

MR Chairman of the conference

Excellencies

Ministers and heads of delegations

ITU Secretary general

And elected officials

Distinguished delegates

Ladies and gentlemen

On behalf of the government of Rwanda, it is my pleasure to address you today and first and foremost I would like to congratulate the Republic of Azerbaijan for hosting this conference and thank you for the reception and hospitality.

As we gather here in Baku Azerbaijan, the global technology landscape is rapidly changing bringing with it new opportunities and also challenges. What has brought us together is a shared interest and commitment towards developing the digital economy in a manner that brings benefit to all of humanity.

Rwanda's policies and strategies align with the theme of WTDC 2025 which is "Universal and meaningful affordable connectivity for inclusive and sustainable digital future". Since 2000, the government of Rwanda has established institutions and mechanisms to create enabling environment and that has been helping us positively impact the lives of Rwandan people.

Rwanda will continue to ensure that every Rwandan has access to resilient and affordable broadband connectivity, access to smart devices and that they are equipped with digital skills to navigate the digital economy. In addition to expanding our fiber connectivity we also recognize the advancement of non-geostationary satellite communication technologies that are bridging the digital divide and contributing to socio-economic development of all of us as member states.

We continue to innovate on service delivery putting in place a safe and secure digital ID for all the citizens and we are also innovating at the policy level where our national data sharing policy is enabling innovation

particularly within public institutions but also in the private sector while also enabling the AI possibilities to drive economy growth, enhance public services and deliver inclusive development throughout the key sectors of the country.

As His Excellency President Paul Kagame highlighted on Africa's vision of AI and I coat" Africa cannot afford to be left behind once again playing catch up we have to adapt, cooperate and compete because it is in our best interest to do so". It is that vein that I want to thank all the partnership we have had with ITU and all the member states and as Rwanda with enjoyed leadership of His excellency Paul Kagame of the Republic of Rwanda but we also want to continue to collaborate globally with member states in driving key interventions including the Smart Africa alliance of the continent of Africa and other global multilateral forums.

Since hosting WTDC in 2022, Rwanda has hosted the Global AI Summit on Africa and championed the establishment of Africa AI council, we hosted MWC Africa and we continue to engage with all of you as we shape a digital transformation global landscape that leaves no one behind.

It is with that framework I would like to announce that Rwanda will be pursuing re-election to the ITU Council for the term of 2027-2030, we request your support and votes as we continue the digital future that leaves no one behind together.

Once again, I wish you a productive WTDC 2025 here in Baku.

Thank you for your attention.