommended increased advocacy groups and NGOs engaging governments and stakeholders to push for policy advocacy and funding for new gTLDs.

Participants inquired about financial support for registration assistance and permanent establishment/taxation implications during new gTLD implementation.

Pierre stressed the need for collective action in Africa to benefit from support, emphasizing compliance with applicants' guidebook guidelines. He recommended AfICTA strategize to raise awareness and facilitate regional support access.

Panelists highlighted ICANN's focus on upcoming opportunities in new gTLDs, stressing Africa's readiness to empower businesses, enhance competitiveness, and foster innovation. The Business Constituency (BC) encouraged collaborative efforts for African businesses to leverage new gTLD potential. ICANN-BC pledged unwavering support and urged proactive engagement for policies aligned with African enterprise needs.

AfICTA representatives urged African business owners' active participation in new gTLD trends, emphasizing engagement with the Business Constituency (BC) as advocates within ICANN. The BC serves as a platform prioritizing and representing business interests, aiming to ensure their inclusion in this evolving landscape. This session aimed to familiarize attendees with BC engagement benefits and gTLD evolution.

Fifth Panel Session

<p>Cyber Security Strategies for Emerging Technologies</p> <p>Watch the Recording here</p>	<p>Moderated by</p> <p>Mr. Yusuph Kileo, Cybersecurity Expert, Tanzania</p> <p>Speakers:</p> <p>Amb. Segun Olugbile CEO Araba Technologies Ltd, Nigeria</p> <p>Mr. Terence Fogarty Director/Consultant, carbon Vector, South Africa</p> <p>Mr. Samuel Omale represented the CEO Afenoid Enterprise Ltd</p>
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Introduction



Mr. Yusuph Kileo, a Cybersecurity Expert from Tanzania, initiated the cybersecurity session by introducing panelists and discussing emerging technologies' impact on cybersecurity. The session explored challenges posed by technological advancements like machine learning and the Internet of Things (IoT). Despite their transformative potential, increasing cybercriminal activities causing business shutdowns were identified as a significant threat requiring urgent resolution.

Policy Question One: What are the challenges and opportunities in the emerging technologies in cybersecurity?



Mr. Samuel Omale, representing Afenoid Enterprise in Nigeria, highlighted the transformative impact of key innovations like Artificial Intelligence (AI), the Internet of Things (IoT), and Machine Learning on global technology. He emphasized their pervasive influence across businesses and households, presenting various opportunities while addressing ethical concerns regarding job displacement and biases in AI. He also highlighted security and privacy challenges like breaches, cyberattacks, and unauthorized data access. Mr. Omale stressed the need for regulatory frameworks and emphasized the importance of interoperability among these technologies for seamless communication. He summarized how these innovations simplify life amidst ethical and technological challenges.

Policy Question Two: The challenge of insufficient awareness programs and a limited skill set to combat cybersecurity threats remains prevalent. How can we significantly improve our efforts to bolster cybersecurity in our countries and organizations?

Mr. Samuel Omale emphasized the need for ethical policies in technology, advocating interdisciplinary collaboration and skilled individuals' involvement. He stressed regular critical assessments and government investment in education for skilled professionals, referencing Nigeria's innovation initiatives.

Policy Question Three: In many African countries, safeguarding data, financial assets, and

critical infrastructure has emerged as a significant cybersecurity challenge. For organizations facing data loss issues, what are the evident shortcomings or aspects where we might be falling short or not adequately addressing these concerns?



Mr. Terence Forgarty emphasized leveraging technology to address cybersecurity challenges in Africa, citing factors like inadequate infrastructure, limited access, skill gaps, and evolving threats. He advocated for strategic investments in cybersecurity infrastructure, capacity building, awareness programs, and public-private collaborations. His multifaceted approach included investing in advanced cybersecurity

infrastructure, developing skilled professionals, conducting awareness campaigns, and fostering collaborations and partnerships for sharing knowledge and resources in cybersecurity.

Policy Question Four: Amid ongoing discussions surrounding encryption and blockchain, particularly regarding cryptocurrencies, there's a contentious debate in African nations about whether to permit bitcoins or digital currencies as official transaction methods. Concerns have arisen regarding security challenges, criminal exploitation of technology, and system manipulation. What advice can you offer regarding control measures in this context?

Mr. Terence Forgharty recommends robust control measures for cryptocurrencies in African countries: Establish clear regulatory frameworks, implement stringent security measures, promote education, foster collaboration among stakeholders, and balance innovation with regulation to ensure safe and responsible usage.

Policy Question Four: What measures can countries adopt to formulate effective cybersecurity policies that bolster national, organizational, and individual security against cyber threats? As numerous nations grapple with challenges in this domain, how can countries further improve their cybersecurity policies to enhance security postures at various levels?



Ambassador Segun Olugbile stressed aligning cybersecurity policies with Africa's unique needs. He emphasized focusing on what Africa can control in technology, concentrating on skill development, innovation ecosystems in universities, and addressing specific challenges like poverty and insecurity. Olugbile advocated integrating emerging technologies, especially AI, into everyday applications for Africa's inward-looking transformation, shaping a governance

framework aligned with the continent's goals.

Ambassador Segun highlighted the importance of comprehensive strategies for governing data and integrating cybersecurity to address social issues. He proposed creating a cybersecurity industry for learning and wealth generation, citing ISOC's initiatives. He recommended AfICTA's involvement in securing gTLDs and leading strategy development at the African Union level, focusing on business empowerment. Olugbile also emphasized the need to enhance technical and software skills in Africa.

Audience Comment: **Dr. Jimson Olufuye** highlighted the disparity between Africa's position in technological evolution and the rest of the world, stressing that while some regions have progressed into the forth industrial revolution, Africa is still grappling with the first. He pointed out the importance of adopting governance frameworks, citing examples like the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) in Europe and the Malabo Convention from the African Union (AU). He emphasized that only 15 out of 55 African countries have ratified the Malabo Convention, indicating a slow pace of adoption.

Dr. Jimson also mentioned the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) Model Law on Cybersecurity, underscoring the need for countries to adopt cybersecurity policies and strategies. He urged policymakers to take security seriously, citing a UN study that correlates security measures with wealth preservation and reduced losses. He highlighted that a 10% increase in maturity level in security can lead to a considerable rise in GDP per capita. Additionally, he noted that increased Internet penetration correlates with enhanced GDP per capita, emphasizing the importance of digitalization policies in driving economic prosperity. Despite existing digitalization policies in Nigeria, he highlighted the need for a more robust focus on cybersecurity.

Sixth Session (Digital skills and Bridging the Digital divide)

Digital skills and Bridging the Digital divide	<p>Moderated by:</p> <p>Dr. Wunmi Hassan, President/CEO, High Tech Centre for Nigerian Women and Youths</p> <p>Speakers:</p> <p>Dr. Melissa Sassi, Partner & Chief Evangelist, P3 Network</p> <p>Mr. Paul Rowney, Former AfICTA Deputy Chair</p> <p>Mr. Abimbola Abioye, Group Managing Director, Fintrak Software</p> <p>Ms. Rachael Shitanda, Council Member, Computer Society of Kenya & Chair Policy Formulation & Engagement Cmtte.</p> <p>Mr. Admire Gwanzura, Non-Executive Directors & Immediate Past President of the Institute of IT Professionals South Africa</p> <p>Mr. Athanase Bahizire, IT Expert and co-Founder, Youth IGF DR Congo</p>
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Policy Question:What strategies can be implemented to narrow the gender gap in digital skills across different divides?

Dr. Melissa Sassi emphasized the gender gap in the tech industry, especially in underserved regions like the global south. She highlighted the importance of addressing this gap and promoting digital creativity to empower youth. Sassi stressed the need to democratize access to technology opportunities for equal benefits across all segments of society.

Mr. Paul Rowney highlighted that the digital divide persists due to regulatory issues, complexity in approaches, and challenges beyond technology limitations. He stressed the importance of digital skills for youth, noted funding gaps, and highlighted challenges with computer literacy in Africa. Rowney emphasized the need to move beyond content consumption, pointing out

infrastructure and connectivity issues in both rural and urban areas as significant barriers to bridging the digital divide.

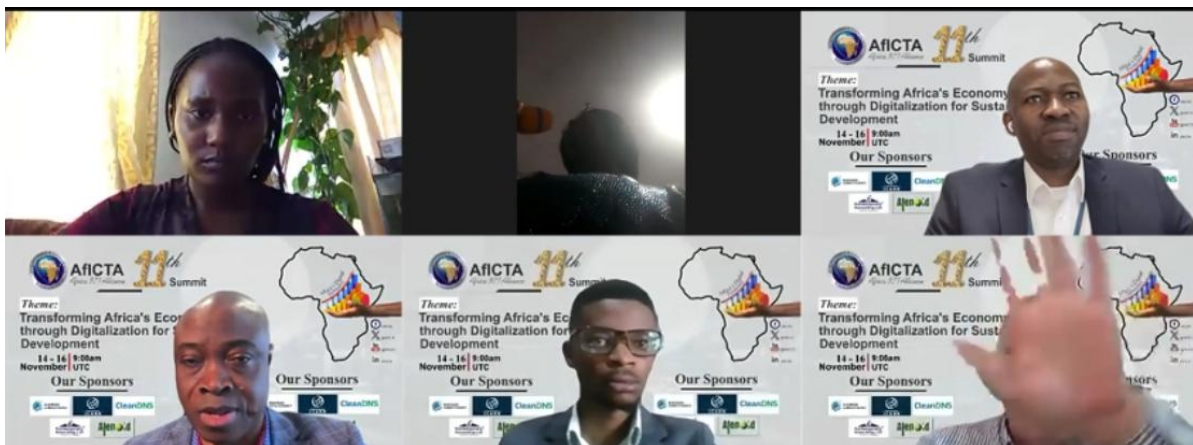
Mr. Bimbo Abioye, GMD Fintrak, Nigeria, defined digital literacy as a comprehensive set of skills beyond mere technology access. He highlighted factors contributing to the digital divide and proposed solutions for Africa: infrastructure development, affordable access, digital literacy programs, and content localization in native languages to enhance accessibility.

Mr. Admire Gwanzura, a Non-Executive Director and Immediate Past President of the Institute of IT Professionals South Africa, highlighted Africa's rapid technological growth and its benefits but pointed out challenges in Internet access and digital skills. He emphasized strategic investments in broadband infrastructure and digital literacy programs, stressing the importance of an inclusive approach involving various sectors to bridge the digital divide. Gwanzura underlined the need for gender-responsive and inclusive measures, especially for youth empowerment, to drive Africa's development.

Quoting the World Economic Forum, Gwanzura noted that only 16% of Africans possess sufficient digital skills for the fourth industrial revolution, underscoring the need for improvement. He emphasized the importance of an inclusive approach to skill development in bridging the digital divide, involving government, civil society, private sector, and individuals. He noted that according to ITU report on Internet usage in Africa 34% of Women using tech in 2022 while 45% of men in 2022 compared to Europe where there are 89% of women and 90% of men respectively which highlighted a huge gap, there is need to ensure that there is inclusivity, gender responsiveness and inclusivity. The asset of Africa is the youth, he stressed the need to empower the youth for development of Africa.

Ms. Rachael Shitanda mentioned the importance of digital skills in Africa's evolving landscape, stressing the need for private sector's support for government initiatives. She proposed comprehensive educational programs focusing on technical knowledge integration, problem-solving, creativity, digital content creation, and safety. Shitanda advocated for active involvement in policy-making and community support through training to foster an inclusive digital ecosystem.

Mr. Anthanze Bashizere, representing African youth, highlighted the importance of digital skills and listed the challenges hindering their progress. He emphasized the need for tools, indigenous solutions, skills development, infrastructure in remote areas, local solutions adoption, Internet access, financial support, and tech expertise to empower African youth in contributing to digital advancement



3.3.0 Summit & Nominating Committee

S/N	Names	AfICTA Designation
1.	Ms. Ulandi Exner	Chair, Organizing Committee & AfICTA Vice Chair Southern Africa
2.	Mr. Paul Rowney	Deputy Chair, AfICTA
3.	Ms. Arinola Akinyemi	Member
4.	Dr. Jimson Olufuye	Member
5.	Mr. Thabo Mashegoane	Member
4.	Omolosho Segun	Programme Officer
5.	Oyeyemi Kayode	Snr. Programme Officer

3.4.0 Africa ICT Award Winners

The outcome of the nomination and election for the 2023 Africa ICT Awards as coordinated by the Nominating Committee of AfICTA is shown below:

S/N	Award Category	Award Winner 2023
1.	Africa ICT Champion Award	1. Dr. Mactar Seck , Chief of Section, Technology & Innovation, UNECA 2. Mr. Kashifu Inuwa Abdullahi , Director General, National IT Development Agency-NITDA 3. Mr. Inye Kemabonta , AfICTA National Coordinator and CEO Techlaw Development Service
2.	Africa ICT Personality Award	4. Dr. Krishnan Ranganath , Africa Data Centres
3.	Africa CIO Award	5. Dr. Mohamed Hamed , Chief Technology Officer, Ceramica Platinum.
4.	Africa ICT Innovation Award	6. Mr. Joshua Obed , Managing Director, Gugu Robotics, Nigeria
5.	Africa Community Development Award	7. Dr. Robinson Tombari Sibe , Co-Founder & CEO, Digital Footprints Nigeria Ltd 8. Mrs. Nandipha Ntsaluba , Department of Veterans, South Africa.

CHAPTER 4

4.1 Recommendations

Some of the Key Recommendations from the Summit are:

Session 1: The Effect of Technology on the Environment and Climate Change

1. Government with the support of other relevant and concerned groups should ensure that e-waste is properly and ethically managed through the creation of a standardized depots with easy access for people to recycle and break down their old equipment (e-wastes) while they also make some returns.
2. Civil society and other relevant groups should be involved in enlightenment programmes and conversations geared towards liberation of our environment from the damages cause by the climatic change through mitigation and adaptation.
3. All stakeholders with the coordination of Ministry of Environment and International bodies should champion the course for a huge investment in renewable energy sources and more energy-efficient equipment to optimize PUE - Power Usage Effectiveness that drastically reduce the emission of Carbon monoxide.

Session 2: The Effect of Technology on the Environment and Climate Change

1. Government while designing and mapping out smart cities should ensure their solutions of choice is user centric, scalable, agile and purposefully deployed to the users' and cities' advantage with the focus on affordability and accessibility. City's smartness should be tailored towards unique challenges and/or people's primary needs.
2. There should be cross-fertilization of ideas, collaboration and cooperation between the key stakeholders. Government agencies and private sector organizations should not be reluctant to share sensitive data or standardize on common networks, tools and infrastructure. This "need-to-know" data-sharing policy can build the kind of cross-collaboration that can help cities prevent criminal activities, improve drinking water and garbage collection and reduce noise and light pollution.

Session 3: (Artificial Intelligence & Ethics, and their Responsible Use)

1. Optimize AI Capabilities; Embrace AI tools to solve diverse problems effectively.
2. Preparation and Utilization in Africa; Focus on preparing for extensive AI utilization and align it with Africa's context and needs.
3. Develop Human Capacity: Prioritize the development of AI-skilled human capital in Africa.
4. Legislative and Regulatory Frameworks; Establish robust frameworks for responsible and ethical AI use.
5. Becoming a Leading Player; Encourage innovation, investment, and active involvement in shaping AI's future in Africa.

Session 4: ICANN-BC Outreach to African Business Owners

1. Incorporate African business owners' perspectives into the Applicant Guidebook for new gTLDs.
2. AfICTA is charged with the responsibility to further mobilize the private sector actors into the ICANN activities the the quest to ensure the Internet remains built on multi-stakeholder approach and emphasis towards collaborative efforts also to effectively leverage new gTLD potential in Africa.

Session 5: Cybersecurity Strategies for Emerging Technologies

1. AfICTA - Africa ICT Alliance should further intensify its cybersecurity awareness creation through its established platforms by partnering regional and local organizations to form a formidable force.
2. All stakeholders in various level should enhance technical and software skill development in Africa such that the populace a provided with the minimum and critical skills to protect themselves in the digital space.
3. Government and Private Sector should collaborate on establishing talent hunts initiatives fostering innovation in emerging technologies.

Session 6: Digital Skills and Bridging the Digital Divide

1. Government should develop and implement digital skills strategies and policies to address the digital divide and promote skill development by investing in digital infrastructure, such as fiber connectivity to improve Internet access, ensuring affordability of devices by facilitating access to cost-effective digital tools, formulating inclusive policies that encompass all segments of society.
2. Private Sector should engage by providing digital skills training to the populace with collaboration and support from government and civil society, providing initiatives aimed at bridging the digital gap and developing locally tailored devices for the African market to enhance accessibility.
3. Civil Society should take advantage of available digital skills training programs, show commitment and support in addressing the digital divide by embracing education as a catalyst for sustainable growth in Africa's digital landscape.

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