

**Policy Statement by H.E. Hon. William Kabogo Gitau, Cabinet Secretary, Ministry of Information, Communications, and the Digital Economy of the Republic of Kenya
High-Level Segment, WTDC-25, Baku, Azerbaijan**

***Theme:** Universal, Meaningful, and Affordable Connectivity for an Inclusive and Sustainable Digital Future*

Ms. Doreen Bogdan-Martin, Secretary General, International Telecommunication Union

Dr. Cosmas Zavazava, Director, Telecommunication Development Bureau

Excellencies,

Distinguished delegates,

Ladies and gentlemen,

The Republic of Kenya is profoundly honoured to participate at this august forum, which tracks progress made and the future of global connectivity,

Kenya's digital transformation journey exemplifies how national innovations can illuminate pathways for global digital inclusion and sustainable development. We have not only benefited from various ITU initiatives but also have been active contributors to the shaping of the global digital policy landscape.

Our commitment to expanding meaningful connectivity has led to significant milestones: nearly 800,000 people in underserved and unserved regions are now connected to mobile networks; over \$300 million from the Universal Service Fund is driving broadband infrastructure expansion to bridge the digital divide for approximately 2.7 million citizens currently offline. These investments include connecting government institutions, deploying extensive fibre optic networks, and delivering digital learning content to primary schools.

We have also pioneered inclusive digital initiatives, such as providing assistive devices for learners with print disabilities and nurturing youth digital skills targeting 1,450 digital hubs. Kenya's experience with digitizing public services, through platforms like E-Citizen and E-Procurement, has revolutionized governance by enhancing transparency and efficiency, setting replicable models for countries worldwide.

These achievements offer valuable lessons on how pragmatic policy frameworks, backed by multi-stakeholder partnerships and innovative financing, can accelerate digital transformation. Kenya's experience demonstrates the importance of combining connectivity expansion with digital literacy and inclusive service delivery, factors crucial to driving socio-economic empowerment globally.

At the continental level, Kenya proudly champions Africa's role in the global digital dialogue. As hosts of one of ITU's 17 Global Innovation and Entrepreneurship Centres, we nurture a vibrant ICT startup ecosystem that fuels innovation across African markets. Our participation in continental projects like the Africa Broadband Mapping Systems, executed by ITU and the European Union, strengthens regional efforts to close the digital divide, fostering a unified African digital agenda that resonates on the world stage.

Africa's emerging voice is pivotal in shaping ITU's future priorities, promoting data-driven policymaking, advancing cybersecurity frameworks, and enhancing regional cooperation to accelerate universal connectivity. Kenya's recognition by the ITU as Africa's leading ICT policy regulatory environment, ranked 20th globally, reflects our commitment to creating enabling environments that grow innovation inclusively.

Looking ahead, Kenya's National Digital Masterplan 2022-2032, alongside our National AI Strategy and 5G deployment, anchors our vision for an inclusive digital society that contributes actively to shaping global norms and standards. Our partnership with the ITU continues to be vital in this journey, as we jointly strive to realize universally affordable and meaningful connectivity.

In conclusion, Kenya affirms its role not only as a beneficiary but as an innovator and leader advancing the global digital agenda. We invite all partners to join us in harnessing digital transformation to achieve inclusive, equitable, and sustainable development for all.

Thank you for your kind attention.