

Welcome Address by Dr Jimson Olufuye, AfICTA Chair at the Opening Ceremony of the 1st AfICTA ICT Summit, Lagos, Nigeria on 27 June, 2013.

Protocols

On behalf of the board of AfICTA, I'd like to welcome you all to the 1st AfICTA ICT Summit with the theme **"Fulfilling the Promise of the Digital Age in Africa"**. To fulfill the promise of the digital age is so key to Africa's socio-economic development that 6 African private sector ICT leaders on May 1, 2012 declared they would join forces through AfICTA to contribute positively to Africa's renaissance. With a population of over 1b and GDP of over US\$2t, it is only with Africa developing its internal potentials that the living standards of its people can rise. Judging by the steady growth rate of 5% coupled with increased intra African trade, particularly in the field of ICT, the desired growth increase will be realized.

As we know, our people are highly talented. Many have made giant contributions to global ICT enabled development. Examples are Dr Hamadoun Toure, Secretary-General of ITU (from Mali) & Mr Fadi Chehade, President & CEO of ICANN (who is of Egyptian descent). The two organizations they head are at the forefront of shaping global ICT Policies and Internet Governance principles. Courtesy of colleagues in Kenya, Kenya is currently the most mobile savvy economy in the world with its award winning MPESA mobile payment system.

When ICT leaders in Africa come together and network appropriately, it is possible to share knowledge, best practices and critical resources thereby minimizing capital flight out of Africa and thus engender needed growth and development. Information and communications technologies are the tools of the 21st century. By working together to put affordable devices into the hands of all Africans, we will empower them with knowledge and link them to the economic opportunities of the connected world.

In this 1st Summit therefore, we shall be addressing those goals, targets, principles and initiatives that would help focus Africa on the path of the Information Society as articulated in the agenda that was formulated by world Heads of State at the World Summit on the Information Society held in Tunis in 2005 called the Tunis Agenda of 2005.

Some of the focal points to be discussed at this Summit include:

- *WSIS & post WSIS targets (eApplications)*
- *Intra-African (ICT) Trade (Networking)*
- *Internet Security & Broadband infrastructure*
- *Multi-stakeholderism & Internet Governance*
- *Quality in Procurement & Project Management*

Also to be discussed are issues around

Filling the Gap for the African countries in ICT innovation

The Role of AU in promoting ICTs in Africa

The Role of UNECA in promoting ICTs in Africa

Developing the ICT Business ECO System in Africa in relation to DNS

With thorough and fluid discussions, I believe the gains recorded in the last 10 years wherein global extreme poverty was reduced from 43% to 21% can be further reduced more drastically in Africa in the next 10 years as more underlining principles of free enterprise are embraced by governments across Africa. We applaud the progress being made and we want to use the

platform afforded by AfICTA and its members throughout Africa to spur our leaders in business, in government and in the community to greater efforts in achieving affordable, reliable access to the global networks for all Africans.

I would like to thank Ms Marilyn Cade, CEO, ICT Strategies and Chief Catalyst IGF USA for her global advocacy in support of Internet commercial and business users and SMEs in the developing and least developed countries particularly Africa. My profound thanks to our event Chair, Ms Funke Opeke, CEO of Main One for her strategic push for broadband connectivity in Nigeria and in Africa at large. I would like to thank Mr Makane Faye, UNECA ICT Chief and Mr Moctar Yedaly of AUC ICT Division for their relentless promotion of ICT for Development in Africa and their able representation of Africa around the world.

Many thanks to ICANN for their overwhelming support on the DNSSEC Roadshow and the BC outreach event. Thank you Dr Richard Lamb and Alain Aina. Big thanks to Mike Silber ICANN Board member for your presence.

Rwanda under the leadership of HE President Paul Kagame has become a role model on the use of ICT for Development in Africa, I'm therefore pleased to have with us the distinguished Amb of Rwanda to Nigeria, HE Joseph **Hatineza**. Thank you for coming your Excellency.

Our gratitude also to HE Vice-President Namadi Sambo who is working strongly with Pres G Jonathan and they are relentlessly pursuing the Transformation Agenda of the present Nigerian administration. Thank you YE for coming.

I would like to specially thank my colleagues on the board of AfICTA for their extra-ordinary co-operation and support. Mr Adrian Schofield, Dr Waudu Siganga, Roger Latchman, Poncelet Ileleji, Lanre Ajayi, Titi Omo-Ettu, Prof. Adenike Osofisan, Engr Hossam El-gamal, Tola Sogbesan, Felix Ndayirukiye and all, many thanks indeed. I would also like to thank the AfICTA, ATCON and Kontemporary staff – Ajibola, Faith/Muyiwa & Timmy for their hard and smart work. Journalists and our media friends thank you so very much. We owe the success of this summit that started yesterday to you. Bayero Agabi, Emeka Aginam, Evely Onuegbu and all thank you. I cannot close without thanking two very important people my wife for her strong support – Pharmacist Oki Olufuye and God Almighty for His divine protection and grace.

Long live AfICTA, long live Africa, long live the Federal Republic of Nigeria.

I wish us all a happy 1st anniversary celebration and deliberations. Thank you.