

MINISTRY OF INFORMATION, COMMUNICATIONS AND THE DIGITAL ECONOMY

REMARKS BY MR. STEPHEN ISABOKE, EBS, PRINCIPAL SECRETARY, MINISTRY OF INFORMATION, COMMUNICATIONS AND THE DIGITAL ECONOMY, REPUBLIC OF KENYA DURING THE SAFARICOM DE(CO)DE 4.0 EVENT.

TUESDAY, 31ST MARCH 2026

SARIT EXPO CENTRE, NAIROBI.

SALUTATION

- Distinguished Guests
- Partners
- Colleagues
- Innovators
- Ladies and Gentlemen

Good Morning,

I. Today, we gather at a special moment as Safaricom marks twenty-five years of purpose-driven innovation, and as Decode 4.0 – Made of Kenya Edition - stands as a powerful symbol of how far our digital journey has come. This moment reminds us that Kenya is no longer just a pioneer in mobile innovation, we are now builders of intelligent, globally relevant digital systems.

II. The Government of Kenya firmly believes that Artificial Intelligence must be democratised. It must be accessible, inclusive and beneficial to all citizens. Under our digital transformation agenda, we are committed to building an ecosystem where AI drives economic growth, job creation, public service delivery and innovation across all sectors.

III. This year's theme, **"**Made of Kenya," is more than a celebration. It affirms that the next generation of digital systems will be built here, by our people, rooted in our values and driven by our ambition to position Kenya as a leading digital economy in Africa.

IV. Artificial Intelligence is fast becoming the engine of national competitiveness. However, AI is not a single tool; it is a layered ecosystem built on data, infrastructure, models, applications, skills and governance. No single institution can build this alone.

V. This is why collaboration is essential. Government, industry, academia, start-ups, creators and communities must work together. Across Kenya, we are already seeing this collective efforts.

VI. A key pillar of this journey is Sovereign AI. For AI to be meaningful, it must be rooted in our context - based on Kenyan data, governed by our laws and capable of understanding and communicating in our languages. From Kiswahili to Sheng and indigenous languages, our identity must be reflected in the technologies we build.

VII. To fully harness AI, we must strengthen our foundations with robust data governance frameworks, local data centres, scalable cloud infrastructure and reliable, sustainable energy to power digital growth. These are not optional. They are essential building blocks of an AI-enabled economy.

VIII. Equally important is talent. Kenya's greatest asset is its people. With one of the youngest, well educated populations globally, AI is opening new frontiers in the creative economy: from gaming and film to digital arts and design, empowering our youth to compete and thrive in global markets.

IX. Safaricom's journey over the past twenty-five years reflects what is possible when innovation meets purpose. From connectivity to intelligent systems, this progress is part of a broader national movement toward a digitally empowered and inclusive society.

X. As we celebrate this milestone, one truth stands clear: Kenya's AI future must be built together. Government will provide policy and infrastructure, industry will drive innovation, academia will build

knowledge and our people will shape adoption. Our future will not be imported, it will be imagined, built and governed right here at home.

XI. Here is to a future that is inclusive, secure, and proudly 'Made of Kenya'.

Thank you. God bless Kenya.