

Speech by Dr Jimson Olufuye on the occasion of the 5th AfICTA Summit 2017

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Protocol

It gladdens my heart to see history being made in Nigeria today where for the first time a Nigerian government entity is collaborating with an African ICT private sector association to host an ICT event in Nigeria. From the perspective of AfICTA, Nigeria is the 2nd country in Africa with this engagement happening and I'd like to thank the DG of NITDA and his team for sustaining the existing MOU with AfICTA and enabling the hosting of AfICTA Summit in conjunction with NITDA's eNigeria under the auspices of the Ministry of Communications. The Minister of ICT, Mr Adebayo Shittu and the DG of NITDA are graciously appreciated for their forward looking vision which is in tandem with the Sustainable Development Goals and the WSIS target for an Information Society i.e. building partnership with all stakeholders. We need such partnership sustained in Africa between all stakeholders and in particular between governments and the private sector.

I'm happy that for 5 years since AfICTA was established, we have grown from a 6-nation membership to a 30-nation membership across Africa; as such I'd like to recognize our board members from Nigeria, South Africa, Egypt, Kenya, Namibia, Cote d'Ivoire and Tanzania and many other members engaging constructively. **In these countries and others, we've continued to energize best practices, foster business networks and enhance intra-African trade which we aim to support governments to transform from its low point of 12% to more than 50% by 2020.** Comparatively, intra-European trade is about 68%.

Trade within Africa and prosperity for our people engendered by ICTs are the fulcrum of our vision for Africa where the promise of the digital age for all Africans is fulfilled; hence the theme of this year's Summit being "One Africa, one future: Leveraging ICTs for Sustainable Development". We are dismayed that no African country fully met the 8 goals and 18 targets for the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) 2015 while other countries in the Middle-East and Asia even surpassed the targets notably with regard to eradication of extreme poverty and hunger, reduction in infant mortality, primary school enrollment, literacy, improvement in health service delivery etc. This is not to say that progress was not made in our countries, only that it is not fast enough. We're optimistic that with the current momentum (through Executive Orders) by the Nigerian government on ease of doing business and the use ICTs to drive governance, a cascading effect on other sectors and other countries may be realized; and our countries would surpass the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030. Therefore, I've no doubt that our distinguished experts particularly from the SDG Office will mobilize us towards the realization of the SDGs in Nigeria.

In 2014, East African Community (ECA) composed of Burundi, Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania, Uganda and South Sudan announced a one network regime that eliminated roaming charges with active participation of all stakeholders particularly the operators. With that, business received a big boost of up to 950% according to a 2016 World Bank report. We are happy to note that the West African Telecom Regulators two weeks ago followed suite to declare a framework for one network across ECOWAS with the aim to eliminate roaming charges. We are happy that many of the stakeholders are with us and would be discussing this subject further in the High level panel 1 on “Building One Future and One Network for Africa”. **Our hope in AfICTA is that by 2020, we should have a tariff free, one network regime for Africa.**

Our keynote Speaker today is one outstanding lady that has added tremendous value to the success of AfICTA within a short period of time and at the International level in the United Nations and ICANN. She is Marilyn Cade, former Chair of the Business Constituency of ICANN and one of the 5 global business representatives to the UN CSTD WG on Enhanced Cooperation (WGEC) on International Public Policy issues pertaining to the Internet. I would like to use this opportunity to appreciate her positive role in the founding of AfICTA and in the progress we have made thus far.

Talking about the UN CSTD WGEC, I’ve the privilege of being one of the 5 global business representatives in the WGEC 2.0. **It is gratifying that the recommendation I made at the WGEC has the potential to resolve a 12-year deadlock on how to implement the 2nd track of the outcome of WSIS 2005.** The 1st is the Internet Governance Forum (IGF) which is in its 12th edition. I would like to use this opportunity to urge African governments (particularly Nigeria) to support this recommendation and let this long standing deadlock be resolved with respect to how governments on equal footing can perform their role on Enhanced Cooperation on International Public Policy issues pertaining to the Internet with full participation of all stakeholders in the private sector, civil society, academic/technical communities.

Considering our firm belief in One Africa, One Future, today, **we are formally moving to a one Africa Internet platform represented by the African domain name .africa TLD.** The .africa TLD complements our various countries ccTLD notably .ng and .za and I’d like to recognise the efforts of the African Union and the .za registry (manager of the string) for their effort in realizing the milestone.

AfICTA appreciates its collaboration with BC-ICANN, the ICANN Africa Stakeholder engagement Office led by Mr Pierre Dandjinou, VP ICANN and all our other sponsors - IITPSA, Mainone, Galaxy Backbone, Whogohost, ATCON for believing in the vision and mission of AfICTA. I would like to thank the Oracle of the

Nigerian ICT industry, Mr Chris Uwaje, fmr President of ITAN, ISPON and co-founder of Nigeria Computer Society for agreeing to Chair this event. So, also to my friend and graceful CEO of Galaxy Backbone Ltd, Mr Yusuf Kazaure. I cannot conclude this speech without appreciating the Consortium that decided to champion the new model for hosting AfICTA Summits namely ADD Consortium (composed of Messrs Afenoid, DigiSphere and Dotengee). Thank you team for being a pioneer for Africa.

In conclusion, I would like to invite you all to attend the gala dinner tonight as we unveil the winners of the AfICTA registered brand awards: Africa ICT Personality and ICT Champion of the year 2017 awards.

Thank you NITDA and thank you our distinguished guests, members of the press, distinguished ladies and gentlemen. Thank you all for coming.