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| **PLENARY MEETING** | **Document 27-E** |
| | **23 April 2022** |
| | **Original: English** |

## Note by the Secretary-General

## CANDIDACY FOR THE POST OF DIRECTOR OF
## THE TELECOMMUNICATION DEVELOPMENT BUREAU (BDT)

Further to the information published in Document 3, I have the pleasure in transmitting to the Conference, in annex, the candidacy of:

**Mr Muhammadou M. O. KAH (Republic of the Gambia)**

for the post of Director of the Telecommunication Development Bureau of the International Telecommunication Union.

Houlin ZHAO
Secretary-General

**Annex**:　1

**THE EMBASSY OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE GAMBIA TO THE SWISS CONFEDERATION AND THE PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE GAMBIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS OFFICE, WTO, AND OTHER INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS IN GENEVA**

**GMB/AdC/2022**

## NOTE VERBALE

The Embassy and Permanent Mission of The Gambia at Geneva presents its compliments to the Secretariat of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) and has the honour to forward herewith a letter and documents addressed to and to be conveyed to His Excellency, Mr. Houlin Zhao, Secretary General of the ITU, from His Excellency Mr. Ebrima Sillah, Minister of Information and Communication Infrastructure (MOICI) of the Republic of The Gambia, on the candidature of H.E Ambassador Professor Muhammadou M.O. Kah, for the post of Director of the ITU Telecommunication Development Bureau (BDT), at the election to be held during the ITU Plenipotentiary Conference (PP-22) scheduled to take place in Bucharest, Romania, from 26 September to 14 October 2022.

The Embassy and Permanent Mission of The Gambia at Geneva avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) the assurances of its highest consideration.

Geneva, 05 January 2022

**International Telecommunication Union (ITU)**

**MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND
COMMUNICATION INFRASTRUCTURE**
GRTS BUILDING, MDI ROAD, KANIFING, THE GAMBIA, WEST AFRICA.

**Date: April 22, 2022**

**Excellency, Mr. Houlin Zhao**
**Secretary General,**
**International Telecommunications Union**
**Place des Nations, 1211, Geneva, Switzerland**

### Support for the Candidacy of H.E Amb. Prof. Muhammadou M.O. Kah
### For
### The ITU Director, Telecommunication Development Bureau (BDT)

**Dear Excellency Mr. Houlin Zhao,**

In response to your Circular Letter CL-21/41 of 27 September, 2021, on behalf of the Government of The Republic of The Gambia, I have the honor to inform you that the Government of The Gambia has decided to present the candidature of H.E Ambassador Professor Muhammadou M.O. Kah for the post of the Director of the ITU Telecommunication Development Bureau (BDT), at the election to be held during the ITU Plenipotentiary Conference (PP-22) that will take place in Bucharest, Romania, from 26 September to 14 October 2022.

Amb. Prof. Kah's candidacy brings leadership with advanced technical competencies in strategy and innovations, digital transformations, and deployment of emerging technologies for ICT development. In addition, he will be bringing substantive experience, expertise, commitment, and will facilitate and support member states to build capacity and competencies to build and scale up value creating and impactful digital ecosystems.

Furthermore, Amb. Prof. Kah will provide leadership for game changing mindsets, smarter policy regimes across member states, that establish collaborations and partnerships leading to deployment of sustainable and impactful initiatives and sustainable technologies, across member states. He is a champion of hands on, pragmatic and innovative approaches that close the digital divide and harness inclusivity for deployment of affordable and accessible broadband connectivity. This includes deployment of data and digital infrastructure, building digital capacity and competencies for the empowerment of girls, women, youth, and internet governance.

Excellency, Amb. Prof. Kah has a track record that stands out anchored on decades of substantive thought leadership in telecommunication and Development, ICTs for Development, Applications of ICTs in health, agriculture, education (digital learning technologies), government (e-government and digital transformation), mobile and emerging technologies and e-commerce. He also has substantive experience and leadership in building Digital Ecosystems and value chains across continents, within academia, public service, the private sector, civil society organizations and start-ups. He is a proven successful institutional builder with impactful leadership tenure at a diversity of institutions across continents. Energetic, enthusiastic, with high social and emotional intelligence, Amb. Prof. Kah has experience of working with a diversity of senior government leadership and regulatory regimes.

In addition, Amb. Prof. Kah continues to lead engagements on the pursuits of digital collaboration and partnerships across regions and with key ICTs/digital organizations at Geneva, and beyond. He will encourage, promote digital readiness and skills to an outstanding capacity and competence that will usher a sustainable and thriving digital ecosystem across member states. Amb. Prof. Kah will provide leadership that will facilitate accelerated and sustainable adoption and deployment of emerging technologies, digital and data infrastructure across member states.

Excellency, we believe that Amb. Prof. Kah's passion, expertise and commitment for development and use of innovative technologies will prevail and be value creating and impactful. We therefore foresee his leadership in reflecting the outcomes of sustainable, and effective use of ICTs and services that will focus our drive towards closing the digital divide, gearing up an equitable and inclusive information society, and scaling up our drive towards attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG's) enabled by digitalization. My Ministry and the Government of The Gambia have the utmost confidence that we have put forward a high-quality candidate from The Gambia worthy of representing us all in a sustained and continued drive for digital innovation leading to a better world that we all seek.

Excellency, it is against this backdrop that I strongly and sincerely believe that Amb. Prof. Kah is eminently qualified to provide leadership as our next Director for Telecommunication Development Bureau. I invite you to read the attached bio of H.E Ambassador Prof. Muhammadou Kah which provides a succinct account of his accomplishments. Always accept the assurances of our highest consideration.

**Hon. Ebrima Sillah**
Minister of Information and Communication Infrastructure (MOICI)
**The Republic of The Gambia**

Amb. Prof.

# Muhammadou M.O. Kah

**Candidate for Director of ITU Telecommunications Development Bureau (BDT)**

Republic of
The Gambia

Telephone: **+41-79-577-9697**
Email: **muhammadou.kah@gmail.com**
Location: **Geneva, Switzerland**
linkedin.com/in/muhammadoukah
twitter.com/mkah
instagram.com/Kah4BDT
facebook.com/Kah4BDT

Languages          English, Wolof, Arabic (intermediate), French (basic), Fulani (basic),
                   Mandinka (basic)

Date of Birth      06 May, 1966
Nationality        The Gambia
Marital Status     Married, with three daughters

# Abridged Resume/CV

## PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

**2020 – Present**
Ambassador and Permanent Representative
Embassy of The Gambia to The Swiss Confederation and Permanent
Mission of The Gambia to the UN Office, WTO, and Other International
Organizations, Switzerland

**2021 – Present**
Visiting Professor (Non-Resident)
University of Johannesburg, South Africa

**2017 – 2020**
Vice President for Academic Affairs/Provost and Professor of IT
& Computing
American University of Nigeria, Nigeria

**2015 – 2017**
Vice Rector for Technology and Information; Founding Dean &
Professor of IT & Communications
School of IT and Engineering; ADA University, Baku, Azerbaijan

**2015 – 2017**
Fellow (Non-resident)
University of Cambridge, Judge Business School, UK

**2015 – 2017**
Cambridge Digital Innovation (CDI) Fellow
University of Cambridge, Digital Innovation, UK

**2015-2016**
Advisor to President of The Gambia on Science, Technology,
and Innovation Policy
Office of the President, The Gambia

**2009 – 2015**
Vice Chancellor/President (Rector) & Professor of Information
Technology & Communications
The University of The Gambia, The Gambia

**2009 – 2015**
Principal /Overseer
The Gambia College for Teacher Training, The Gambia

**1993 – 1995**
Resident Visitor
*Human Factors Group, AT&T Bell Laboratories, USA*

**1994 – 1995**
Adjunct Professor of Statistics; Group Dynamics and
Psychology
Bloomfield College, USA

**1995 – 1996**
Director of Institutional Research and Strategic Planning
Bloomfield College, USA

**1996 – 2000**
Assistant Professor of Information Systems
Howard University, School of Business, USA

**1997 – 1998**
Adjunct Associate Professor of Information Systems
The George Washington, University School of Business
and Public Administration, USA

**1998 – 1998**
Adjunct Associate Professor of Quantitative Methods
and Management Science
Saint Mary's University, Halifax, Canada

**2000 – 2005**
Assistant Professor of Information Systems and E-Commerce
Rutgers University, School of Business, USA

**2003 – 2005**
Department Chairman and Visiting Professor, Information
Systems  and Operations Management
American University of Sharjah , United Arab Emirates (UAE)

**2005 – 2009**
Founding Dean and Chief Technology Officer; Professor of IT
and Communications
American University of Nigeria, Nigeria

# ADDITIONAL EXPERIENCE

**2004 –2005**
Consultant
*Dubai Municipality Digitisation Project, UAE*

**1997 –2000**
Consultant
*World Bank, USA*

**1994 –1996**
Project Manager,
Programmer and Analyst
*Strand Management Solutions, USA*

**1993 – 1995**
Consultant
*The Gambia Telecommunication Company Ltd (GAMTEL), The Gambia*

# CORPORATE GOVERNANCE & BOARD
## OF DIRECTOR EXPERIENCE

### Board Chairman
ACT-Afrique Group, Senegal, *2019 – Present*

Zenith Bank - The Gambia, The Gambia, *2009 – 2020*

Gambia International Airlines (GIA), The Gambia, *2013 - 2017*

### Board Member
African Agriculture Technology Foundation, Kenya, *2022 - Present*

Center for Rural Affairs and Community Development, Nigeria, *2019 – Present*

Science for Africa, USA, *2017 - Present*

Millennium Excellence Foundation, *2013 – Present*

African University of Science and Technology, Nigeria, *2010 – Present*

The Gambia Standards Bureau Board, The Gambia, *2011 – 2015*

Institute of Bankers of The Gambia, The Gambia, *2011 – 2015*

The American University of Nigeria, Nigeria, *2010 – 2017*

Nigeria Communications Commission's Digital Bridge Institute, Nigeria, *2007 – 2013*

Abuja Technology Village, Nigeria, *2006 – 2013*

### Other
Advisory Board- ReEnergy Africa, Nigeria, *2022 - Present*

Advisory Board- Africa Europe Foundation, Belgium, *2021 - Present*

Advisory Board- Africa United Corporation, London, UK, *2022 – Present*

Governing Council Member, The Africa University of Science & Technology, Nigeria, *2018 – Present*

Advisory Board Member, Nxzwake Institute, Ghana, *2017 – Present*

Panel Member, Malabo Montpellier Panel for Food and Nutritional Security in Africa, Senegal, *2017 – Present*

Advisory Board Member, Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) - Regional Entrepreneurship Acceleration Program (REAP) - Abuja Team, Federal Ministry of Communication & Digital Economy, Nigeria, *2019 – 2020*

Chairman of National Committee on Galaxy Backbone PLC, Government,  Federal Ministry of Communication & Digital Economy, Nigeria, *2020-2021*

Member, AgTech and Digital Supply Chain for Agriculture Group constituted by ITFC and IsDB, Saudi Arabi, *2019 – 2020*

Governing Council Member, American University of Nigeria, Nigeria, *2018-2020*

Program Committee, EuroScience Open Forum, France, *2017 – 2018*

# LEADERSHIP ROLE AS A DIPLOMAT
## IN THE MULTILATERAL SYSTEM AT GENEVA

**2021 – Present**
Vice Chairman
*UNCTAD's Commision For Science Technology And Development*

**2020 – Present**
Advisory Board
*UNCTAD's Trade and Development Bureau*

**2021 – Present**
Vice Chairman
*World Intellectual PropertyOrganization's (WIPO) General Assembly*

**2021**
Co-Friends of the Chair to facilitate outcomes on the Design Law Treaty
*WIPO General Assembly*

**2021 (Apr.-Sept.)**
Chairman
*Group of African Ambassadors at Geneva*

**2022 - 2024**
Member, United Nations Human Rights Council, Geneva

**2022 - 2024**
Vice President (Africa), *United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHCR),* Geneva

# EDUCATIONAL
## BACKGROUND

**2017**
Post Graduate Diploma (DiPSI), Strategy and Innovation
*University of Oxford, Saïd Business School, UK*

**2016**
Doctor of Science (D.Sc. - Honoris Causa)
*The University of The Gambia, The Gambia*

**1999**
PhD, Information and Technology Management
**Thesis: "An econometric analysis of telecommunications, information technology, and economic growth in Africa: A case study of the Gambia."** *(Best Dissertation Award)*
*Stevens Institute of Technology, USA*

**1999**
Master of Science in Finance (MSF)/Financial Engineering
*The George Washington University, USA*

**1994**
Advanced Graduate Diploma, Human Factors Engineering
*Stevens Institute of Technology, USA*

**1992**
Master of Science in Information & Technology Management/Info.Sys
*Stevens Institute of Technology, USA*

**1992**
Bachelor of Science, Technology Management and Information Systems
*Stevens Institute of Technology, USA*

# PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT
## AND EXECUTIVE EDUCATION

**Digital Transformation Strategy Program**
School of Business, Imperial College, UK, *2022*

**Program on Negotiations and Dispute Resolutions**
Harvard Law School, Harvard University, USA, *2022*

**Virtual Learning Journey: Diplomatic Tradecraft for Non Diplomats**
Global Center For Security Policy (GCSP), Geneva, Switzerland, *2021*

**Post Graduate Certificate (IDP-C), Corporate Governance**
INSEAD (Fontainebleau, France and Singapore), *2019*

**Transforming Leadership for 21st Century Africa**
Harvard University, Kennedy School of Government, USA, *2018*

**International Directors Program**
INSEAD - Certified Int'l Director
(Fontainebleau, France and Singapore), *2018*

**The Voice of Leadership: Inspiration, Influence & Impact**
The AGA KHAN University Graduate School of Media and Communication, Kenya, *2018*

**Beyond Innovation: Business Models For Transformative & Competitive Advantage**
University of Cambridge, Judge Business School, UK, *2017*

**Advance Leadership Reunion & Follow Up Program**
University of Cambridge, Judge Business School,UK, *2017*

**Advance Leadership Program**
University of Cambridge, Judge Business School, UK, *2015*

# SELECTED **HONORS AND RECOGNITIONS**

— Recipient of the 2021 Endowed Professor of ICT, ICT University, Yaounde, Cameroon

— Recipient of the 2014 President of the Republic of The Gambia National Leadership Award, The Gambia

— Reciepient of National Merit Award - Insignia - Officer of the Republic of The Gambia (OFR), 2014

— Reciepient of National Merit Award - Insignia - Member of the Republic of The Gambia (MRG), 2010

— Served as member of selection committee for prizes awarded by the African Union, 2013 Award for Scientific Women, ECOWAS, Nigeria

— Served as member of Selection Committee of Distinguised Scientists from OIC Member States/Islamic Development Bank, 2015 Prizes for Science and Technology, Saudi Arabia

# SELECTED **PUBLICATIONS**

H.E. Amb. Prof. Kah has published numerous peer-reviewed journal articles, book chapters, grant funding applications, supervised MSC and PhD thesis, and examined several PhDs, on a range of topics including ICT in electoral processes, learning management systems, ICT social inclusion, mobile health, and more.

— Kah, Muhammadou M.O. Kah. (With Abubakar, N. H., & Dasuki, S. I.). How mobile phones contribute to the social inclusion of women in Africa. A Nigerian Perspective. 28th European Conference on Information Systems (ECIS 2020), An Online AIS Conference (First Virtual ECIS Conference), June 15 – 17, 2020.

— Kah, Muhammadou M.O. (with Ignace Djitog), Ontological Approach to Holistic Healthcare Systems Simulation, International Journal of Privacy and Health Information Management (IJPHIM), 2020

— Inuwa, Ibrahim; M. O. Kah, Muhammadou; and Ononiwu, Chidi, "Understanding How the Traditional and Information Technology Anti-Corruption Strategies intertwine to Curb Public Sector Corruption: A Systematic Literature Review" (2019). PACIS 2019 Proceedings. 15. https://aisel.aisnet.org/pacis2019/15

— Kah, Muhammadou M.O. Book Forward, Pages vii-xvi, in the Integrated Series in Information Systems 35; Series Editors: Ramesh Sharda & Stefan VoB. Publication in: Knowledge Management For Development: Domains, Strategies and Technologies for Developing Countries. Edited by Kweku-Muata Osei-Bryson, Gunjan Mansingh and Lila Rao. Springer. 2014.

— Kah, Muhammadou M.O. (with Ritchard M'bayo and Samuel Tesunbi). Bridging the Knowledge Gap: Promoting Development through Communication, Education, and Knowledge Creation and Acquisition. Publication in: Communication and Development in Africa, University of Ibadan Press.

— Kah, Muhammadou M.O. (with Iliya, A.,Ononiwu, C. & Quaye, A. K. M). Mobile Phone use for empowerment and well-being of the physically challenged in Nigeria. In P. Nielsen & H. Kimaro (Eds.), Information and Communication Technologies for Development: Strengthening Southern-Driven Cooperation as a Catalyst for ICT4D (Vol. 552).. India: Springer. 2019.

— Kah, Muhammadou M.O. (with Heike Baumüller). Going Digital: Harnessing the power of emerging technologies for the transformation of southern African agriculture. Published in: Transforming Agriculture in Southern Africa - Constraints, Technologies, Policies and Processes Editors: Richard A. Sikora, Eugene Terry, Paul Vlek and Joyce Chitja. Routledge, Taylor & Francis-In Press. 2019

— Kah, Muhammadou M.O. (with J. Kah). Capacity Building: A Stakeholder-University Partnership Framework for The Gambia. Journal of African Administrative Studies, issue N°74, pp. 1-24, 2011.

— Kah, Muhammadou M.O. (with J. Kah and M. Speirs). ICT and Socio-Economic Development: Interventions and Issues in Rural Communities in Adamawa State, Nigeria. Proceedings of the 3rd International IDIA Development Informatics Conference, South Africa, 2009.

— Kah, Muhammadou M.O. (with J. Kah). ICT and Socio-Economic Development: A University's Engagement in a Rural Community in Yola, Nigeria; Theme: Social dimensions of ICT Policy. Book Chapter: IFIP TC9- 8th International Conference on Human Choice and Computers. South Africa, 2008.

— Kah, Muhammadou M.O. (with J. Kah). Building Software Development Capacity and Competence in Rural Nigeria: Pitfalls and Prospects. Proceedings of the 10tth International Conference on Social implications of Computers in Developing Countries. IFIP. UAE, 2009

— Kah, Muhammadou M.O. (with A. Ajibesin & H.Anthony Chan). Throughput Enhancement of Joint AMC & Power Control with Diversity Combining for Next Gen.Mobile Satellite Systems, IEEE Sarnoff Symposium,USA, 2009.

— Kah, Muhammadou M.O. (with Urquhart and Liyanage). ICTs and Poverty Reduction: A Social Capital and Knowledge Perspective, Journal of Information Technology, 2007.

— Kah, Muhammadou M.O. (with Mbarika, Samake and Sumrall). Information Technology Access: Cyber Café Diffusion in Sub-Saharan Africa, Journal IEEE Technology and Society, 2007.

— Kah, Muhammadou M.O. (with Odinma, Oborkhale). The Trends in Broadband Wireless Networks Technologies, The Pacific Journal of Science and Technology. 8(1):118-125, 2007.

— Kah, Muhammadou M.O. (with Amiri & El-Tarhuni). A Model of Telecommunication Sector Development in GCC Countries. Proc. of The 2nd International Conf. on Modeling, Simulation & Applied Optimization, Abu Dhabi, 2007.

— Kah, Muhammadou M.O. (with Kendall & Kendall).Formulating ICT Policy through Discourse: How Internet Discussions Shape Policies on ICT in Developing Countries, Journal of IT for Development, 2005.

— Kah, Muhammadou M.O. (With Mbarika, Meso & Musa). Do Investments in Telecommunications Infrastructure Improve Tele-density in Developing Countries? Electronic Journal on Information Systems in Developing Countries, Vol.12,#1, pp. 1-17,2003.

— Kah, Muhammadou M.O. (with Kendal & Kendall). ICTs and the Digital Divide: Using Fantasy Theme Analysis to Examine the Dialog of Policy Makers Research Abstract-Proc. of Decision Sciences (DSI 2003), Wash., DC, 2003.

— Kah, Muhammadou M.O. (with Mbarika). Precursor to the Diffusion of Information Communications Technologies(ICT's) for Africa's Least Developed Countries: Policy, Tele-density and Internet Diffusion Proceedings of the International Federation of Information Processing Conference (IFIP 9.4), Bangalore, India, 2002.

— Kah, Muhammadou M.O. (with Mbarika, Meso & Musa). The Role of IT in Transforming African Economies. Procee. of 2002 Annual Global Information Technology Management Conference (GITM), NY, 2002.

— Kah, Muhammadou M.O. (with Mbarika, Meso & Musa). Do Investments in Telecommunications Infrastructure Improve Tele-density Growth? Proce. of Annual Global Information Technology Management Conf.(GITM).2002.

— Kah, Muhammadou M.O. (with R.Papp).The Evolution of an Information Economy in West Africa: A Framework For Developing an Information Infrastructure in The Gambia. Proc. of Americas Conf. on Info. Systems,Boston, 2001.

— Kah, Muhammadou M.O., Strategic Significance of Information Technology: The Gambia, West Africa, Proceedings of the 2000 Americas Conference on Information Systems, CA, 2000.

— Kah, Muhammadou M.O, The Dynamics of Telecommunications Investment and Economic Growth - Proceedings of the 1997 Annual Conference of the Jamaica Computer Society, Jamaica, 1997.

# SELECTED PH.D. THESIS EXAMINATIONS

— University of Sierra Leone, Fourah Bay College, Media and Communication Studies: Assessing Indigenous Communication in Transitional Democratic State of Sierra Leone: A Case study of Fourah Bay Community in Western Urban and Hastings and Yams Farm Communities in Western Rural – 2019

— University of Sierra Leone, Fourah Bay College, Media and Communication Studies: Representation of Women Within Media in Sierra Leone - 2019

— University of Sierra Leone, Fourah Bay College, Media and Communication Studies: Assessing the Role of Social Media in enhancing Political Participation in the Electoral Processes in Sierra Leone - 2019

— University of South Africa (UNISA), Johannesburg,  South Africa - Creating public value in Information and communication technology: A learning analytics approach - 2020

— University of Cape Town, South Africa - Information Systems- Using software as a service to support the academic activities of students in higher education institutions with a relative lack of resources - 2018

— University of Cape Town, South Africa - Information Systems- A framework for enhancing government service delivery through the use of mobile technologies: An African countries context – 2016

— University of Cape Town, South Africa - Information Systems- The Impacts of ICT Infrastructure on National Development: A multi-method investigation involving data mining and data envelopment analysis – 2012

— University of Cape Town, South Africa-Information Systems- Integration of e-Learning Systems into Academic Programmes in South African Universities – 2010

— University of Cape Town, South Africa-Information Systems-The E-Government Artifact in the Context of a Developing Country: Towards a Nomadic Framework – 2008

— University of Cape Town, South Africa –Information Systems- The Internet As a Tool For Participation By Local Communities In Foreign Aid Projects In Sub-Saharan Africa - 2007

— University of Cape Town, South Africa-Information Systems - The role of Information Systems in legislation led reforms: a case study in the context of the new municipal rates act in South Africa" – 2007

— The University of The West Indies, Mona Campus-Information Systems - Towards a Knowledge Infrastructure Harnessing the Knowledge Sources of HealthCare Organizations - 2009

— The University of The West Indies, Mona Campus-Information Systems-The Evaluation of Information Systems (IS) Project Performance: A Multi-perspective Approach to Improved Understanding – 2009

— University of South Australia-Information Systems - The Internet As a Tool For Participation By Local Communities In Foreign Aid Projects In Sub-Saharan Africa –  2003

# SELECTED PH.D. THESIS SUPERVISIONS/ CO-SUPERVISIONS

— Acceptance of Learning Management Systems: A Perspective of Northern Nigerian Students - 2021

— Mobile Phone Use Among People with Disabilities in Adamawa State, Nigeria – Perspective from Critical Realist Single Case Study - 2022

# SELECTED MSC. THESIS SUPERVISION/ CO-SUPERVISION

— American University of Sharjah, Engineering Systems Management Graduate Program, United Arab Emirates (UAE) - A Model of Telecommunication Sector Development and Economic Growth in GCC Countries: A Case Study of UAE – 2006

Amb. Prof.

# Muhammadou M.O. Kah

**Candidate for Director of ITU Telecommunications Development Bureau (BDT)**

Telephone: **+41-79-577-9697**
Email: **muhammadou.kah@gmail.com**
Location: **Geneva, Switzerland**
linkedin.com/in/muhammadoukah
twitter.com/mkah
instagram.com/Kah4BDT
facebook.com/Kah4BDT

| Languages | English, Wolof, Arabic (intermediate), French (basic), Fulani (basic), Mandinka (basic) |
|---|---|
| Date of Birth | 06 May, 1966 |
| Nationality | The Gambia |
| Marital Status | Married, with three daughters |

Republic of The Gambia

# Bio

> ## As BDT Director, I will usher in a sustainable drive for thriving digital transformation to close the digital divide and enable equitable broadband connectivity for a better world

Driven by a passion for sustainable development, applications of digital and emerging technologies, building digital infrastructure, and mentoring future generations, I have focused my career on building capacity in information communication technologies (ICTs) for human development. As a global citizen with global leadership experiences, I have worked in a variety of contexts, both at the international and local grassroots levels. My work has aimed to advance and strengthen data and digital technology infrastructure within communities by facilitating innovative, collaborative programs to address the digital divide, inclusivity, affordable and universally accessible broadband connectivity, and digital skilling to build sustainable and value-creating ecosystems.

Early in my life, I recognized the potential of ICTs, telecommunications, and digitalization to uplift humanity from poverty, create wealth, and enhance the quality of life, especially for young people and women. As a result, I became a pioneer in the ICT for development field and a thought leader in the sector, through my extensive work in academia as well as through my services as a member of international scientific panels such as the Malabo Montpellier Panel, the Euro Science Forum, Science For Africa, Africa-Europe Foundation, African Agriculture Technology Foundation, and ReEngery Africa, amongst others. Under my leadership for BDT, I will bring immense capacity-building abilities as an institutional builder of sustainable and thriving digital ecosystems to respond to the needs of all Member States, especially LDCs, LLDCs, and SIDs. I will be a unifying leader for BDT with a commitment to closing the digital divide and championing inclusive and equitable digital outcomes.

In my current role as Ambassador & Permanent Representative of The Gambia to the UN Offices in Geneva, World Trade Organisation (WTO), and other international organizations in Switzerland, I have had the opportunity to substantively engage and elevate critical development topics in multilateral platforms, collaborating with Member States, international organizations, and civil society to champion sustainable development agendas for communities across the globe, especially the centrality of digitalization for economic revitalization. As the recent Chairman of the Africa Group of Ambassadors in Geneva, I served as a broker, interlocutor, and negotiator for challenging and diverse global issues in the multilateral system on cross-cutting topics including trade, intellectual property, digitalization, agriculture, public health, social policy, human rights, and gender. I believe that collaboration, partnership, and alignment across development organizations are critical to achieving the SDGs. ICTs and efficient deployment of sustainable digital and emerging technologies provides an excellent connector that can facilitate and enable productivity across sectors.

As an advisory board member for UNCTAD's trade and development bureau, and Vice-Chairman (Africa - reelected) of UNCTAD's Commission on Science and Technology for Development 25th session, I lead dialogues on some of the most pressing global issues

around digitalization, STI (science, technology, and innovation), frugal innovation, 4IR, and emerging technologies (AI, blockchain, IOTs, machine learning, big data, etc.).

It has been a pleasure throughout my career to work as The Gambia's Ambassador to the ITU as well as a contributor to policy dialogues and speaker at ITU and other global forums. Recent contributions include: Delivering the opening statements and serving as a moderator at ITU's Global Event for Emerging Technology for Connectivity 2021 for the session entitled *"Emerging Technology for Connectivity: Accelerating digital transformation in LDCs, LLDCs, and SIDs"*; **Panel Discussion** - *The Commonwealth Connectivity Agenda*; *Small-holder digital climate Advisory Services - Policy Implications for Data Infrastructure*; *Agriculture and Fisheries Data Infrastructure, 26th UN Framework Convention on Climate Change Conference of the Parties (COP26), Glasgow, UK*; **Panel Member** - *Leveraging Big Data and Innovation for the South in the Global Economy,* The Atlantic Dialogues, Policy Center For The New South, Rabat Morocco; **Panel Speaker** - 2020 Investor Summit: *ICTs for Improving Investment readiness of small and medium agribusinesses,*The Commercial Agriculture for Smallholders and

Agribusiness (CASA),Virtual Summit; **Panel Speaker** - *Boosting Innovation via better Knowledge Transfer,* World Intellectual Property (WIPO)'s International Seminar on *"Harnessing Public Research for Innovation in the Time of COVID-19 and Beyond – The Role of Knowledge Transfer Policies"*; **Moderator** (Virtual) - *Enhancing the frontiers of Youth Opportunity through Innovation and Scalability,* Millennium Excellence Foundation, Accra, Ghana; **Moderator** - *Agritech & Digital Supply Chain Webinar*; Islamic Trade Financinance Cooperation and the Islamic Development Bank, Jeddah, Saudi Arabia.

I also contributed on behalf of the government of The Gambia by **delivering a policy statement** highlighting *developments in The Gambia's digital ecosystem* at the Sixth World Telecommunications/ICT Policy Forum (WTPF-21). In addition, **I moderated** the recent forum co-organized by the African Union, Africa Group of Ambassadors in Geneva, the European Union, and the ITU with the theme "*Towards Digital Africa: Accelerating the Achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals."*

I have dedicated many years to mentoring people across continents to increase interest and capacity in the ICTs and emerging technologies disciplines, particularly

for underrepresented groups such as youth, women, and people from rural communities and small states (LDCs, LLDCs). I have held teaching and leadership positions in the United States, Africa, the Middle East, and Eastern Europe. I served as the first Gambian-born Vice-Chancellor of the University of Gambia from 2009 to 2015. Through my many years in academia, I have worked to create opportunities for young people to realize their potential and transfer knowledge and skills.

I am amongst the founding leadership of the American University of Nigeria (AUN), establishing the School of Information Technology and Communications and serving as Interim Dean of the School of Business & Entrepreneurship and CIO of the University for one year. I was also founding Dean of the School of Information Technology & Engineering and Vice-Rector for Technology and Innovation at ADA University in Baku, Azerbaijan. I spearheaded resource mobilization to facilitate the establishment of a center of excellence to build capacity and competencies in data science, big data, AI, machine learning, and other emerging technologies.

In addition, I have also had the opportunity to lead impactful initiatives to build the ICT

infrastructure in the rural community of Yola, Nigeria, by securing grants from the MacArthur Foundation (USA) to open an ICT training center to increase digital skills acquisition for youths, women, and other community members, providing a hub for students to create marketable and entrepreneurial skills in technology applications for the digital ecosystem. This work required me to develop partnerships with several private sector global technology companies including Microsoft, IBM, Oracle, and SAP that enabled participants to become certified and substantively skilled, in turn enhancing their employability, allowing them to enter the competitive international workforce or engage in start-up activities. For the past decade, I have been a non-resident Visiting Professor at the University of Johannesburg, South Africa, and serve as a Ph.D. Examiner for Information Systems and IT for Development for the University of Cape Town, South Africa,

Completing my Bachelor of Science, Master of Science, and Ph.D. in Technology Management and Information Systems at the Stevens Institute of Technology, in Hoboken, New Jersey, my PhD thesis in

1999 was on *"An econometric analysis of telecommunications, information technology, and economic growth in Africa: A case study of the Gambia."* was recognized and awarded the Best Dissertation at the Graduation ceremony.  I also hold a Master of Science in Finance from The George Washington University in Washington, DC and a Postgraduate Diploma (DipSI) in Strategy and Innovation from the University of Oxford, Saïd Business School in the United Kingdom. I was awarded an Honorary Doctoral Degree - Doctor of Science (D.Sc. - Honoris Causa) from the University of The Gambia. I also served as a contributor - teaching the "Africa Module" in the Advanced Leadership Program (ALP) at the Judge Business School, Executive Education Progam, University of Cambridge. I was also appointed as an honorary Fellow of the Judge Business School and the Digital Innovation Centre. For continuous professional development, I have completed several Executive Education Leadership Programs at Harvard University's Kennedy School, University of Cambridge, and AGA KHAN University (Kenya), University of Oxford, INSEAD, and Imprerial College, UK.

Recently, I completed the Digital Transformation Strategy program at Imperial College Business School in the UK, and the Harvard Law School Program on Negotiation and Dispute Resolution.

I also engage with private sector organizations as a leader and advisor, serving as the Founding Chairman of *Zenith Bank* in The Gambia and Chairman of the Board of Directors for *Africa Consulting & Trading Group (ACT)*, in Dakar, Senegal. I am a member of the *Malabo Montpelier Panel*, board of the *African Agriculture Technology Foundation*, advisory board of *Africa-Europe Foundation*, and *ReEnergy Africa*. I am an Internationally Certified Director from INSEAD, through the INSEAD Singapore and Fontainebleau program.

In 2014, I was also awarded The Gambia's National Merit Award, Insignia (Officer of The Republic - ORG) and the President's National Leadership Award. In 2020, I received the National Merit Award, Insignia (Member of The Republic of the Gambia - MRG). Recently in 2021, I was honored with an Endowed Professor of ICT by the ICT University, Yaounde, Cameroon.

Amb. Prof.

# Muhammadou M.O. Kah

**Candidate for Director of ITU Telecommunications Development Bureau (BDT)**

Republic of
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Languages — English, Wolof, Arabic (intermediate), French (basic), Fulani (basic), Mandinka (basic)

Date of Birth — 06 May, 1966
Nationality — The Gambia
Marital Status — Married, with three daughters

# Vision statement and leadership

> " **I will provide leadership to facilitate innovation, collaboration and partnerships, with smart policy regimes for affordable and accessible broadband connectivity.** "

It would be an honor to implement my strategic vision to drive forward a thriving ITU's development programs with innovative and sustainable initiatives for Member States. My leadership will be aimed at resolving access gaps with affordable and resilient broadband connectivity, closing the digital divide through inclusive activities, and facilitating digital transformation by increasing capability and capacity. This work will be propelled by innovative financing as well as collaboration with the private sector, learning institutions (academia), and civil society organizations.

Further, I will be a champion for Member States' requirements in respect of post-pandemic related challenges, especially where this relates to the digital divide, inclusivity in technological advancement, building needed competencies and capacity, requisite infrastructure, and smart policy regimes. My vision includes a commitment to

address key challenges for Member States, in that digital and emerging technologies are still consumed and not created, and connectivity and digital divide remain unresolved. Thus, our BDT will enhance its activities to build and strengthen digital ecosystems for Member States with capabilities that will facilitate innovation, transformation, financial value, connectivity, and closing the digital divide with inclusivity.

My experience in a diversity of global cultural contexts shapes my vision for the BDT and facilitates my ability to ensure inclusivity, especially for youth, women, members of our society who are ably challenged, and other vulnerable members. I am equipped with the ability to build relationships and be sensitive to the needs of all people, particularly in the context of growing, adopting, and deploying emerging digital technologies and digital transformation.
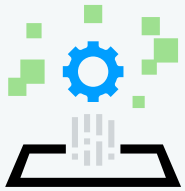
My leadership and vision for the BDT will usher in a sustainable and continuous drive for thriving digital innovation leading to a better world. As an energetic and innovative director, I will bring thought leadership and a game-changing mindset to ITU's BDT to usher in great agility, collaborative teamwork, and a development focus. In addition, my technical and leadership background spans the digital and telecommunication ecosystem in member states, facilitating my deep understanding of the opportunities and challenges facing ITU's work. I am propelled by a commitment to facilitate our collective objective of closing the digital divide, creating an equitable and inclusive information society, and scaling up our drive towards the attainment of the SDGs enabled by digitalization.

**Deploying my vision will include:**

### Collaborating
internally with the ITU Directorates Standard and Radio Communications to strengthen, align, and increase development as a core element in the overall institutions strategy, each directorate's strategy, programs, activities, and more importantly, as the ethos of a transformed ITU

### Leveraging
the capabilities and applications of emerging technologies

### Facilitating
the building of sustainable and resilient data and digital infrastructure to support digital transformation

### Facilitating
the centrality of development as a core ITU value to be embedded in the organizational culture, reflected in all ITU processes, and championed across the organization resulting in change that will permeate through all internal functions, regional structures, and policy and regulatory regimes for Member States

### Bolstering
the Telecommunication and Development Bureau with a diverse talent pool to support our work programs and activities

### Developing
innovative, sustainable, and integrated systems, solutions, and applications for new and challenging issues experienced by Member States
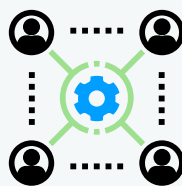
### Leveraging
resource mobilization and innovative financing for BDT's development programs leading to sustainable investments to advance Member States' digital transformation as a core of their national development plans

### Strengthening
multi-sector collaboration and partnerships to build a resilient and thriving digital ecosystem, connecting the unconnected, closing the digital divide with inclusivity, and digital skilling

### Enhancing
ITU flagship initiatives such as GIGA and Girls Can Code, equipping girls with digital skills and coding capabilities, Partner2Connect, and new innovative initiatives

> **We must produce high-quality content that builds ICT capacity and engagement in a meaningful way to help people not only be consumers of technology but also creators, experts, and visionaries for the future**

ICTs and digitalization are more than ever essential for the development of member countries, especially LDCs, LLDCs, SIDs, and communities across social, political, and economic elements. Emerging technologies, as well as digital platforms and tools, are being deployed with impactful applications in agriculture, health, trade, education, and delivery of social and government services. Harnessing artificial intelligence (AI), machine learning, deep learning, big data, blockchains, drones, and robotics is pivotal to strengthening ITU's mission, impact and value for Member States quest for digital transformation.

As an international leader, BDT serves its Members by convening key stakeholders from the private and public sector to define policy, support positive enabling environments, and facilitate the sharing of standards and practices from many industries with a development focus. ITU has defined its current strategic priorities to connect the world and shape the future of ICT. This work connects deeply to my personal mission to leverage ICT to bring people together and ensure that everyone, everywhere, has sustainable and equitable access to technology and affordable and reliable broadband connectivity.

As BDT Director, I will bring my experiences as a global leader, working directly on grassroots community capacity building as well as my international experience developing programs and partnerships across sectors, influencing policy and governance, and mentoring aspiring ICT professionals. We must produce high-quality content that builds ICT capacity and engagement in a meaningful way to help people not only be consumers of technology but also creators, experts, and visionaries for the future. During my time as an Ambassador in Geneva, I have championed the centrality of digitalization as an enabler to achieving the SDGs. I have gained unique knowledge and experiences with key stakeholders in the multilateral system, across governments, civil society, academia, and the private sector.

The combination of skills I have demonstrated in my career in coordination, facilitation, negotiation, strategy development, and thought leadership combined with an extensive technical background has prepared me to lead the BDT. To fulfill ITU's Development mandate, I will infuse an entrepreneurial and start-up mindset, recruiting and retention of talent, into the culture of the BDT to encourage our team to harness their creativity and embrace disruptions and frugal innovation to support Member States with smart and pragmatic regulatory regimes and innovations that will build thriving ecosystems and digitally-enabled value chains for our Member States.

> **Amb. Prof. Kah has a track record that stands out anchored on decades of substantive thought leadership in telecommunication and Development, ICTs for Development, Applications of ICTs in health, agriculture, education (digital learning technologies), government (e-government and digital transformation), mobile and emerging technologies and e-commerce. He also has substantive experience and leadership in building Digital Ecosystems and value chains across continents, within academia, public service, the private sector, civil society organizations and start-ups. He is a proven successful institutional builder with impactful leadership tenure at a diversity of institutions across continents. Energetic, enthusiastic, with high social and emotional intelligence. Amb. Prof. Kah has experience of supporting and working with a diversity of senior government leadership and regulatory regimes.**

**Hon. Ebrima Sillah,** Minister of Information & Communication Infrastructure (The Gambia)

**Under my leadership of the Telecommunication and Development Bureau (BDT), I will vigorously prioritize and focus on the following:**

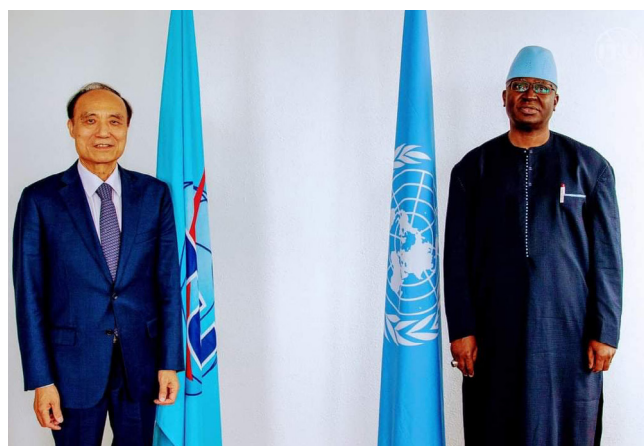# Digital divide and inclusivity

The need for inclusive access to technology has become imperative to social development for all people, particularly those who face barriers to access. I will provide leadership to establish substantive collaborations and partnerships to facilitate the adoption of innovations leading to affordable and universally accessible, reliable, secure, and ubiquitous broadband connectivity.

Further, leveraging new and emerging technologies (AI, quantum computing, blockchains, robotics, drone technologies, machine learning, IOT, deep learning) cannot be achieved without first addressing the inequities in the science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) fields and without disrupting and improving curriculums and program structures and credential approaches (ex. embracing micro-credentials).

We must consider gender, age, ability, geography, and socio-economic status and apply an equity lens to all ITU's programs and activities. I will situate the BDT as a proponent and champion of digital equality, empowerment, and support for youth, women and the physically challenged. I will lead innovative and impactful initiatives aimed at bridging the digital divide to ensure affordable, accessible, and resilient broadband internet connectivity within urban areas and rural communities.

# Data and digital infrastructure

ICT has become more central in people's lives than ever before, with the COVID-19 pandemic creating a stronger need for people to operate remotely and rely on telecommunication systems and digital platforms and services. ITU plays a key role in enabling the least developed countries to keep up with the growing demands on data and digital infrastructure to drive towards a world that is connected even during global crises. Data and digital infrastructure is the first building block needed to be able to scale up the creation and use of digital services and platforms. This is particularly critical for LDCs, LLDCs, and SIDs, and I am committed to supporting innovative initiatives and programs, including multi-sectoral collaborations and partnerships for Member States to build their sustainable data and digital infrastructure.

# Digital transformation of government and social services

Using my significant field experiences working across different continents, as well as my diplomatic credentials, I will provide leadership to facilitate negotiations, cooperation, and engagement with partners to scale up ICTs and digital growth for value-creation and development across our Member States. Governments of Member States must adopt ICTs and embrace digital transformation for effective delivery of services to citizens and key stakeholders to put in place affordable and universally accessible, reliable, secure, and ubiquitous broadband connectivity, along with a digitally enabled supply chain, digital identifiers, and government digital platforms and services.

I will champion the adoption of advancements in emerging technologies and digital transformations to Member States, enabling a charge forward with sustainable development in our collective bid to promote economic and societal benefits and attainment of the SDGs. We will strengthen our technical support for Member States' digital transformation initiatives and programs to facilitate digital capability. This will include a focus on:

**A.** Essentials for Member States - Leadership and political buy-In; Team ability; Market and government readiness; Required resources and strategies for resource mobilization.

**B.** Readiness for Member States - Strategy; Governance; Data and digital infrastructure; Development ethos; Measurement; Build capacity and support infrastructure for cyber and information security for Member states, especially LDCs, LLDCs, and SIDs.

**C.** Performance for Member States- Sustainable finance and innovation; Design and process innovation; Architecture, requirements, deployment, and implementation; Training and upskilling; Development of digital solution plan; Identify national development priorities; Strengthening national development plans embedding digital as a core element for all sectors and enabler of processes; Alignments and public awareness and education.

# Smarter Policy & Regulatory Regime Capabilities and Expert Guidance

As new and emerging technologies disrupt and challenge existing policy regimes that may not fit current times, the need for agility, expert guidance, and a broad talent pool to facilitate smarter regulatory frameworks for Member States will be BDT's commitment. Under my leadership, the BDT will be responsive to supporting Member States for needed reforms and improvements to usher in a regulatory environment that will enable a sustainable and thriving digital ecosystem for Member States. I will champion and commit to revitalizing and strengthening BDTs support for policy and regulatory regimes and frameworks that are fit for purpose, responsive, and facilitate growth.

I'll provide leadership to bring to the forefront of improved policy regimes for Member States to build capacity and capability on internet governance. This is particularly important for LDCs, LLDCs, and SIDs. This will swiftly facilitate the creation of an enabling environment wherein stakeholders are guided to developing smarter policy and regulatory regimes that consider the complicated questions around regulations, ethics, security, and privacy. Further, it will facilitate building a sustainable, thriving ecosystem that will harness the growing youthful talent in LDC, LLDC, and SID Member States to unleash their creativity, innovation, effective and efficient utilization and contribution of local content and indigenous knowledge as value to the ecosystems and value chains. In addition, this will lead to production capabilities contributing to the digital platforms and services powered by emerging technologies across global value chains and creating employment and wealth.

# Resource Mobilization, Sustainable & Innovative Financing, and a Culture of Excellence

To achieve ITU's ambitious goals, we must harness expertise, nurture and retain talent, and build a strong culture of a development ethos. Excellence, quality, and high performance will reinforce our values of being a people-centric, results-based organization that is impactful in the digital empowerment of citizens across Member States. Under my leadership, the BDT will manage resources and our operations efficiently with transparency and accountability, will strengthen the talent pool and financial resources, especially at BDT's Regional Offices.

As a leader, I will champion a culture of feedback, recognition, and inclusion. I believe that bringing out the best in others requires strong mentoring and support from leadership and that a learning and active listening culture enables organizational knowledge to be shared and grown. I will lead and secure strong multi-sectoral collaborations and partnerships to facilitate successful resource mobilization and infuse innovative and sustainable financing for the rapid deployment of programs.