

MINISTRY OF INFORMATION, COMMUNICATIONS AND THE DIGITAL ECONOMY

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MONDAY, 27 APRIL 2026.

EDGE HOTEL, NAIROBI.

Salutation

- Excellencies
- Distinguished Guests
- Industry Leaders
- Ladies and Gentlemen,

Good afternoon,

I. I am happy to join the Connected Africa Summit 2026 and to make my contribution on the topic that is contemporary - **The Changing Face of AI Weaponisation in Africa.**

II. In this information age where the world is inundated with information overload. It is difficult for the general public to discern the truth from misinformation, disinformation, mal-information and deepfakes.

III. In this landscape, sophisticated misinformation can potentially escalate from a communication challenge to a systemic risk that may impact governance and threaten national security.

IV. To show the severity of the issue, the 2025 Meltwater report ranked Kenya among the top countries for concerns regarding online misinformation with over 72% of internet users worried about fake news. According to this report, WhatsApp, Facebook and YouTube are the top three sources of fake news consumed in Kenya.

V. By October last year, there were 18.4 million active social media users in Kenya, spending an average of 4 hours daily which is double the global average of 2 hours.

VI. We are witnessing the rise of automated propaganda and deepfakes that exploit local languages and cultural nuances, making them incredibly difficult for global platforms to detect and moderate. This is no longer just a theoretical threat from abroad; it is a hyper-local challenge designed to disrupt our institutions. Our counter strategies, therefore, must be equally localized, context-

aware, and driven by Kenyan and indeed African expertise by extension.

VII. In Kenya, this direction is deliberate. For example, through the National Artificial Intelligence Strategy (2025–2030), the Ministry of Information, Communications and Digital Economy has established a comprehensive framework to guide the country on AI governance, innovation, and deployment.

VIII. Our focus is on AI-ready infrastructure, trusted data ecosystems, and innovation at scale supported by a risk-based regulatory approach that protects citizens while enabling growth.

IX. This policy direction is reinforced by Kenya's Government Communication Strategy and draft Policy which affirms the State as the custodian of credible public information and establishes a coordinated mechanism to address misinformation and disinformation.

X. Together, these frameworks are geared to position Kenya not only as a participant, but as a regional digital centre of knowledge, and a pace-setter in both AI governance and integrity of the digital information ecosystem.

XI. Kenya's response is multi-layered. We are integrating AI-driven detection capabilities to identify generative, synthetic and manipulated AI content. We are strengthening regulatory frameworks to ensure accountability across digital platforms including mechanisms for liaison with platform owners for enforcement including takedowns where necessary.

XII. At the same time, we are scaling digital skilling of our public communication officers and the digital literacy for the general members of the public using established Jitume Digital hubs across the country. Additionally, our learning institutions are now embedding machine learning and data management with a clear objective to position our youth as producers of globally competitive digital innovations.

XIII. As you can acknowledge, the future of artificial intelligence lies in responsible enablement, not restriction. The integration of artificial intelligence into our economies is a new reality.
Our responsibility as government is to steward its adoption with foresight, ensuring regulation keeps pace with innovation while building secure, transparent, and accountable ecosystems that earn and sustain public trust.

XIV. Guided by this approach, Kenya is driving a strategic shift from consumption to creation of AI technologies. Our national strategy prioritizes locally relevant AI models, powered by Kenyan data and inclusive of our languages and contexts. This is central to advancing digital sovereignty, ensuring that Africa retains control over its data, platforms, and innovations.

XV. The viability of an AI-driven economy remains intrinsically linked to robust connectivity and access, including device affordability. Broadband infrastructure underpins the AI economy, enabling data flows, cloud services, and digital innovation.
The Digital Super-highway and Creative Economy pillar of the government's BETA plan has committed over 100,000 kilometers of fiber optic cable, 1450 Jitume Hubs in all elective wards and 25,000 free public WiFi hotspots across the country.

XVI. Moving forward, our objective is for African nations to transition from being primary consumers within the digital economy to become active contributors of our collective future.
Kenya is ready to lead not only in adopting artificial intelligence, but in shaping its governance and unlocking its value for our people.

XVII. In this information age, you will all agree with me that we are facing complex challenges that require dynamic, coordinated, cross sectoral and multi-national approach.

XVIII. To deep dive into practical and actionable solutions, let me handover the stage to the upcoming panel for thought-provoking discussion, answering the critical question: **'Regulate, Remove,**

Or Rebuild? How Africa should respond to the AI Mis/Disinformation Crisis.' I look forward to the insights from our moderator and esteemed panellists.

I thank you.