

OFFICE OF THE SPECIAL
ENVOY ON TECHNOLOGY

TechPlomacy

Newsletter
August 2025

TOGETHER
For Change

How technology revolution is impacting everything.

Amb. Philip Thigo
Office Of The Special Envoy on Technology

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ENVOY'S NOTE

Rebuilding trust in the age of technological acceleration, crisis of trust in institutions and the need to re-imagine capable developmental states



Technology is no longer at the margins of our societies—it is the very fabric through which we govern, trade, learn, and secure our future. Yet as the pace of innovation accelerates, so too does the crisis of trust in institutions. Rebuilding that trust is not just about new policies or frameworks; it is about re-imagining capable states, investing in people, and ensuring that technology remains anchored in dignity and shared prosperity.

This edition of the TechPlomacy Newsletter captures how we in Kenya, together with our partners, are navigating this new terrain. From shaping the design of global AI governance institutions at the United Nations, to advancing sovereign AI initiatives rooted in African languages, to rethinking digital accessibility and data as a public good —our work affirms a simple principle: Africa must be a creator, not just a user, of technology.

Inclusion is central to this vision. When women and children are not counted in our data, they are not served by our systems. In the age of intelligence, bias in the AI stack—compute, data, talent, models, and use cases—translates into bias in outcomes. Centering women and children in how we design and deploy technology is not an act of charity, but of justice, equity, and resilience. It ensures that the benefits of AI are distributed fairly and that our societies are stronger, not weaker, in the face of change.

Equally, this is an age where trust and safety must become the guardrails of progress. From countering disinformation and violent extremism, to ensuring safe adoption of AI in healthcare and justice, to protecting children online, our diplomacy insists that technology cannot outpace ethics. Trust is the new global currency, and safety is its measure.

What inspires me most is the spirit of collective action that runs through these pages. Whether in building bridges between Nairobi and Los Angeles, convening multilateral forums on trust and safety, or listening to children re-imagine the future of education, we are reminded that technology diplomacy is ultimately about people.
As you read, I invite you to see not only the projects and partnerships, but also the vision they point to: a world where technology strengthens our societies rather than divides them, where inclusion and responsibility guide innovation, and where trust is restored as the foundation of progress.

Amb. Thigo

TechEnvoy, Kenya

Team Decompress

The team took a much-needed break after 14 months of navigating the complexities of technology diplomacy. This moment provided an opportunity to step back, reflect, and celebrate the collective effort that often goes unseen behind major outcomes.

What stood out during this decompress was the balance between commitment and camaraderie. Even as laptops were occasionally used for quick follow-ups, there was still space for open conversations, light moments, and team-building activities that strengthened trust and collaboration.

The session also created room to surface shared learnings from the journey so far—what worked well, what needed adjustment, and how the team could evolve its ways of working to be even more adaptive in a fast-changing environment. This reflection was critical in linking day-to-day work with long-term strategic goals.

Most importantly, the decompression reinforced the team's culture of mutual support, resilience, and shared purpose. This cohesion continues to drive their ability to take on challenges, push boundaries, and deliver impact.



Christchurch Call Foundation

The Office of the Special Envoy on Technology held a virtual engagement with the leadership of the Christchurch Call Foundation, represented by Mr. Paul Ash (former Special Advisor to New Zealand Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern) and Ms. Yasmin Chilmeran. The Christchurch Call is a landmark multistakeholder initiative that brings together governments, technology companies, and civil society to eliminate terrorist and violent extremist content online. It promotes voluntary collaboration aimed at reducing the spread of harmful content while upholding human rights and protecting digital freedoms. Discussions highlighted the Foundation's ongoing work —often undertaken discreetly—on critical issues.

These include strengthening information integrity and resilience, advancing trust and safety in digital spaces, countering gender-based violence and extremism, and addressing the challenges posed by rapid technological change.The Special Envoy expressed appreciation for the Foundation's efforts and reaffirmed alignment on these shared priorities. The meeting was made possible through the kind introduction of Ambassador Prof. Bitange Ndemo. Looking ahead, the Office will pursue deeper engagement with the Christchurch Call Foundation in the coming months to advance joint objectives for a safer and more resilient digital ecosystem.



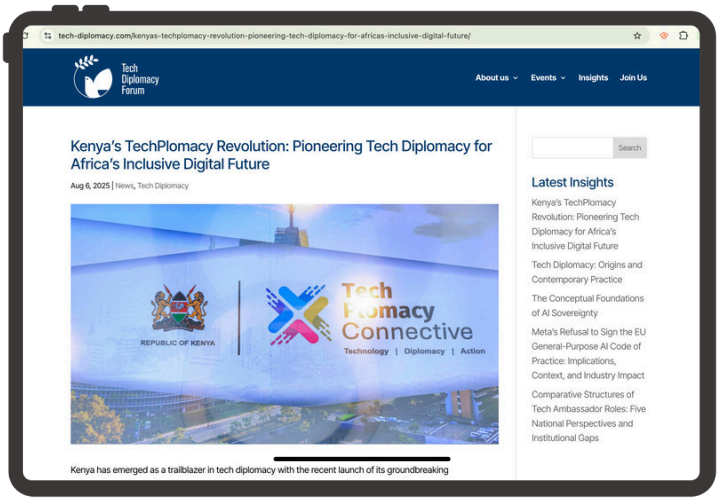


Strengthening Development Data Systems in Times of Uncertainty

The Office of the Special Envoy on Technology joined partners from LDRI and CEPEI in a roundtable on strengthening development data systems. Discussions underscored the urgent need for resilient data infrastructures to address emerging global challenges.

The Special Envoy highlighted four priorities: building capable development states through technical capacity and financial reforms to secure long-term capital; breaking down silos to enable seamless data sharing between government and the private sector; cultivating leadership fluency on the high economic returns of data investment; and engaging Ministries of Finance and Planning to ensure sustainable budgetary commitments.

The Office looks forward to continued engagement with partners to advance these imperatives in the coming weeks.



A spotlight on Kenya's techplomacy connective

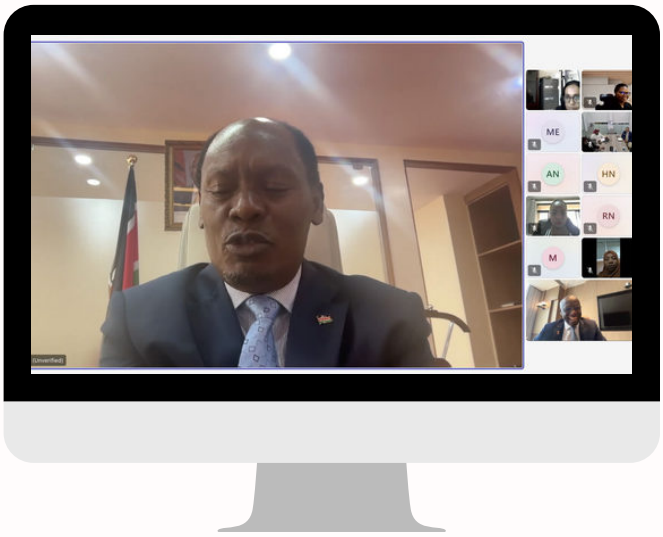
Honored that Kenya's TechPlomacy Revolution is spotlighted by the Tech Diplomacy Forum (Aug 6, 2025). Our TechPlomacy Connective initiative, launched in July by the Prime Cabinet Secretary Musalia Mudavadi, represents a bold new model for Global South leadership in digital and diplomatic collaboration. By bringing together governments, multilaterals, industry, and civil society, we're shaping an inclusive, ethical, and resilient global tech ecosystem—built from Nairobi for the world.

This feature underscores that Africa can—and must—lead in development and use of Ai, build bridges, break silos, and champion a human-first approach to emerging technologies.



Harnessing the Transformative Power of AI in Africa

The Office of the Special Envoy on Technology, Amb. Philip Thigo, joined Mark Elliott, Division President, Africa, Mastercard, to launch the white paper Harnessing the Transformative Power of AI in Africa and to speak on AI's role in shaping the continent's future. The discussion highlighted AI's potential to drive inclusion in finance, health, infrastructure, and education, stressed the need for collaboration across governments, industry, and innovators, and called for deliberate policies and capacity building that empower local innovators. Amb. Philip Thigo emphasized Africa's pivotal moment to ensure AI-driven growth is inclusive, ethical, and transformational.



Advancing Kenya-DCO Collaboration and Membership

Kenya is moving closer to formally joining the Digital Cooperation Organization (DCO) following months of productive dialogue and high-level bilateral meetings. Amb. Philip Thigo, Kenya's Special Envoy on Technology, moderated a session chaired by Hon. William Kabogo, where DCO colleagues presented their ambitious four-year strategy. The strong alignment between DCO's strategic pillars and the Ministry's Transformation Agenda—underscored by the Cabinet Secretary—signals a solid foundation for shared progress. Of particular note was the Digital Economy Navigator, a tool that provides empirical insights to support data-driven policymaking and empower SMEs on Kenya's digital journey. The Office of the Special Envoy looks forward to deepening this collaboration and leveraging DCO's tools and expertise to unlock new opportunities for Kenya's digital entrepreneurs.



Global Trust Summit: Concept Note Shared

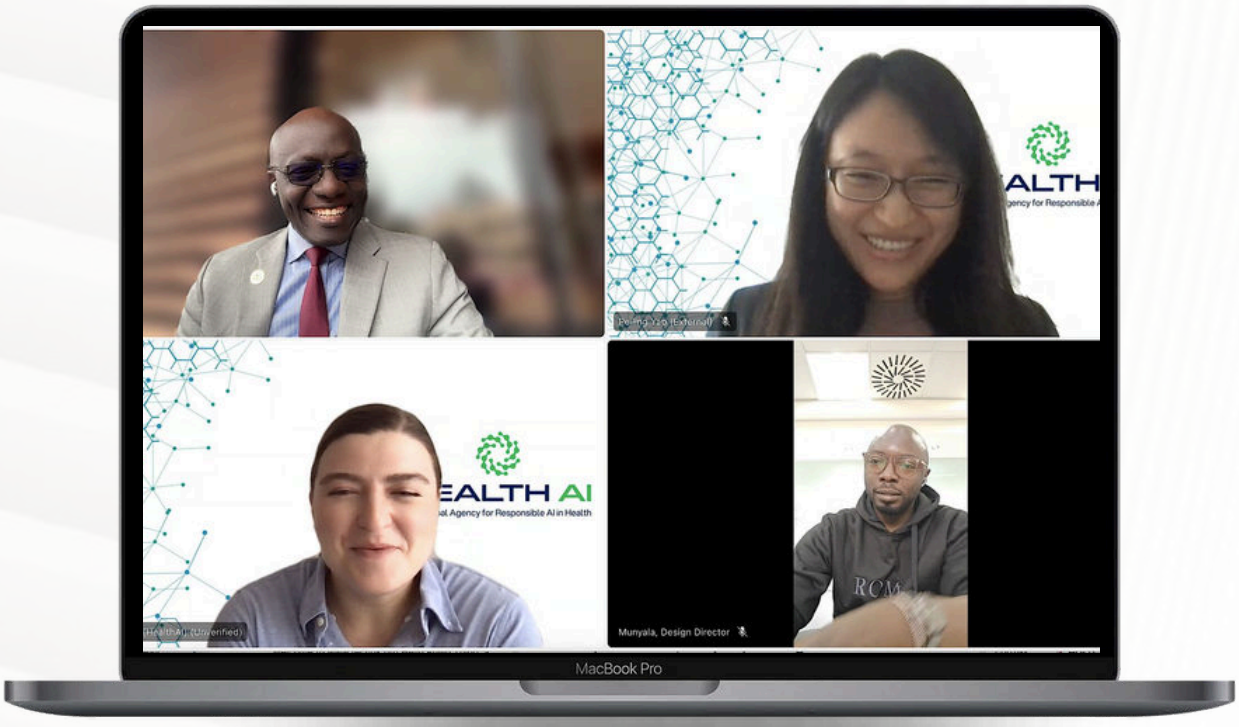
The Office of the Special Envoy on Technology, Amb. Philip Thigo shared the initial concept note for the Global Trust Summit during a meeting convened by the State Department of Foreign Affairs and chaired by Principal Secretary Dr. Korir Sing'oei. The session brought together stakeholders from government, civil society, academia, multilateral organizations, and the private sector.

The Summit, to be hosted in Nairobi, will bring together global leaders, technology executives, and policy experts to deliberate on the global trust deficit. Key thematic areas identified include mis/disinformation and the erosion of truth, governance of emerging technologies with a focus on AI safety, resilience of critical infrastructure, inequality, and the future of global cooperation. Kenya's role in hosting the Summit underscores its tradition of convening high-level multistakeholder dialogues that respond to complex global challenges.



Uniting Silicon Valley and the Silicon Savannah for Inclusive Innovation

The Office of the Special Envoy on Technology engaged with key leaders, including the Deputy Governor of Nairobi, H.E. Njoroge Muchiri; the Secretary for Transport for California, Mr. Toks Omishakin; the Deputy Mayor of Los Angeles for International Affairs, Dilpreet Sidhu; and a delegation from the State of California. The discussions centered on trade, investment, and technology, emphasizing shared aspirations for inclusive growth, smart cities, and sustainable futures. The Kenya–Nairobi–California–Los Angeles partnership leverages the expertise of Silicon Valley and Nairobi, the "Silicon Savannah," to pioneer urban innovation, green mobility, and inclusive economic growth. By acknowledging both shared challenges and unique opportunities, the collaboration aims to transform vision into concrete action that positively impacts communities and the environment.



EXCITING CONVERSATIONS ON HEALTHAL'S GLOBAL GOVERNANCE FORUM 2025

The office conducted a preparatory briefing with Dr. Peiling Yap and Anna Brezhenva ahead of the HealthAI Global Governance Forum 2025, providing strategic insights on AI integration in healthcare, focusing on governance, compliance, and operational readiness. The discussions emphasized the necessity of aligning AI technologies with local health system contexts, considering infrastructure limitations, workforce readiness, and patient accessibility, and highlighted the importance of phased implementation and adaptation to local clinical workflows.

Key points included adherence to global and regional regulatory frameworks, clinical safety standards, data protection protocols, and ethical guidelines for patient care.

The office also noted the critical need for enhanced data governance, interoperability of health information systems, and targeted capacity-building for healthcare professionals to ensure effective AI adoption. Furthermore, effective AI governance was linked to multi-level stakeholder coordination, including policymakers, healthcare providers, technologists, and civil society, to ensure equitable access and sustainable adoption. These insights underscore the importance of structured frameworks, capacity-building initiatives, and investments in infrastructure and governance mechanisms to support safe, ethical, and scalable AI deployment within regional health systems

ELEVATE Initiative



The ELEVATE Initiative, launched in partnership with Microsoft, has already seen more than 300 Kenyan women enroll in its second cohort for 2025. Designed to empower women and strengthen professional capacities in Artificial Intelligence, the program provides specialized courses, mentorship guidance sessions, interactive workshops, professional networks, and accredited certificates. What makes ELEVATE unique is its inclusivity — no prior AI experience is required, making it accessible to women from all backgrounds, whether they are beginners or early-career professionals.



This milestone reflects the growing momentum of a global movement to Elevate Women in AI. Yet,the ambition stretches further: to welcome even more women into this transformative journey. By joining ELEVATE, participants not only gain valuable technical knowledge but also access a supportive global community shaping the future of work and technology. We invite more women to take part, seize the opportunity, and help redefine the role of women in the AI space.

Scaling Ideas to Action: Advancing AI Collaboration Across Sectors

The office met with Winnie Karanu (Microsoft) to explore executive-level skilling across the Executive, Judiciary, Foreign Service, and Parliament. The discussion also reflected on ongoing collaborations with ICare and UNESCO in Saudi Arabia under the Decision Intelligence Design Fellowship (DIDF).

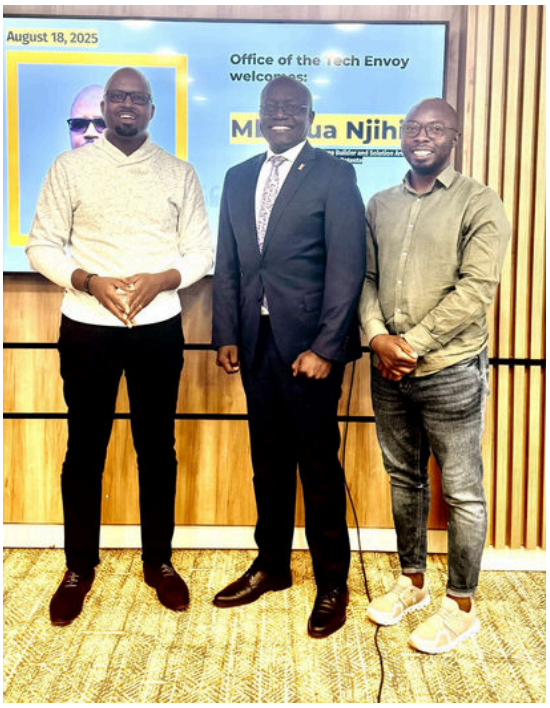


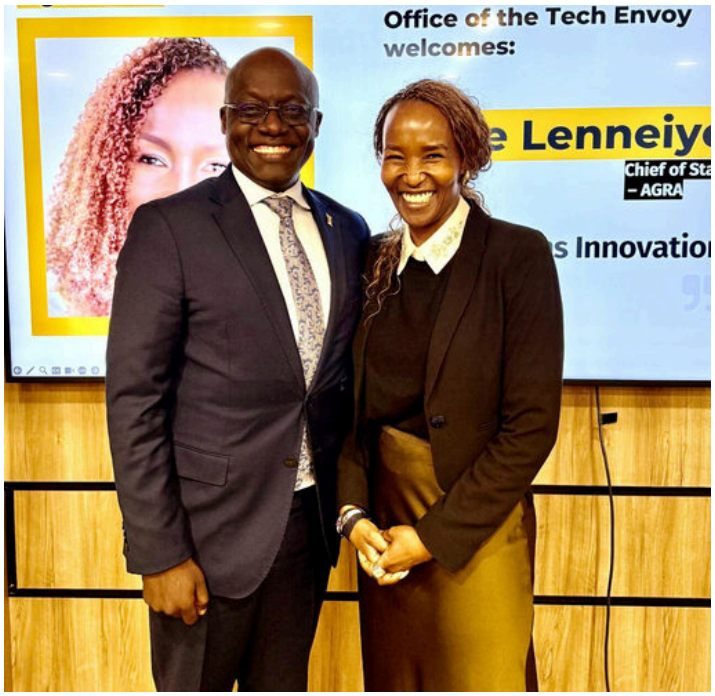


The office met with Shain Rahim (Cisco) to deepen conversations on the AI workforce readiness study and on smart cities and urban innovation with Nairobi City County. The discussions built on the momentum of the recently launched White Paper, with appreciation extended to Charmaine Houvet for joining online.

Scaling Ideas to Action: Advancing AI Collaboration Across Sectors

The office met with Mbugua Njihia to discuss rethinking finance through cross-border digital payments, while also evolving the use case emerging from the MIT Kuo-Sharper Center — “Hedging Currency Risk: From Strategies to Implementation.”





The office met with Thule Lenneyie (AGRA) to focus on food systems innovation and digital public infrastructure (DPI), with discussions centered on boosting farmer incomes through technology and start-ups, and strengthening household resilience through trade-driven investments across the AI stack.

The office met with Philip Mwaniki (Roya Media Services) to discuss re-imagining Kenya’s Silicon Savannah in the age of intelligence through storytelling, exploring the future of media, and leveraging media assets for local language large language models (LLMs).





Nairobi-Los Angeles Dialogue on Trade and Investment

The Office of the Special Envoy on technology participated in a high-level discussion with Dilpreet Sidhu, the Deputy Mayor for International Affairs for the City of Los Angeles. The primary objective of the dialogue was to strengthen trade and investment ties between Nairobi and Los Angeles.
This discussion builds on our historical collaboration, which includes the groundbreaking virtual Trade Tour held during the COVID-19 pandemic. A key outcome of this meeting was the agreement to establish a formal Nairobi–Los Angeles Trade & Investment Dialogue. This new initiative will focus on advancing cooperation in areas of research, technology, and innovation, leveraging the shared priorities and common interests of both cities.



Alignment of Research on Data and AI

The office of the special envoy on technology, in collaboration with Leonida Mutuku of LDRI, have significantly advanced our research on data and AI alignment. Her pioneering work in data science and contributions to Data for Development have been invaluable. Ms. Mutuku's leadership in shaping Kenya's National AI Strategy, which is built on the pillars of AI Digital Infrastructure, Data, and AI Research, Development, and Innovation, has ensured an inclusive and locally-grounded vision for AI. Together, we have been developing critical pathways for Kenya's AI adoption, focusing on creating a robust AI stack that is locally rooted, ethical, equitable, and research-driven. We are preparing to unveil the results of this research in the coming months.



AI in Kenya & Africa - Vision Unwrapped

On Unwrap Africa (SABC), Amb. Philip Thigo joined Thembekile Mrototo to discuss Kenya's role in shaping the future of artificial intelligence and Africa's position in global digital transformation. The conversation highlighted Kenya's AI ambitions, the President's strategic focus on building across the full AI stack—from research and infrastructure to deployment—and Africa's agency in the Fourth Industrial Revolution, stressing the need to shift from being suppliers of raw materials to becoming active beneficiaries through local talent, innovation, and sustainable growth..

Exploring Areas of Collaboration between Action Lab and Cisco



A team from the Office of the Special Envoy on Technology: Action Lab, engaged Cisco CDA to explore the establishment of a long-term Action Lab–Cisco partnership aimed at positioning Kenya as a continental and global hub for public interest technology.

Anchored in Action Lab's role as a neutral convener and Cisco's global CDA expertise, the collaboration seeks to advance Kenya's digital transformation, strengthen digital sovereignty, and drive inclusive economic growth.

The parties agreed to anchor their work around four flagship innovation tracks for 2025:
The Nairobi Smart Region Digital Twin, Judiciary Modernization, Food Systems Transformation, and Cybersecurity & Workforce of the Future.

These initiatives will be overseen by a joint Steering Board and supported through secure lab infrastructure, seed funding, and blended financing models.

Next Steps:

- Secure institutional resources and lab infrastructure to operationalize the Action Lab facility.
- Establish a high-level Steering Board with representatives from Cisco, Action Lab, and key ministries.
- Launch 2025 flagship pilots:
  - Nairobi Smart Region Digital Twin (mobility, services, safety, climate monitoring).
  - Judiciary digital infrastructure pilots (e-filing, AI-ready systems, virtual courts).
  - Farmer digital ID and national agri-DPI pilots for food systems transformation.
  - Expansion of the National Cybersecurity Training Centre and deployment of AI-enabled SOCs.
- Develop the 2025–2028 joint roadmap aligned with Kenya's Digital Economy Masterplan, incorporating regional and global engagement.
- Engage donors, DFIs, and private sector partners to co-invest in scaling and ensuring long-term sustainability.



AFRICAN YOUTH FORUM SUMMIT

The team joined the African Youth conversation, themed “Youth Advancing Multilateral Cooperation through Technology & Partnerships”, and explored how young people can shape institutions and harness technology for inclusive growth.

Dr. Dlamini-Zuma emphasized that Agenda 2063 places citizens at the center, calling for a “skilling revolution” to build the infrastructure of the future across finance, manufacturing, and trade.

Speakers emphasized that the Age of Intelligence necessitates a shift in mindset —one that is adaptive, reform-oriented, and responsive to global challenges. Participants echoed the President of Kenya’s consistent advocacy for an inclusive and just multilateral system, underscoring the role of youth in leveraging technology not only to hold leaders accountable but also to engage in public service, strengthen food systems, and create opportunities for prosperity and productivity.



Unlocking Opportunity Through Collaboration

the launch of the CISCO White Paper “AI and the Workforce in Africa”, discussions highlighted the importance of partnerships in advancing digital skills, innovation, and entrepreneurship. Hilda Moraa’s leadership in fintech and SME empowerment, alongside Winnie Karanu’s work on Microsoft’s skilling initiatives in Kenya and the Women Elevate program with iCare in Saudi Arabia, were noted as key drivers of progress.

The initiatives have expanded digital skills access in Kenya and empowered women leaders in Saudi Arabia, reflecting the potential of cross-sector and cross-regional collaboration. Conversations at the event underscored opportunities to scale these efforts further, ensuring greater impact in preparing the workforce for the future.



Regional Women in Data Summit 2025

AMb. Philip Thigo addressed the Africa Regional Women in Data Summit 2025 in Naivasha alongside Ms. Mercy Wanjau, Hon. Harriette Chiggai, and Namhla Mniki-Mangaliso. He stressed that when women and youth are not counted, they are not served — and in the Age of Intelligence, bias in data drives bias in outcomes. Calling for a shift from Digital Public Infrastructure to Digital Public Intelligence, he emphasized real-time, transparent, and inclusive systems centered on women and youth. Noting that every $1 invested in data yields $32 in returns, he underlined the economic and governance benefits. With the Summit focusing on health, food, trade, and service delivery, he concluded: “Resilience is a choice — the smartest today is investing in data, AI, and Digital Public Intelligence for all.”

Cohere - Action Lab sync on Kenyan LLM project

On 15th August 2025, Cohere and the Office of the Special Envoy on Technology held a sync on the Kenyan LLM project, focusing on partnership finalization and investor engagement. Phase one targets a judicial use case in English and Swahili, while phase two expands to Kenyan languages. Cohere will draft the partnership agreement and investor deck, with Action Lab engaging potential backers such as Safaricom, Oracle, Cassava, and Cisco. Later in the month, the Envoy’s office met with Safaricom to explore collaboration on financial support, technical cooperation, and data sharing within the Cohere–Action Lab sovereign LLM initiative.

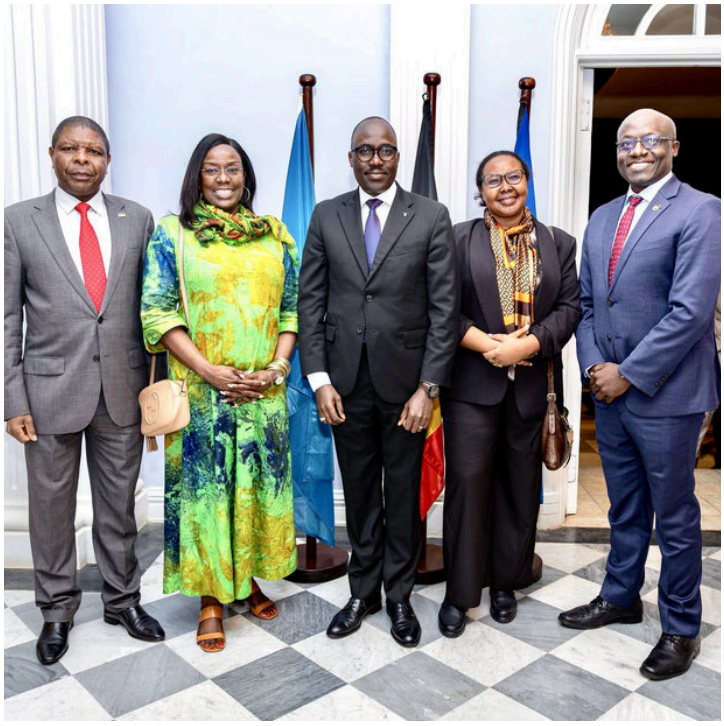




STRENGTHENING KENYA-CALIFORNIA RESEARCH & INNOVATION PARTNERSHIPS

The Office of the Special Envoy on Technology participated in the Roundtable on Research & Innovation Partnerships between Kenya and California, convened during the California–Africa Climate & Economic Partnership Forum in Nairobi.
The discussions highlighted parallels between Kenya's "Silicon Savannah" and California's Silicon Valley as global epicenters of creativity, tech-driven innovation, and problem-solving in areas such as AI-powered climate solutions, agritech, sustainable mobility, and health innovation.

A key outcome was the establishment of the Africa Clean Transportation Centre of Excellence (ACT CoE) in Nairobi, which will catalyse sustainable mobility innovation across the continent.
Over the next 12–24 months, the partnership will focus on advancing a joint research agenda, mapping existing collaborations, and establishing twin lab partnerships. It will also prioritize faculty and graduate exchanges, the development of an innovation-to-commercialization pipeline, as well as the creation of shared data and research platforms to strengthen knowledge exchange and impact.



Belgium Goes **Green!**

The office of the special envoy on technology was part of the inauguration of Belgium's new embassy in Nairobi, which is the first net-zero embassy in Africa. The inauguration was attended by Principal Secretary Dr. Korir Sing'oei, Belgium's Ambassador to Kenya H.E. Peter Maddens, and the Belgian Minister of Foreign Affairs.

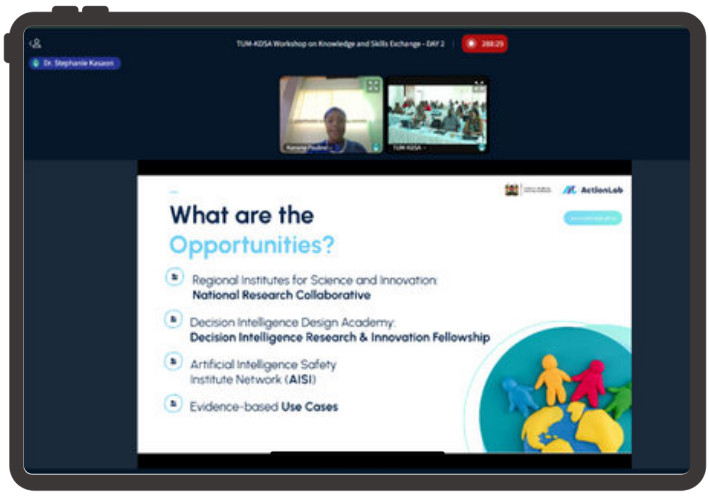
The embassy represents a significant step in embedding sustainability within diplomatic infrastructure. It integrates green technologies and innovation to achieve carbon neutrality, positioning the facility as a model for sustainable diplomacy.

The establishment of this net-zero embassy further reinforces Nairobi's emerging role as a hub for technology and climate diplomacy in Africa. It also demonstrates how international partnerships can accelerate the green transition while advancing shared climate and development objectives.



Kenya Law - Action Lab Potential AI Collaboration

A team from the Office of the Special Envoy on Technology engaged Kenya Law on potential AI collaborations, including the development of a research assistant and a judiciary-focused LLM model. The discussion highlighted the importance of coordinating on judicial projects to avoid duplication, as both parties are pursuing similar initiatives. It was agreed that the next step will be an initial team meeting with Kenya Law and Action Lab, followed by a joint meeting with Action Lab, the Judiciary ICMS Committee, and Kenya Law.



TUM x DAAD Presenatation by Action Lab

The Office of the Special Envoy on Technology, through Action Lab, participated in a joint event hosted by the Technical University of Mombasa (TUM) and the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD), focusing on opportunities for AI in research and knowledge exchange. The presentation emphasized the role of Action Lab and the Institute of Design and Innovation in shaping Africa's AI and research agenda, particularly in building people-centered, adaptive, and trustworthy innovation. The session also highlighted pathways to strengthen cross-sector collaboration, linking academia, industry, and government stakeholders to create sustainable research opportunities that can anchor Kenya's position in the global AI landscape.



Validation of Regional Center of Competence Curriculum on AI and Emerging Technologies – Kenya School of Government

The Office of the Special Envoy on Technology, through Action Lab, was invited to participate in the validation process of the RCOC curriculum, led by the Kenya School of Government. The recently developed curriculum focuses on AI and emerging technologies, project management, and data and AI applications for HR practitioners in the government sector. It is organized around four core streams: foundations, application, management, and leadership.

During the validation process, Action Lab contributed extensively to discussions on the integration of AI across all four streams, offering insights on practical use cases, ethical considerations, and strategies for scaling AI capacity in government. These contributions ensured that the curriculum reflects both local priorities and global best practices, positioning it as a comprehensive framework for strengthening public sector capacity in emerging technologies.

Strathmore
UNIVERSITY

Decision Intelligence
Design Academy

Collaboration with Strathmore University

TThe Office of the Special Envoy on Technology, through Action Lab, met Strathmore University to explore collaboration in AI, data, and executive education. Strathmore was identified as a key partner in co-designing executive training and masterclasses to strengthen data-driven decision-making in government while embedding youth engagement. The meeting also discussed partnerships with Stanford, Tara, and others to bring technical expertise and computing resources into Kenya's innovation ecosystem. Strathmore expressed interest in the Decision Intelligence Innovation Fellowship, aligning with Kenya's AI Development Plan. The engagement positioned Strathmore as a strategic bridge between academia, government, and global partners, catalyzing Africa's digital transformation.





“When Children Lead”: Rethinking EdTech Through Their Eyes

The Office of the Special Envoy on Technology was excited to participate in the EdTech Children’s Summit 2025, which brought together children, the Principal Secretary for Children and Welfare Services, Ms. Carren Agengo, and other stakeholders to discuss the future of technology in education.

Their depth, insight, and courage to explore issues ranging from equity and mental health to greening technology and school safety was profoundly moving.

Children highlighted challenges and opportunities around access and inclusivity, online safety, AI bias, mental health, school safety, and greener technologies.

A clear message emerged: technology should not be built or deployed without putting children first, reinforcing the need for child-centered EdTech solutions that advance equity, safety, well-being, and sustainability.

Preparing for “Empowering Nations for Inclusive Prosperity in the Era of AI” at UNGA80

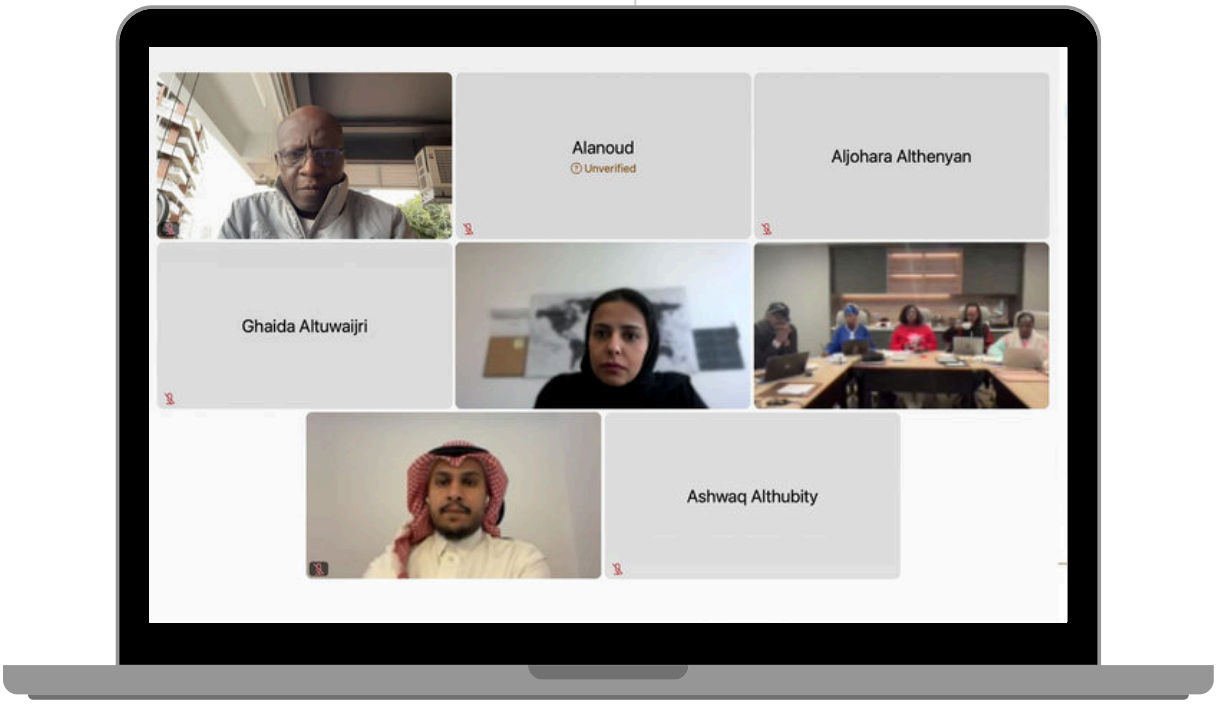
The Office of the Special Envoy on Technology had the privilege of meeting with colleagues from the Saudi Data & AI Authority (SDAIA) to prepare for the upcoming high-level roundtable, “Empowering Nations for Inclusive Prosperity in the Era of Artificial Intelligence.” The event, co-hosted by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the Republic of Kenya, will take place on the margins of the 80th Session of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA80).

This roundtable builds on a number of global milestones: the adoption of the Pact for the Future and its annex, the Global Digital Compact; the recommendations of the UN Secretary-General’s High-Level Advisory Body on AI; and the Secretary-General’s recent report on Innovative Voluntary Financing Options for AI Capacity Building. Together, these frameworks highlight the urgent need for coordinated, inclusive approaches to AI governance and the development of national capacity.

The session will respond directly to the call for an AI Capacity Building Network, an initiative designed to strengthen multilateral cooperation, advance South–South exchange, and equip nations with the institutional readiness, expertise, and resources needed for the safe, secure, and inclusive adoption of AI. With the global AI readiness gap widening, the dialogue will explore how countries can bridge divides by combining locally tailored strategies with global best practices, ensuring that AI becomes a driver of inclusive prosperity.

As a closed, invitation-only meeting, the roundtable will convene high-level representatives from governments, international organizations, academia, civil society, and industry. Together, participants will share insights, identify opportunities, and map out urgent capacity-building needs, with the aim of establishing a robust and sustainable AI Capacity Building Network.

Kenya is proud to work with Saudi Arabia in co-leading this important effort at UNGA80—placing the Global South at the center of AI innovation, governance, and cooperation for people and planet.



UN Member States :New Global AI Governance Institutions

After six months of negotiations, all 193 UN Member States have reached consensus on the establishment of two new institutions to strengthen global AI governance:

- An Independent Scientific Panel on AI, tasked with providing evidence-based assessments and synthesizing research on AI's opportunities, risks, and impacts.
- A Global Dialogue on AI Governance which will serve as a platform for stakeholders to enhance international cooperation and build trust in the field.

The two mechanisms are designed to be mutually reinforcing, with scientific evidence guiding dialogue and dialogue amplifying science into global action. Their unanimous adoption highlights the urgency of advancing trustworthy, inclusive, and sustainable governance of AI, despite geopolitical and financial challenges.
Kenya, representing the Group of 77 and China (134 developing countries), played a central role in the negotiations. Its mandate included providing the initial institutional designs, building consensus within the G77, and negotiating the group's position with the wider UN membership.
The outcome reflects both institutional innovation and a collective commitment to ensuring that AI governance is grounded in science, cooperation, and solidarity.



Human Technology Institute Roundtable – AI Governance at a Crossroads



Amb. Philip Thigo joined the UTS Human Technology Institute in Sydney for a high-level, invitation-only roundtable on the future of AI regulation and governance. The Australian Government – like many governments – recognises that AI will shape prosperity and security in profound ways. Yet, the central question is how to harness opportunity while managing risk in a rapidly shifting technological and geopolitical landscape.

Amb. Philip Thigo, in his discussion, shared that AI governance today is animated by four critical questions:

- Domestic vs International: How do governments balance sovereign priorities at home with the urgent need for global cooperation?
- Process vs Product: Should we focus more on the inclusivity and legitimacy of decision-making processes, or on the regulatory frameworks and institutions themselves?
- Posture for Rapid Change: What regulatory stance can respond to a technology evolving far faster than traditional governance cycles?
- Regulate Technology or Impacts?: Do we set guardrails on the technology itself – such as models and compute – or on the societal impacts, like misinformation, bias, and safety in critical sectors?

They are the very questions that will determine whether AI strengthens our societies or deepens risks and divides.



Decision Intelligence Design Academy

DIDA (Decision Intelligence Design Academy) Collaboration WITH JKUAT(AOSP)

The Office Of The Special Envoy on Technology, through Action Lab, engaged JKUAT THROUGH Prof. Muliaro Wafula and the Africa Open Science Platform (AOSP) EA Node to explore collaboration on the Decision Intelligence Innovation Fellowship, a research-to-innovation program designed to build capacity in trustworthy AI and decision intelligence. The fellowship's 2025 focus is on high-impact AI challenges in health, environment, and food systems, alongside cross-cutting areas such as data governance, infrastructure, skills development, and combating disinformation, with outputs feeding into Kenya's AI Opportunities Plan.

Action Lab proposed AOSP's involvement as an academic partner, research supporter, mentor, and advisor, while aligning with AOSP's broader objectives. Prof. Muliaro welcomed the initiative, noting its fit with AOSP's plans to establish an AI Institute and federated computing infrastructure, and suggested using VizAfrica 2025 as a demonstration platform. He emphasized the availability of "Seed Fellows" for mentorship and called for a follow-up discussion to clarify organizational roles, resources, and integration of the fellowship into AOSP's research-to-innovation agenda.



Exploring Areas of Collaboration between Action Lab and Cisco

A team from the Office of the Special Envoy on Technology engaged Cisco CDA to explore the establishment of a long-term Action Lab–Cisco partnership aimed at positioning Kenya as a continental and global hub for public interest technology. Anchored in Action Lab's role as a neutral convener and Cisco's global CDA expertise, the collaboration seeks to advance Kenya's digital transformation, strengthen digital sovereignty, and drive inclusive economic growth. The parties agreed to anchor their work around four flagship innovation tracks for 2025: the Nairobi Smart Region Digital Twin, Judiciary Modernization, Food Systems Transformation, and Cybersecurity & Workforce of the Future. These initiatives will be overseen by a joint Steering Board and supported through secure lab infrastructure, seed funding, and blended financing models.



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  - Farmer digital ID and national agri-DPI pilots for food systems transformation.
  - Expansion of the National Cybersecurity Training Centre and deployment of AI-enabled SOCs.
- Develop the 2025–2028 joint roadmap aligned with Kenya's Digital Economy Masterplan, incorporating regional and global engagement.
- Engage donors, DFIs, and private sector partners to co-invest in scaling and ensuring long-term sustainability.

Technical University of Mombasa (TUM) and Action Lab Collaboration

The Office of the Special Envoy on Technology engaged the Technical University of Mombasa (TUM) to explore strategic collaboration in advancing capacity-building and innovation. The discussions centered on strengthening the Decision Intelligence Design Academy through co-creation and delivery of learning sessions, as well as implementing research within the Decision Intelligence Innovation Fellowship. TUM expressed readiness to support Action Lab's broader mission by aligning its institutional resources and expertise with national priorities in AI, digital innovation, and the Blue Economy.

The meeting also underscored opportunities for mutual reinforcement between TUM's new Kwale Campus and Action Lab's innovation ecosystem.

This includes integrating postgraduate researchers into the Kenya AI Opportunities Plan, establishing joint mentorship structures, and developing short courses to enhance skills for both undergraduate and postgraduate students. Additionally, the partners highlighted the potential of the Ocean Climate Innovation Hub as a platform to advance Blue Economy research and innovation projects with a strong focus on sustainability and climate resilience.

The collaboration is designed to serve as both a pipeline for talent and a research hub, ensuring that knowledge generation, training, and innovation contribute directly to Kenya's digital transformation agenda and regional leadership in public interest technology.

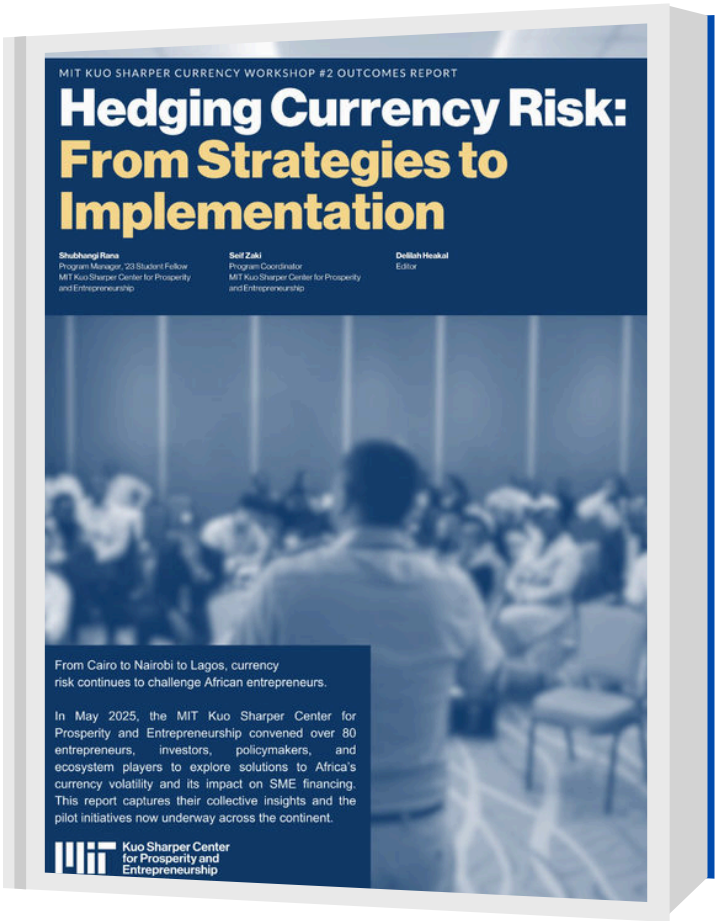
Next Steps:

- TUM to share a draft MoU to guide long-term collaboration.
- Dr. Ali and Dr. Mariam to serve as mentors/advisors and propose additional TUM faculty for similar roles.
- TUM to nominate postgraduate members for fellowship opportunities under the Kenya AI Opportunities Plan.
- Action Lab and TUM to co-design and implement short courses for students across both institutions.
- Joint participation in the Kwale Campus Youth Conference (December 2025) with a focus on AI, research, and career advancement.
- Collaboration on Blue Economy research and innovation projects through the Ocean Climate Innovation Hub.

TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY OF MOMBASA

DIDA
Decision Intelligence Design Academy

Hedging Currency Risk: From Strategies to Implementation



the Office of the Special Envoy on Technology convened over 80 policymakers, development finance institutions, banks, entrepreneurs, and funders in Nairobi to address one of Africa's most pressing challenges—currency instability and its impact on innovation and enterprise growth. This convening, building on the first workshop on currency volatility held in Cambridge, MA, in October 2024, marked a shift from diagnosis to the co-design of practical solutions.

The outcome of these discussions is captured in a new report, "Hedging Currency Risk: From Strategies to Implementation", authored by Program Manager and '24 Student Fellow, Shubhangi Rana, and Program Coordinator, Seif Zaki.

The report highlights several pilot initiatives that emerged from the Nairobi sessions, seven of which are now under active development across the continent.

These pilots are designed to mitigate the effects of devaluation, inflation, and liquidity pressures on African entrepreneurs and include innovations such as fully collateralized domestic bonds backed by USD/EUR deposits in local banks, stablecoin infrastructures for converting crowdfunded dollars into shilling loans, local currency debt facilities for low-fee schools, structured SME guarantees, regulated crowdfunding platforms, a Yieldcoin token, and a narrative campaign to build investor confidence

Read the full report here.https://lnkd.in/gpRRygyM

Australia's Parliament Explores AI Governance and Technology Policy

The Office of the Special Envoy on Technology engaged Australian parliamentarians in discussions on AI governance and emerging technology policy during a roundtable hosted at Parliament buildings in Canberra.

The session, convened by the Minderoo Foundation and its partners, brought together the Hon. Tim Ayres (Minister for Industry and Innovation), the Hon. Dr. Andrew Charlton (Assistant Minister for Science, Technology, and the Digital Economy), the Hon. Kate Chaney MP, and members of the Parliamentary Friends of Tech Policy.

Kenya shared its experience in agile governance of AI through practical, proof-of-scale use cases, while also emphasizing its active role in shaping global AI governance frameworks.

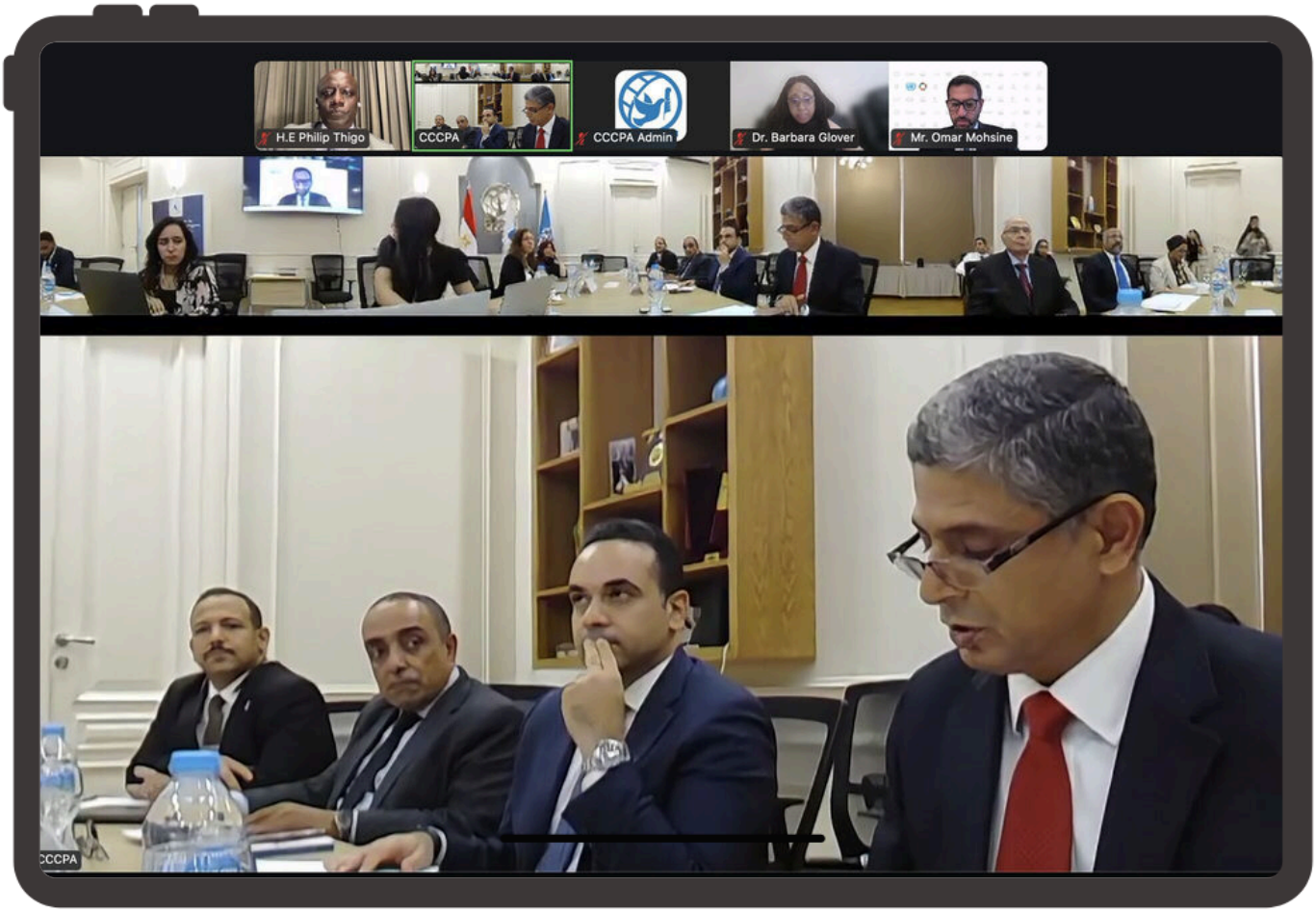
The dialogue underscored the strong collaboration between Kenya and Australia through the International Network of AI Safety Institutes, highlighting that no country can govern AI in isolation. The discussions further underscored the importance of bipartisan cooperation in Australia in building trust, managing risks, and ensuring the responsible development and diffusion of AI, thereby advancing a people-centered digital future.







A New Era of Peace, Security & Development in the era of intelligence



The Office of the Special Envoy on Technology participated in an online workshop convened by the Cairo International Center for Conflict Resolution, Peacekeeping and Peacebuilding (CCCPA), in its role as Secretariat of the Aswan Forum for Sustainable Peace and Development.

Discussions highlighted how Artificial Intelligence is reshaping the concept of peace and security — from information integrity, where disinformation and algorithmic manipulation fuel unrest, to the resilience of critical infrastructure, as AI-enabled cyber operations blur civilian and military boundaries.

The fairness of algorithms and data was also underscored, with concerns that bias could entrench inequality and erode social trust.

At the same time, AI's potential as an enabler was emphasized — advancing early warning, humanitarian assistance, and the Sustainable Development Goals in areas such as health, education, and climate resilience.

For Africa, the meeting stressed the importance of being creators of trustworthy AI, not just users, ensuring technologies remain anchored in values of human dignity and under human oversight in life-and-death decisions.

Digital Accessibility Program Workshop

The Office of the Special Envoy on Technology, through Action Lab, convened a week-long workshop from 25th to 29th August 2025 under the UK Digital Access Programme (DAP), in collaboration with the Kenya Society for the Blind, the Judiciary, and other justice-sector stakeholders. The meeting, themed "Gava Mkononi Kwa Wote – Government Services for All," focused on developing a Digital Accessibility Maturity Roadmap for the justice sector to advance inclusive e-Government services for persons with disabilities (PWDs) and senior citizens. Guided by the Persons with Disabilities Act (2025) and the KS-2952 ICT Accessibility Standard, participants conducted institutional self-assessments using the Integrated Digital Accessibility Maturity Model (IDAMM), surfacing systemic barriers such as weak enforcement, limited technical capacity, and ableist attitudes. Keynotes by Justice Isaac Lenaola, Senator Crystal Asige, and other sector leaders highlighted milestones—including training 15,000+ PWDs, enhancing 23 government platforms, and pioneering virtual courts—while underscoring the urgent need for accessible, inclusive digital systems.

The workshop produced concrete commitments from institutions across the justice sector. The Judiciary pledged to develop a Digital Access to Justice Policy, while the ODPP committed to establishing a compliance team by November 2025, and the NCLR undertook to conduct annual accessibility audits. Cross-cutting outcomes included alignment with WCAG 2.2 standards, embedding accessibility by design, budgeting for assistive technologies such as screen readers and braille devices, and building continuous staff and leadership capacity. Institutions also agreed to implement monitoring and evaluation frameworks with clear timelines (3–10 months, with measurable outcomes expected by March–June 2026). Collectively, these actions position Kenya's justice sector as a regional leader in inclusive digital governance, with the roadmap serving as a foundation for accountability and long-term transformation.



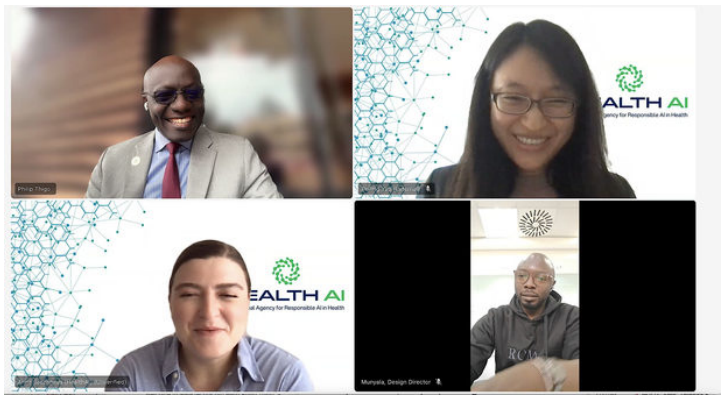




OUR GALLERY


Harnessing the transformative power of
AI in AFRICA










LDRI
Local Development
Research Institute






Amb. Philip Thigo Mbs.
Maxwell Okello








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AUGUST 2025 NEWSLETTER