

The International Advisory Body on Submarine Cable Resilience Declaration
(agreed by the International Advisory Body on Submarine Cable Resilience on 26 February 2025)
Abuja, Nigeria

We, the members of the International Advisory Body on Submarine Cable Resilience, recognize the vital role of submarine telecommunications cables in enabling global connectivity, empowering economic growth, and supporting digital transformation. They are critical infrastructure and should be respected in accordance with international law.

In the spirit of collaboration and shared understanding, we adopt this Declaration as a framework for fostering resilience and encouraging cooperative efforts to support this vital infrastructure.

1. Acknowledging Vital Infrastructure

We recognize the essential role that submarine telecommunications cables play as critical infrastructure in enabling global economic, social, and governmental activity through interconnected communication systems by carrying over 99% of intercontinental data traffic.

2. Strengthening Cable Protection Through Risk Mitigation

We underscore the importance of identifying and mitigating a range of risks to submarine cable systems, including natural events and accidental maritime damage, through the timely exchange of pertinent information, knowledge and best practices as well as enhanced cooperation between government agencies and all relevant stakeholders. We encourage promotion of sufficient and necessary mitigation and recovery measures to reduce the scale and scope of cable damage.

3. Promoting Diverse Routes and Landings to Enhance Resilience and Continuity

Considering that submarine telecommunications cables are crucial to the digital ecosystem from strategic, economic, safety, security, and strategic autonomy perspectives, we encourage the development of geographically diversified infrastructure, through all possible funding approaches including Public-Private-Partnerships, to mitigate potential disruptions, increase resilience, maintain connectivity, and ensure no region is left isolated.

4. Facilitating Timely Deployment and Repair

We encourage the development of government policies and practices to expedite the deployment of new submarine cable systems, ensure the maintenance and timely repair of damaged cables, to promote streamlined permits processes, maintain stockpiles/spares, and further support the development of the submarine cable installation and repair ecosystem.

5. Promoting Global Cooperation

We encourage international cooperation among governments, national regulatory authorities, research centres, universities, industry stakeholders, international organizations and other stakeholders to address shared challenges and support the continuous operation of submarine cable networks.

6. Advancing Sustainable Approaches

We uphold international law, and promote best practice principles and multistakeholder coordination on submarine communication cables. We support the adoption of physical risk based planning and environmentally sustainable practices informed by the best available science in the planning, deployment, and maintenance of submarine cables, ensuring the responsible management of natural and marine environments.

7. Fostering Technological Innovation

We highlight the value of innovative technologies and solutions that can mitigate the risks of damage to and enhance the resilience and efficiency of submarine cable systems, to ensure they remain operational, robust and reliable.

8. Facilitating Capacity Building

We advocate for the development of knowledge-sharing platforms and training programs to enhance the ability of all nations, particularly developing countries, to manage protect and repair submarine cable systems effectively and efficiently.

9. Preparing for Future and Present Connectivity Needs

Recognizing the rapid growth in global data transmission and the reliance of the entire digital ecosystem on such connectivity, we support efforts to ensure that submarine cable infrastructure can meet the demands of an accessible, stable and open digital future, and address the current digital divide, inter alia, through investment in new cable systems, upgrades to existing routes, and improved capacity planning.

10. Encouraging Proactive Risk Awareness

We encourage regular risk assessments and cooperative approaches among all relevant stakeholders, including governments, cable operators, system suppliers, and maintenance providers, to identify and address risks and challenges in submarine cable systems, contributing to greater resilience and preparedness for the long-term.

11. Using Data for Informed Decisions

We underline the importance of using data-driven and evidence-based approaches, including the analysis of cable routes, natural hazard risks, maritime activities and resources, to develop repair capabilities, guide decision-making and prioritize areas requiring additional focus.

Through this Declaration, we reaffirm our shared vision of collaboration, innovation, and sustainability, ensuring that submarine cables continue to play a vital role in global connectivity and development.