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OCTOBER 2025
NEWSLETTER

GITEX 2025

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Foreword

October has been a month of reflection, resilience, and renewal for Kenya's journey in the digital age — a time to celebrate our growing leadership in technology while honoring the visionaries who laid its foundation in governance, innovation, and public service.

We mourn the passing of the Rt. Hon. Raila Amolo Odinga — a statesman whose belief in people, progress, and possibility continues to inspire generations. His lifelong dedication to justice, democracy, and national unity has left an indelible mark on Kenya's history and future. It is in this regard that we dedicate our October Cover to his enduring legacy — a tribute to visionary leadership and the power of conviction to shape a nation's destiny."

In the years I had the privilege to work with his strategy team, he consistently emphasized the place of technology and democracy — how these tools, when guided by wisdom and humanity, could expand civic space, deepen public engagement, and create opportunities for dialogue, rather than curtail expression.
Together with the late Hon. Dalmus Otieno, then Minister for Public Service, and under the guidance of the late Rt. Hon. Prime Minister, we expanded the normative framework for how public service could embrace technology — culminating in the successful development, adoption, and ratification of the African Charter on Public and Civil Service Administration, with Kenya becoming the first country to domesticate this shared continental value.

Under his leadership, we also worked with the Kenya Alliance of Resident Associations (KARA), the UNDP, and the UN Millennium Campaign to deploy the first-ever citizen feedback capability on public service performance for frontline institutions such as hospitals, schools, and local offices — the early foundations of what evolved into the Huduma model.

Kibera Primary School was one of the key pilot institutions in this initiative, where citizen feedback directly led to the resolution of an eight-year water challenge that had long affected learners and teachers alike.

The Prime Minister leaves behind a legacy whose full impact will continue to be felt and appreciated in the days and years to come. This edition carries that same spirit of service, sovereignty, and stewardship. We look at how Kenya is shaping global AI governance and partnerships at GITEX Dubai— including a high-level bilateral with H.H. Omar Al Olama, the UAE Minister of State for Artificial Intelligence, Digital Economy, and Remote Work Applications.

In that discussion, we explored how to advance a model of AI that is both responsible and human-centered, and we extended a formal invitation to his office to join us in Nairobi for AI Everything x GITEX Kenya 2026, the first Africa edition of one of the world's most influential AI convenings. We affirmed a shared ambition: AI must deliver public value, national capability, and trusted services — especially for citizens.

Industrial opportunity for our youth: Our engagement with UNIDO leadership advances a joint agenda around critical and emerging technologies, advanced manufacturing, and clean technology — with one purpose: to ensure that Africa's young people are not just employable in the future economy, but are building it.
AI for inclusion and skills: Through the launch of the Kenya AI Skilling Alliance (KAISA) with KEPSA and Microsoft, and through deeper collaboration on sovereign AI capabilities and interoperable standards, we are investing in people — in women, in young talent, in the public service itself. Because a nation cannot outsource its intelligence.

Pan-African public service transformation: Our structured collaboration with South Africa's National School of Government, the Kenya School of Government, CPSI, and partners like Cassava Technologies shows what it means to modernize the state itself — AI in service of service delivery.
Technology for dignity and climate resilience: From institutional clean cooking, to environmental digital public infrastructure, to early warning systems for climate risk with partners like WRI, UNDP, the Rockefeller Foundation, and others, Kenya continues to insist that innovation and human dignity must move together.

Across these stories runs one through-line: Kenya is not waiting to be invited into the future. We are shaping it — on our own terms, in partnership with others, and anchored in public purpose.
As we look ahead, may we continue to build a digital future worthy of our people's aspirations — intelligent, just, sovereign, and profoundly human.

We also reflect on the Global Data Festival 2025 under the theme Resilience by Design, and Kenya's work to frame a distinctly African narrative: From Origins to Intelligence. Drawing on the vision of the Presidential Taskforce on the Home of Human Origins (KHOHO), we connect Kenya's deep human story — from early tools along Lake Turkana to the present-day Silicon Savannah — to the responsibilities of the intelligent era. In a world shaped by climate pressure, conflict, inequality, demographic shifts, and accelerating technology, we argue that resilience is not an abstract policy term; it is a lived practice. It is a collaboration. It is memory. It is designed.

This edition also documents how we are translating principles into systems:
Responsible AI and global security: Kenya's endorsement of the 2025 UN Resolution on Artificial Intelligence in the Military Domain signals our continued leadership in insisting that emerging technologies must be governed by international law, ethics, and human dignity — that AI must be a force for stability, not escalation.

Justice and digital trust: Our partnership with Kenya Law Reports and the Judiciary is building an architecture of Digital Public Intelligence — near real-time access to rulings and decisions, interoperability across justice systems, and a single source of truth that treats transparency as a public service, not a privilege.

Amb. Philip Thigo
Special Envoy On Tech



Engagement with Cisco Country Digital Acceleration (CDA) Program

Ambassador Philip Thigo participated in a co-creation workshop organized by Cisco's Country Digital Acceleration (CDA) Program and the County Government of Nairobi. The session focused on accelerating digital initiatives that improve citizen services, including the modernization of infrastructure into an AI-ready data center, deployment of AI- and IoT-driven smart waste management systems, digital integration of the "Dishi na County" school feeding program, and implementation of IoT-enabled solutions for safer cities. The engagement reinforced Action Lab's collaboration in advancing Nairobi's digital transformation and innovation ecosystem.

Engagement with TikTok – Creator Education Program (#LevelUpAfrica)

Ambassador Philip Thigo participated in TikTok's Creator Education Day in Nairobi, held under the #LevelUpAfrica initiative, which aims to strengthen digital skills and opportunities for Africa's youth creators. He delivered remarks highlighting the potential and challenges of Kenya's growing creative economy, now a major source of youth employment and entrepreneurship.

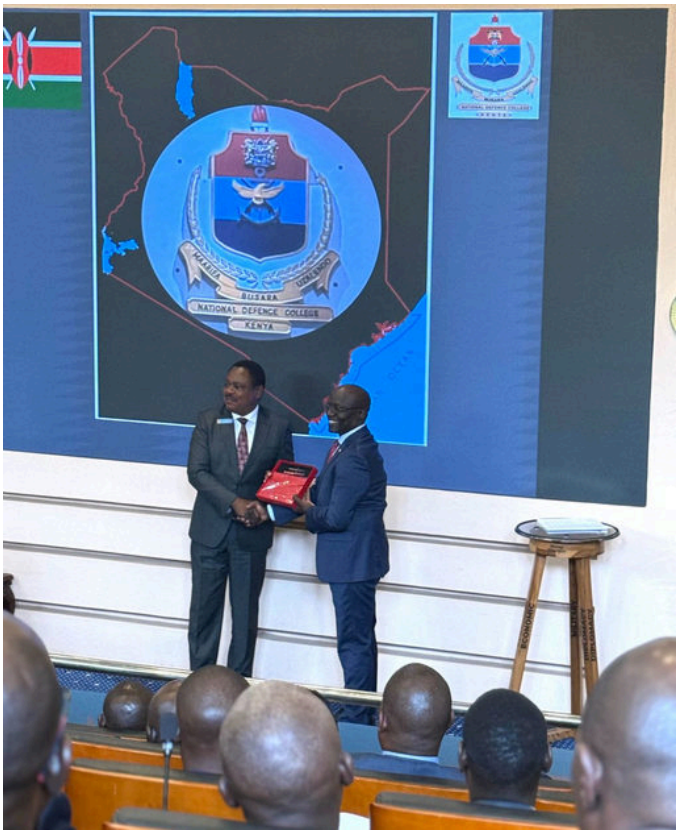
Key issues discussed included fair and seamless digital payments, inclusive skills development beyond Nairobi, and broader market access for Kenyan creators. The engagement reaffirmed Action Lab's collaboration with global platforms to enhance digital inclusion and support sustainable livelihoods through the creative economy.





Lecture at National Defence College — “Strategic Leadership in the Age of Intelligence”

Ambassador Philip Thigo delivered a Lecture of Opportunity to senior leaders from African and Asian militaries and public service at the National Defence College. His address examined AI’s strategic implications—global trends and risks, governance (including Kenya’s leadership at UNGA and role in the AI Safety Institute), dual-use applications across defence (ISR, logistics, decision support) and civilian sectors (health, agriculture, infrastructure), and the principles of safety, ethics, security, and trust. He outlined investment needs in compute, data, talent, energy, partnerships, innovative financing, research, and use-case development, emphasizing leadership that is agile under uncertainty. The engagement underscored Kenya’s frontline role in shaping responsible AI for security, sovereignty, and human dignity.





Strengthening Kenya–France Collaboration in Digital Science and Artificial Intelligence

Ambassador Philip Thigo hosted representatives from Inria, France’s National Institute for Research in Digital Science and Technology, following their week-long visit to Kenya. Discussions with Cécile Vigouroux (Director of International Relations), Hélène Kirchner (Scientific Expert), and Laura Norcy (International Partnerships Officer) focused on deepening collaboration between Inria and Action Lab in research, policy, and innovation around digital science and AI.

The partners agreed to prioritize joint work on AI-driven disruptions in the labor market, developing scenarios, policy options, and adaptive responses to promote inclusive and resilient adaptation. This partnership aligns with Kenya’s vision of positioning itself as a trusted hub for AI research and governance. It also contributes to ongoing preparations for the France–Africa Summit 2026, ensuring that digital science and AI remain central to the bilateral agenda.





Launch of Safaricom 2025 Sustainable Business Report — “Anchored in Purpose, Accelerating for a Digital Future”

Ambassador Philip Thigo joined Eng. Dr. Festus Ngeno, Principal Secretary for Environment and Climate Change, Mr. Adil Arshed Khawaja, Chairman of Safaricom, and Dr. Peter Ndegwa, CEO of Safaricom, at the launch of the Safaricom 2025 Sustainable Business Report. Themed “Anchored in Purpose, Accelerating for a Digital Future,” the report underscores the intersection of prosperity, purpose, and responsible innovation.

Ambassador Thigo highlighted that purpose-driven enterprises foster resilience, legitimacy, and trust while accelerating responsibly to remain relevant in a rapidly evolving world. Safaricom’s leadership in sustainability and accountability reflects a broader vision of business as an ecosystem leader — partnering with government, empowering youth, and collaborating with civil society to drive inclusive digital growth.

He emphasized that in the age of intelligence, businesses must stay anchored in purpose, act responsibly, and work alongside innovators to build a digital future that is intelligent, just, and sustainable.

Safaricom
Twaweza



Building a Future-Ready Foreign Service: Leveraging AI and Innovation for Efficient, People-Centered Service Delivery

Ambassador Philip Thigo hosted the inaugural in-person meeting of the Digital Transformation Committee of the State Department for Foreign Affairs, following his appointment by the Principal Secretary. The Committee is mandated to reimagine and enhance business processes for greater efficiency, deepen engagement with diverse stakeholders, and leverage emerging technologies—particularly Artificial Intelligence—to upskill the Foreign Service for the digital age.

Ambassador Thigo commended the Committee's diverse team of young professionals drawn from across departmental units for their innovation, energy, and commitment to driving institutional transformation. He emphasized that effective digital transformation begins within—affirming that "charity begins at home."

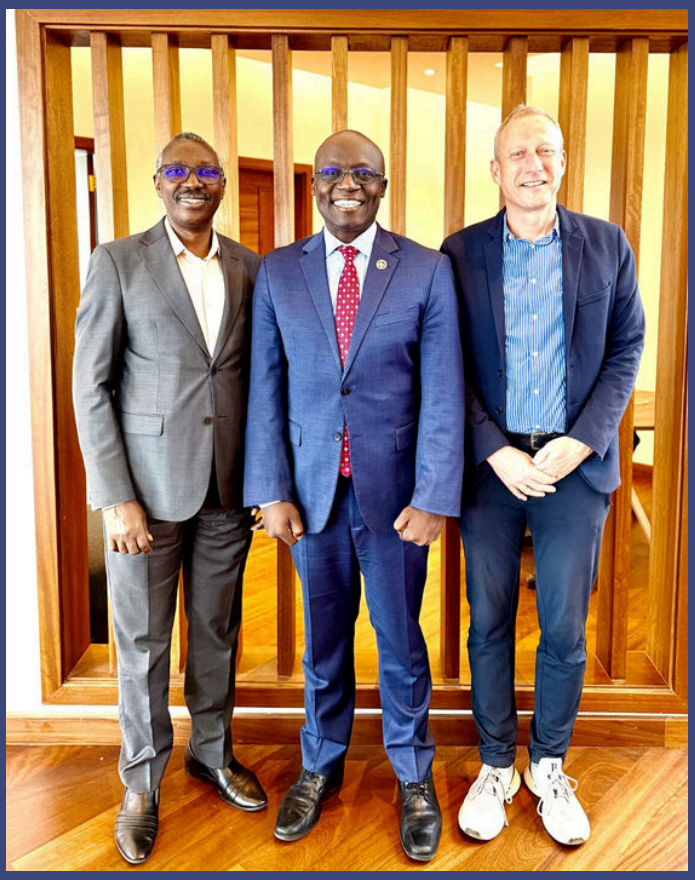


Strengthening Leadership Capacities in Emerging Technologies and Cybersecurity

Ambassador Philip Thigo engaged with the Al Akhawayn University (AUI) global team, comprising Deborah Bartlett, Rokhaya Diouf, and Nicolas Klotz, in a dialogue on advancing leadership competencies in emerging technologies and cybersecurity. Ambassador Jessica Gakinya facilitated the engagement in Morocco.

The discussion emphasized the importance of equipping government and private sector leaders with the skills to navigate rapid technological change — including building cyber resilience, leveraging Artificial Intelligence responsibly, and fostering agile policy development for national preparedness.

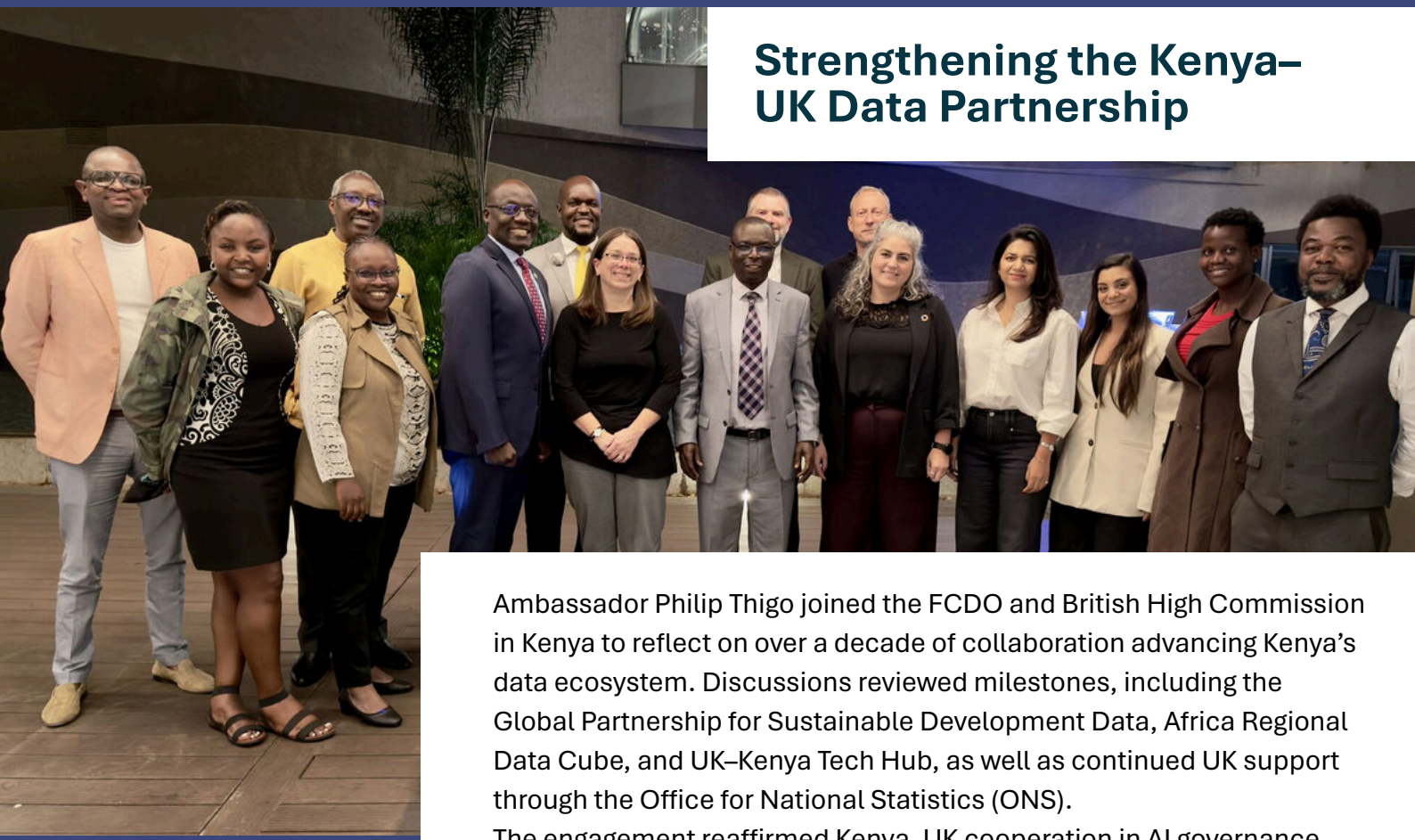
Ambassador Thigo underscored that collaboration and shared learning are essential to shaping Africa's digital future — where leaders anticipate risks, co-develop solutions, and strengthen collective capacity for innovation and security.



Strengthening AI and Data Readiness for National Statistical Systems

Ambassador Philip Thigo met with Dr. Johannes Jütting and Mr. Philippe Gafishi of PARIS21 to discuss enhancing the role of AI and data in official statistics. The dialogue focused on building AI-ready national statistical systems through structured data, security safeguards, and public trust.

Kenya's digital leadership and PARIS21's expertise provide a strong foundation for creating inclusive and trusted data ecosystems. The engagement reinforced the shared commitment to ensuring national data systems remain empowered amid evolving global dialogues on AI governance and the UN's Pact for the Future.



Strengthening the Kenya–UK Data Partnership

Ambassador Philip Thigo joined the FCDO and British High Commission in Kenya to reflect on over a decade of collaboration advancing Kenya's data ecosystem. Discussions reviewed milestones, including the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development Data, Africa Regional Data Cube, and UK–Kenya Tech Hub, as well as continued UK support through the Office for National Statistics (ONS).

The engagement reaffirmed Kenya–UK cooperation in AI governance, the Global Digital Compact, and emerging AI use cases across key sectors — a testament to the power of aligned values in driving inclusive digital transformation.



Reshoring Kenya's Authentic Sports Brand

The office of the special envoy on technology met with Elis Clementino and Frank of HNV Studios, creators of Enda Athletic, to advance discussions following engagements with H.E. President William Ruto at the UN General Assembly. The meeting focused on practical steps to reshore Enda Athletic's production to Kenya, aligning with the BETA Agenda on green manufacturing.
Key priorities include equipping national teams with a Kenyan-made brand, expanding the business of sports to enhance athlete earnings, and establishing Africa's first immersive AI- and AR-powered sports museum. The collaboration underscores Kenya's commitment to building a sustainable, globally competitive sports industry.

Witnessing Innovation by Women for Women in Laikipia

The office of the special envoy on technology attended the launch of the Ndoto Community Hub in Laikipia — an innovation center empowering young women and mothers to tackle challenges such as period poverty and early childhood pregnancy through skills development and entrepreneurship.
He also witnessed six outstanding innovation pitches addressing issues from environmental conservation and youth empowerment to AI-driven community solutions. The event showcased the creativity and resilience of Kenya's youth.
Ambassador Thigo congratulated the Institute of Design and Innovation (IDI) for mentoring these innovators and the Drawing Dreams Initiative for making the Hub a reality, affirming that innovation thrives everywhere in Kenya when supported.






GITEX
GLOBAL

Nation-Building with AI: Rewriting the Rules of Sovereign Intelligence



Ambassador Philip Thigo joined David Rowan, Founding Editor-in-Chief of Wired UK, for a fireside conversation at GITEX Global Main Stage on the future of sovereign intelligence. The session explored Kenya's leadership in the age of AI and emphasized that Africa must be recognized as a central player in shaping the global AI agenda.

Ambassador Thigo highlighted that Africa — with its young population, green energy, and innovative spirit — is not just a user but an emerging creator of AI solutions rooted in its realities. He underscored Kenya's vision of sovereignty as agency in an interdependent world, grounded in international law and the UN Charter, ensuring AI advances strengthen rather than fragment global cooperation.



Advancing Africa's AI Future Through Innovation, Financing, and Collaboration

Ambassador Philip Thigo met with USG Amandeep Gill, the UN Secretary-General's Envoy on Technology, and Mehdi Snène to advance joint efforts following the UNGA discussions on innovative financing for AI capacity building. The meeting focused on translating global dialogue into actionable outcomes, including championing President Ruto's leadership in innovative financing for AI capacity development aligned with the Africa Green Industrialization Initiative (AGII); establishing an AI Centre of Excellence at JKUAT under Prof. Muliaro's leadership as part of a multi-country network connecting centres in Senegal, South Africa, India, and Kazakhstan; and hosting OSPOs for Good in Kenya to strengthen the nation's vibrant open-source ecosystem. These initiatives reaffirm Kenya's commitment to building a collaborative, well-financed, and open AI future for Africa.

Kenya and Canada Deepen Collaboration in AI Research and Innovation



Ambassador Philip Thigo held a brief engagement with Hon. Evan Solomon, Canada's Minister of Artificial Intelligence and Digital Innovation, and his Deputy Minister at GITEX Global, reaffirming the strong Kenya–Canada partnership in AI research. He expressed appreciation for Canada's continued support through IDRC and referenced prior collaboration with Minister François-Philippe Champagne within the AI Safety Circuit.
The discussion also explored ongoing collaboration between Cohere and Safaricom on local language model research, reflecting shared priorities in advancing inclusive, safe, and globally relevant AI innovation. This engagement underscores Kenya and Canada's joint commitment to leveraging AI for mutual growth and digital prosperity.



Kenya–OECD Strategic Cooperation on Digital Innovation and Environmental Ethics in AI

Ambassador Philip Thigo held a bilateral meeting with the OECD, represented by Jerry Sheehan, Director of the Directorate for Science, Technology and Innovation, to discuss strengthening collaboration in science, technology, and innovation, with a particular focus on capacity building aligned with the Global Digital Compact (GDC).
As the current host institute for the Global Partnership on AI (GPAI), the OECD encouraged Kenya to join the network, recognizing the nation's shared commitment to principles of AI safety, risk management, and equitable opportunity. The dialogue also explored potential cooperation on standards and environmental safeguards throughout the AI lifecycle. The OECD expressed strong support for Kenya's leadership in responsible AI, including collaboration through the Open Government Partnership (OGP) framework.

Strengthening Global Collaboration on Responsible AI Bilateral Meeting with H.H. Omar Al Olama, Minister of AI, UAE

In the margins of the global discussions on artificial intelligence governance, Ambassador Philip Thigo, MBS, Special Envoy on Technology, held a bilateral meeting with H.H. Omar Al Olama, Minister of State for Artificial Intelligence, Digital Economy and Remote Work Applications of the United Arab Emirates, and a distinguished member of the UN High-Level Advisory Body on Artificial Intelligence.



The discussion reflected a shared commitment to advancing responsible, inclusive, and human-centred AI as a cornerstone for national transformation and global cooperation. H.H. Al Olama shared valuable insights on the UAE's comprehensive strategy to harness AI for enhancing internal capabilities, public-sector service delivery, and national competitiveness, grounded in a risk-based approach that prioritizes trust, safety, and tangible societal outcomes.



Ambassador Thigo and H.H. Al Olama also exchanged views on the upcoming AI Everything x GITEX Kenya 2026, to be held in Nairobi in May 2026, which will mark the first Africa edition of one of the world's most influential AI and technology convenings. Ambassador Thigo extended a formal invitation for H.H. Al Olama's participation, underscoring the event's role in positioning Kenya and Africa as emerging leaders in the sovereign and sustainable AI era.

The meeting concluded with an affirmation of continued collaboration between Kenya and the UAE on AI capacity-building, innovation ecosystems, and the global architecture for AI governance. Ambassador Thigo was accompanied by Amb. David Lokemer, Consul-General of Kenya in Dubai, and expressed appreciation to KAOUN International for the seamless facilitation of the engagement.

This dialogue reinforces Kenya's commitment to bridging global and regional perspectives on AI, ensuring that technology remains a force for inclusive growth, environmental sustainability, and global cooperation.

Unlocking Innovation: Kenya–UNIDO Collaboration on Critical Technologies for Youth-Led Growth



The Office of the Special Envoy on Technology held a productive discussion with Mr. Ciyong Zou, Deputy Director General of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), on advancing collaboration between Kenya and UNIDO around critical and emerging technologies — including artificial intelligence, advanced manufacturing, and clean technology.

The meeting underscored the shared ambition between Kenya and UNIDO to harness technology for inclusive and sustainable industrial development, in line with the Bottom-Up Economic Transformation Agenda (BETA) and UNIDO's mandate to promote innovation-led growth. Discussions focused on how these collaborations can expand opportunities for young people — enabling them not only to access jobs of the future but to become innovators, creators, and entrepreneurs driving Africa's digital and industrial transformation.



Kenya's strategy on sovereign and inclusive digital transformation complements UNIDO's emphasis on industry 4.0, skills development, and green industrialization. Both sides explored areas for joint programming around AI and data ecosystems, digital skills development, innovation clusters, and sustainable manufacturing, with the aim of building scalable models that can be replicated across the region.

This collaboration represents a significant step toward positioning Africa — and Kenya in particular — as a hub for responsible technological advancement, where innovation is closely linked to jobs, inclusion, and environmental sustainability.

The Office of the Special Envoy on Technology appreciates Mr. Zou's commitment and looks forward to deepening this partnership as part of a shared agenda to unlock innovation and empower young people in the era of intelligence.

Welcoming Ai Everything X Gitex Partners to Kenya

An absolute pleasure to welcome 10 companies looking to partner with Ai Everything x GITEX Kenyaa and Global Global for the inaugural Africa edition of this globally renowned largest convening of technology companies, countries, innovators and SMEs. We were also excited to welcome 3 out of the 10 looking to open up presence in Kenya. Greatful to Dr. Chelule of SEZA for being so agile and responsive. Looking forawrd to more companies opening up in the next couple of months!!!



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Kaspersky, a Russian multinational cybersecurity and antivirus company, offers advanced security solutions for both consumers and businesses. **“We’re very excited to visit Kenya — a key market for us — and to participate in GITEX Kenya.”**

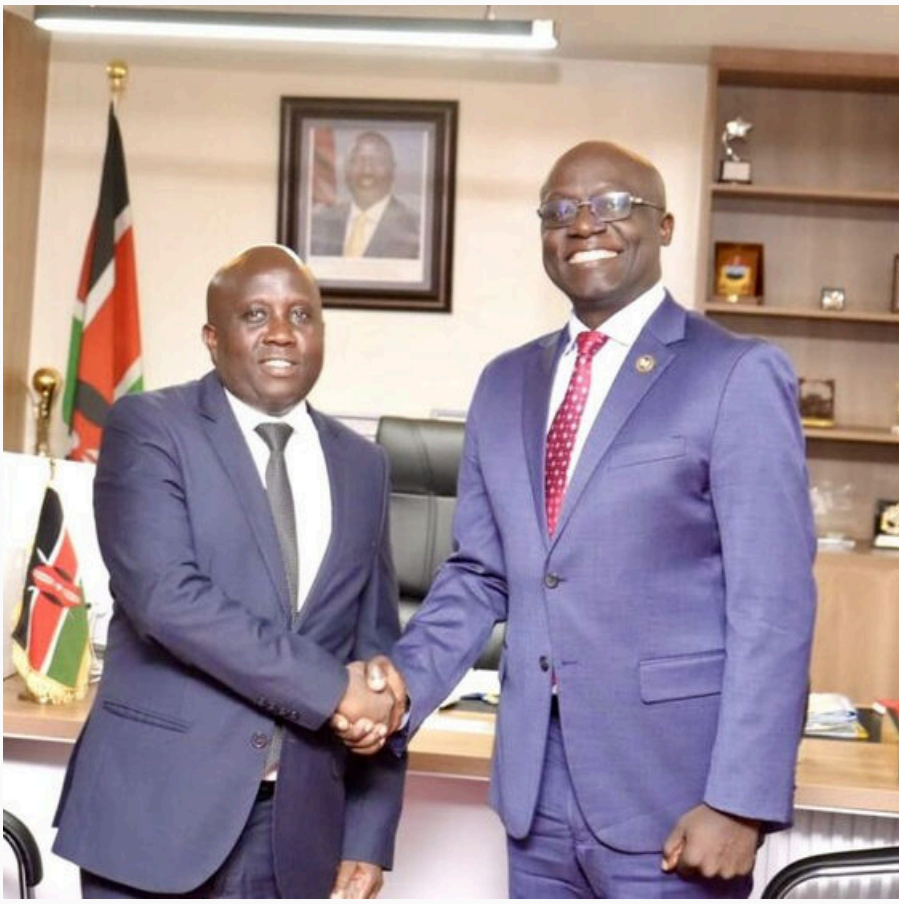


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Courtesy Call on Eng. John Tanui, Principal Secretary, Ministry of ICT and the Digital Economy



Ambassador Philip Thigo paid a courtesy call on Eng. John Tanui, Principal Secretary at the Ministry of ICT and the Digital Economy, to discuss advancing Kenya's technology diplomacy in support of startups, entrepreneurs, and innovators under a Whole-of-Government Approach. The meeting focused on positioning Kenya as a global hub for technology investment, MICE activities, and digital talent, while enhancing the ease of doing business and improving the country's global innovation ranking. Both leaders reaffirmed Kenya's commitment to inclusive growth and sustainable innovation in emerging technologies such as AI and the digital economy, emphasizing that when government, industry, and innovators work together, technology becomes a bridge to shared prosperity.

Kenya AI Skilling Alliance: Preparing a Nation for the Intelligent Era

The Kenya Private Sector Alliance (KEPSA), Microsoft, and the Office of the Special Envoy on Technology have launched the Kenya Artificial Intelligence Skilling Alliance (KAISA) — a national, multi-stakeholder platform to coordinate AI skills development, innovation, and policy collaboration across key sectors. Recognizing that AI is today's engine of transformation, KAISA aims to equip citizens with the skills, creativity, and confidence to thrive in an AI-powered future by linking skills to jobs, innovation to opportunity, and technology to inclusion. The Alliance brings together government, private sector, academia, and civil society in a collective effort to build talent, strengthen institutions, and transform AI's potential into jobs, entrepreneurship, and social impact.



Leveraging AI to Support the African Group of Negotiators – Collaboration with IOM

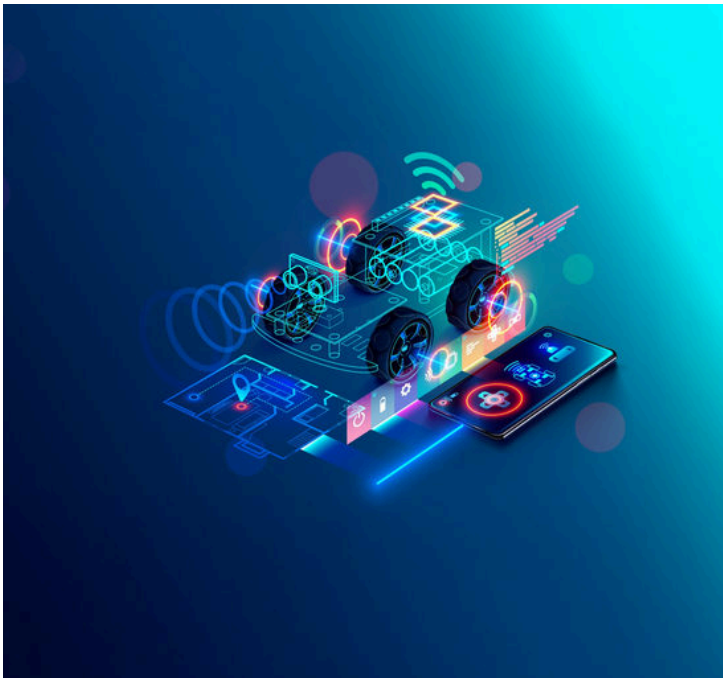
The Action Lab attended a meeting with the International Organization for Migration (IOM) focusing on exploring how artificial intelligence (AI) can be leveraged to support negotiations for the African Group of Negotiators. Discussions centered on the development of an AI tool designed to assist African negotiators by supporting document drafting, conflict checking, and translation. The participants agreed to finalize the contract of engagement as the next step.

Follow-Up Meeting with Novation City (Tunisia) on Collaboration for Global AI Congress Africa 2025

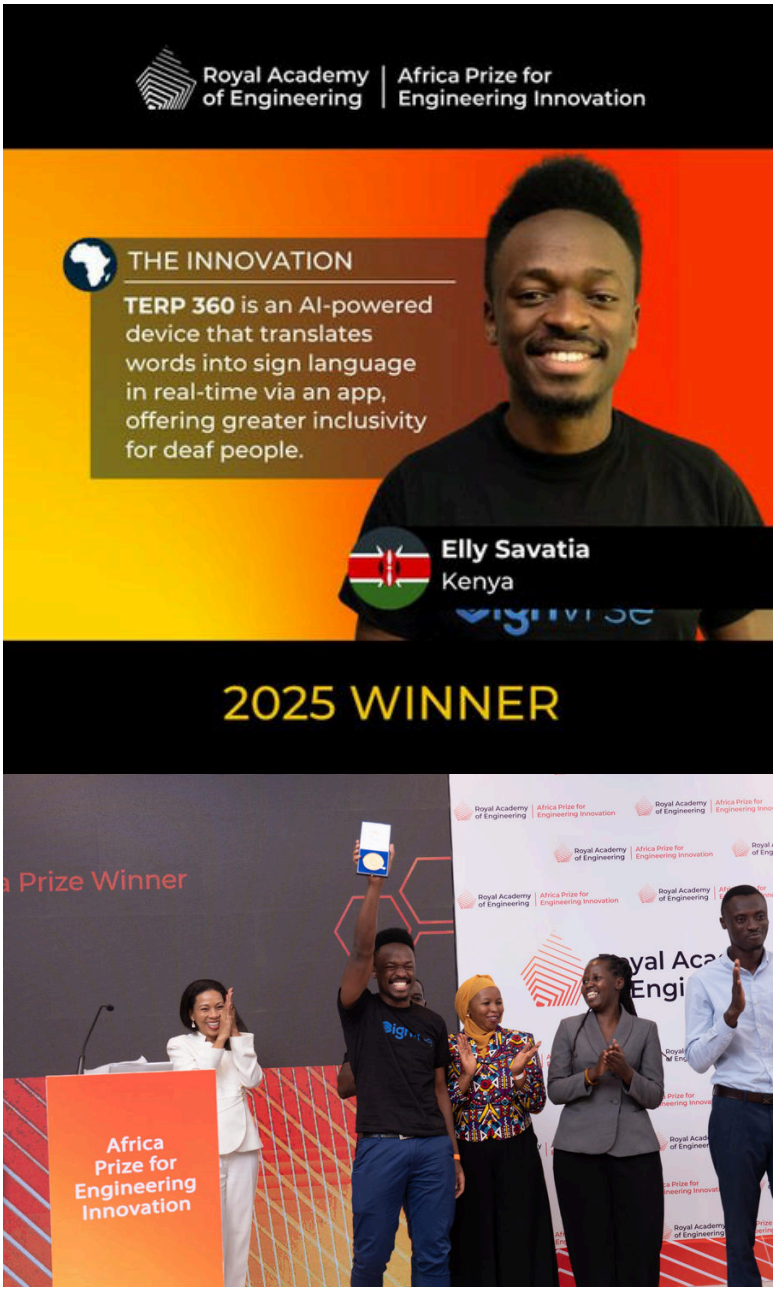
The Action Lab attended a follow-up meeting with Novation City (Tunisia), where the discussion focused on potential collaboration for the Global AI Congress Africa 2025 and explored opportunities beyond the event, particularly in startup incubation and acceleration. It was agreed that Novation City would follow up with potential collaboration areas for the upcoming event, while Action Lab would prepare and share an initial brief outlining possible areas for future partnership beyond the congress. N

Mozilla Kenya Language Corpus Governance Framework Meeting

The Action Lab met with stakeholders in Kenya's language corpus ecosystem to discuss the development of a governance framework guiding processes across the language data value chain—from data collection and value attribution to its use in AI large language models (LLMs). The meeting emphasized the importance of responsible data governance to ensure transparency, inclusivity, and ethical AI development. Mozilla is committed to preparing a summary of the discussions for participants and scheduling a follow-up meeting to advance deliberations on the governance framework and address outstanding issues raised during the session.



Kenya's Elly Savatia Wins 2025 Africa Prize for Engineering Innovation



Kenyan innovator Elly Savatia has been named the winner of the 2025 Africa Prize for Engineering Innovation by the Royal Academy of Engineering for his groundbreaking assistive technology, Terp 360. The AI-powered application translates speech into sign language using lifelike 3D avatars, addressing interpreter shortages and improving accessibility for Deaf and hard-of-hearing communities in classrooms, workplaces, and public services. Developed through Signvrse, Savatia's innovation was chosen from 16 talented entrepreneurs across Africa, earning him £50,000 to expand Terp 360's reach into education, healthcare, and corporate sectors. The awards ceremony took place in Dakar, Senegal, marking the first time the Africa Prize has been hosted in Francophone Africa.

Now in its 11th year, the Africa Prize for Engineering Innovation remains the continent's largest award dedicated to engineering excellence. This year's finalists from Uganda, Ghana, Kenya, and Mozambique showcased cutting-edge innovations tackling challenges in healthcare, clean energy, and sustainability. Beyond the monetary awards, the programme offers intensive business training, mentorship, and global exposure to help innovators scale impactful technologies. As Elly Savatia shared, "This is a testament to the innovative assistive technology work coming from Africa," underscoring the Prize's mission to celebrate African solutions transforming lives worldwide.

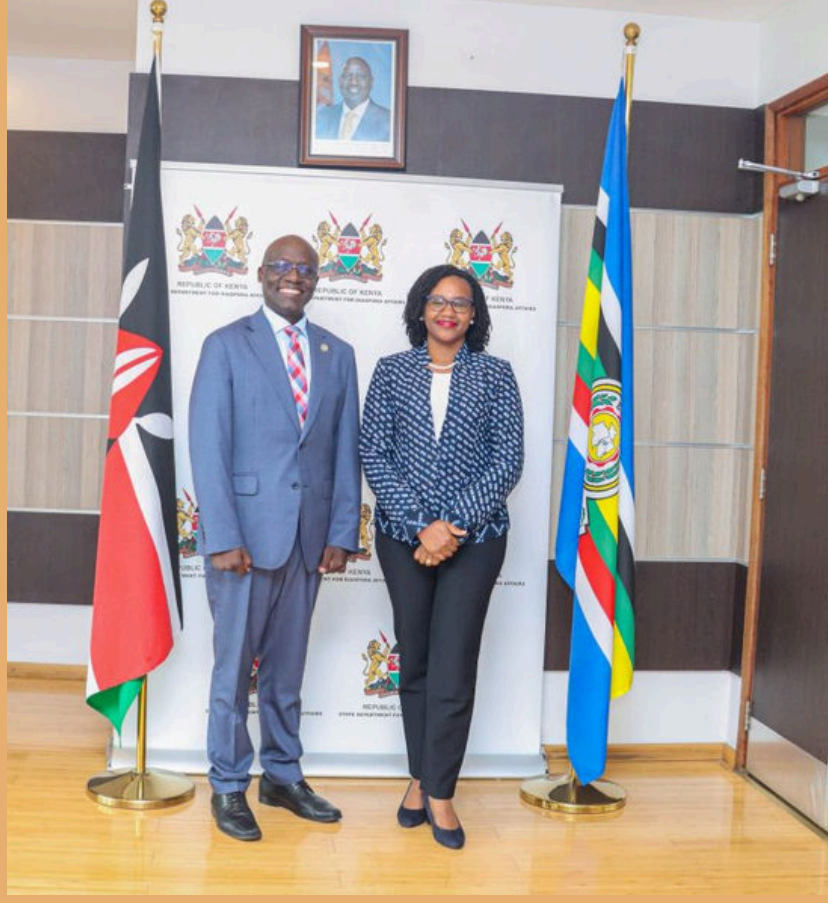
The Impact of New Media on 21st Century Diplomacy



Ambassador Philip Thigo engaged Kenya's newly appointed Ambassadors and High Commissioners at the Foreign Service Academy on how emerging technologies are reshaping diplomacy in the Age of Intelligence. The discussion highlighted how, in today's connected era, a single tweet can influence alliances, narratives, and even crises—underscoring the growing importance of trust, agility, and purpose in diplomatic engagement. The session explored how new media, including AI-driven content and digital diplomacy platforms, are redefining communication, public trust, and multilateral relations. It emphasized that effective diplomacy now requires digital fluency, innovation, and collaboration, with the guiding insight that "the future of diplomacy is digital-first, anticipatory, adaptive, and built on trust."

Harnessing the Power of Our Global Network

Ambassador Philip Thigo held an engaging discussion with Ms. Roseline Njogu, Principal Secretary for Diaspora Affairs, on strengthening collaboration with Kenya's diaspora, particularly those driving progress in critical and emerging technologies. The meeting highlighted the diaspora's role as a global network of innovators and visionaries who not only excel abroad but remain deeply committed to contributing to Kenya's development. Together, they aligned on a shared roadmap under the Bottom-Up Economic Transformation Agenda (BETA) to enhance diaspora engagement and technology diplomacy as key pillars for advancing Kenya's strategic leadership, economic growth, and shared prosperity.







Strengthening Identity Systems for Inclusion: Reflections from the 4th Global CRVS & Gender SymposiumStrengthening Identity Systems for Inclusion: Reflections from the 4th Global CRVS & Gender Symposium

Nairobi hosted the Fourth Global CRVS & Gender Symposium, co-organized by the UNFPA Centre of Excellence for Civil Registration and Vital Statistics (CRVS) Systems in partnership with the Government of Kenya, IDRC, UNICEF, GFF, UNECA, and Open Data Watch. The event convened ministers, policymakers, and data innovators to explore how CRVS systems can advance gender equality, inclusion, and sustainable development. Representing Kenya, Ambassador Philip Thigo participated in the Partners' Roundtable on CRVS Financing, sharing insights on leveraging technology to strengthen CRVS systems and improve population data. Discussions highlighted Kenya's leadership in building inclusive, interoperable, and tech-enabled identity systems that support service delivery, social protection, and data-driven governance.

The Symposium reaffirmed alignment between the CRVS community and Kenya's broader Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI) and Digital Public Intelligence (DPIi) agenda. As global efforts advance toward universal legal identity and gender-responsive governance, CRVS remains vital to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) — ensuring every individual is counted, protected, and empowered through inclusive digital transformation.

UNDP Africa: Scaling Innovation and Leadership for the Intelligent Era



At the margins of the UNDP Africa Retreat, Ambassador Philip Thigo held a strategic engagement with Ahunna Eziakonwa, UNDP Regional Director for Africa, and Madelena Monoja, UNDP Deputy Resident Representative for Kenya. The meeting reaffirmed a shared commitment to positioning Africa's innovation, talent, and leadership as globally competitive and future-ready.

Two flagship collaborations were central to the discussion — the Center for Competence and the Timbuktoo Green Tech Hub.

The Center for Competence aims to strengthen institutional capacity and leadership fluency in artificial intelligence (AI) and emerging technologies, focusing on equipping senior government officials, Members of Parliament, and the defense sector with the tools to navigate digital transformation and AI governance.



Meanwhile, the Timbuktoo Green Tech Hub underscores Africa's ambition to drive climate-resilient innovation, supporting entrepreneurs developing technologies that advance decarbonization, sustainable job creation, and inclusive growth.

The engagement reflected a shared vision for strategic alignment, actionable collaboration, and measurable impact, with both institutions committed to translating dialogue into tangible outcomes. These initiatives will continue to focus on empowering people, transforming systems, and connecting innovation to opportunity — across Kenya, Africa, and the global community.



Strengthening Collaboration with the World Resources Institute (WRI)



At the margins of the High-Level Summit on Unlocking Finance and Investments for Institutional Clean Cooking, Ambassador Philip Thigo held a bilateral meeting with Dr. Rebekah Shirley, Deputy Director for Africa at the World Resources Institute (WRI). The discussion focused on aligning technology and environmental stewardship to advance practical, people-centered solutions for sustainable development.

Both parties agreed to strengthen collaboration in three key areas: (1) Environmental Digital Public Infrastructure (e-DPI) — developing interoperable environmental data systems to support AI for the Environment applications and data-driven climate action; (2) Environmental Safeguards and Standards — exploring frameworks to enhance environmental standards in support of the forthcoming UNEA-7 Resolution on Artificial Intelligence for People and Planet; and (3) Practical Demonstration at UNEA-7 — co-hosting a side event on Early Warning and Climate Resilience to showcase the role of emerging technologies in enhancing preparedness and protecting communities.

The meeting reaffirmed the shared commitment between WRI and the Office of the Special Envoy on Technology to translate innovation into measurable impact, strengthening Africa's leadership in sustainable and inclusive climate action.

Enhancing Access to Justice through Digital Public Intelligence



The Office of the Special Envoy on Technology hosted the Kenya Law Reports (KLR) team for a strategic update on ongoing collaboration with the Judiciary of Kenya, focusing on leveraging emerging technologies to enhance service delivery, streamline access to legal information, and improve system interoperability across the justice sector.

Kenya Law continues to set a regional benchmark for innovation in public legal information, offering near real-time publication of rulings, judgments, and decisions. This commitment to transparency and efficiency positions KLR as a critical component of Kenya's Digital Public Intelligence (DPIi) framework — demonstrating how AI and data systems can strengthen governance and improve access to justice.

Ambassador Philip Thigo, MBS, emphasized that "Justice must not only be done but be digitally accessible — to every citizen, everywhere, in real time." The engagement also explored ways to advance interoperability to establish a single source of truth for legal documents, a model gaining international recognition as a best practice in digital governance.

The Office commended the Registrar of the Judiciary for their visionary leadership and sustained dedication to building a digitally enabled, citizen-centric justice ecosystem that enhances equity, accountability, and trust in public institutions.

Kenya Endorses 2025 UN Resolution on Artificial Intelligence in the Military Domain

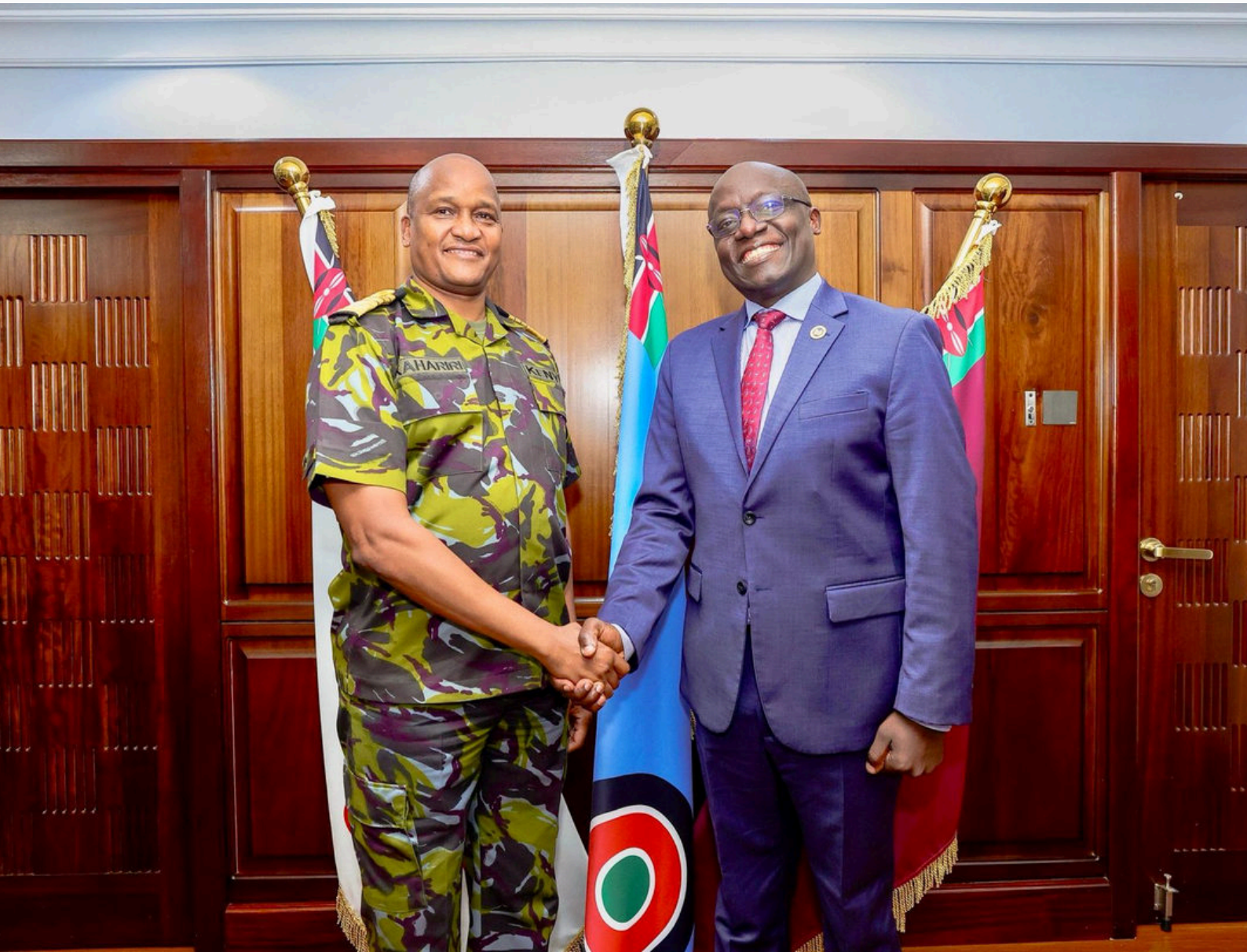
Kenya has reaffirmed its global leadership in responsible AI governance by co-sponsoring the 2025 United Nations Resolution on Artificial Intelligence in the Military Domain and its Implications for International Peace and Security (AIMD). Adopted by the UN General Assembly on 17 October 2025 with the support of 50 member states, the resolution represents a significant milestone in shaping international norms governing the use of AI in defence and security contexts.

Through the collaboration of the Office of the Special Envoy on Technology (OSET) and the Ministry of Defence, Kenya's endorsement reflects its continued commitment to promoting the ethical, transparent, and peaceful application of emerging technologies. This builds on Kenya's earlier support for the inaugural AIMD resolution (A/RES/79/239) adopted in 2024, reinforcing the nation's advocacy for a rules-based, human-centred approach to AI governance.

Over the past year, Kenya has played a pivotal role in shaping global dialogue on responsible military AI. It co-hosted the Responsible AI in the Military Domain (REAIM) Summit in Seoul in 2024, bringing together governments, researchers, and industry leaders to define principles for safe and accountable AI in defence. Kenya also hosted the African Regional Consultations on REAIM in Nairobi in June 2024 and August 2025, providing a continental platform for engagement and establishing itself as Africa's leading voice on AI and international security.

Domestically, these efforts align with the Kenya AI Strategy 2030, which outlines national priorities for ethical innovation, transparency, and the protection of human rights in AI deployment. Looking ahead, Kenya will actively participate in the 2026 consultations on implementing the AIMD resolution and contribute to global knowledge-sharing efforts to strengthen AI governance capacity across developing nations.

Kenya's endorsement of the AIMD resolution reaffirms its conviction that technological innovation must serve humanity—anchored in international law, guided by ethical principles, and harnessed for peace, not peril.



Kenya: From Origins to Intelligence — Building the African Narrative

Kenya is poised to host the Global Data Festival 2025 under the theme “Resilience by Design,” celebrating Africa’s growing leadership in data innovation, technology, and human-centered development. In preparation, the Office of the Special Envoy on Technology convened a technical roundtable with key partners to align on themes, content, and collaborations that will ensure the Festival reflects an authentically African narrative.

The dialogue featured Jenna Slotin, Interim CEO of the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development Data (GPSDD), who emphasized that “data is not just about measurement — it is about meaning, trust, and transformation.” The discussion was further enriched by insights from the Presidential Taskforce on the Home of Human Origins (KHOHO), whose vision of positioning Kenya as the Home of Human Origins — a living museum of humanity — resonates with the Festival’s theme by bridging science, culture, and innovation. Amid global challenges — from climate change and conflict to inequality and technological disruption — one message stood out: crises are not new, but humanity’s capacity to adapt through data, science, and collective intelligence continues to define resilience.

Demographic shifts, automation, and artificial intelligence are reshaping societies, and Kenya’s historical perspective through KHOHO offers enduring lessons on adaptation, collaboration, and purposeful innovation. From the world’s earliest tools discovered at Lomekwi, Lake Turkana, to the digital revolution of the Silicon Savannah, Kenya embodies the full continuum of human technological evolution. Its people-first, purpose-driven model of innovation — from M-Pesa’s mobile banking revolution to AI-enabled public systems — demonstrates how technology can emerge from necessity, scale through resilience, and transform through inclusion.

As the world navigates the rise of AI and rapid demographic change, Kenya stands ready to lead a new global dialogue that places humanity at the center of intelligence. Grounding technology in culture, ethics, and identity, Kenya offers a compelling blueprint for a future where innovation upholds dignity, equity, and sustainability.

The future is human — and it begins in Kenya. From the cradle of humanity to the forefront of digital transformation, Kenya continues to illuminate the world’s story of resilience and creativity — reminding us that resilience, by design, is humanity’s oldest and most enduring technology.



A Historic Milestone: Kenya Presents First-Ever United Nations Resolution on AI and the Environment





This week, Kenya achieved a historic milestone at the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) in Nairobi by presenting the first-ever UNEA-7 Resolution on “Safe, Responsible and Sustainable Artificial Intelligence for People and Planet.” The proposal places AI at the center of the global environmental agenda, ensuring that technological innovation advances sustainability, inclusion, and safety.

The resolution recognizes AI’s growing role in ecosystem monitoring, climate prediction, and resource management, while also addressing its environmental footprint — from energy and water use to e-waste and mineral extraction. It calls for a full-lifecycle approach to AI sustainability and the establishment of ethical, transparent, and accountable frameworks to guide responsible innovation.

Emphasizing equity, the resolution highlights the need for capacity-building, technology transfer, and global cooperation, particularly for developing countries. It aligns with the UN Pact for the Future, integrating sustainability into emerging AI governance mechanisms.
Informed by the UNEP Technical Paper on the Environmental Impact of the AI Lifecycle, led by Dr. Golestan Radwan and Ms. Irene Mwoga, the resolution reflects strong global consensus for evidence-based, collective action on AI and the environment.

As deliberations advance toward UNEA-7 in 2025, Kenya continues to lead as a bridge between technology and environmental multilateralism, reaffirming that in the age of AI, safeguarding the planet is not optional — it is our shared destiny.



Preparing a Nation for the Intelligent Era: Launch of the Kenya AI Skilling Alliance and Bilateral Collaboration with Microsoft on Sovereign AI



Kenya has taken a major step toward shaping its future in the age of intelligence with the launch of the Kenya Artificial Intelligence Skilling Alliance (KAISA) — a partnership between the Kenya Private Sector Alliance (KEPSA), Microsoft, and the Office of the Special Envoy on Technology. The national, multi-stakeholder platform will coordinate AI skills development, innovation, and policy collaboration across sectors to ensure Kenya's workforce is ready for the opportunities of the AI era.
Recognizing that AI is today's engine of transformation, the initiative focuses on empowering people rather than simply adopting technology. Through KAISA, Kenya is building a coordinated national framework that links skills to jobs, innovation to opportunity, and technology to inclusion — with a strong emphasis on engaging youth and women.
On the sidelines of the launch, Ambassador Philip Thigo held a bilateral meeting with Microsoft leadership to strengthen collaboration on AI skilling and sovereign AI development.

The dialogue reaffirmed a shared vision of positioning Kenya as an interoperable and trusted AI hub, anchored in data sovereignty, ethics, and public value. The discussions also aligned with Microsoft's We Elevate initiative, co-designed with ICAIRE (Saudi Arabia), which has already trained over 500 women in Kenya in AI and digital skills. Building on this success, Kenya and Microsoft will scale these efforts to expand access, develop sovereign AI infrastructure, and empower communities across the country.
As Ambassador Thigo emphasized, Kenya must not remain a passive consumer of AI but an active creator and leader shaping its evolution. KAISA embodies this commitment — to nurture talent, strengthen institutions, and turn AI's promise into jobs, entrepreneurship, and social good.
Special appreciation was extended to partners including Dr. Ehud Gachugu, Somanna Palacanda, Phyllis Migwi, Winnie Karanu, and teams from ILO, UNESCO, Pathways, academia, civil society, and industry, whose collaboration continues to define Kenya's path toward an inclusive, responsible, and sovereign AI future.

Unlocking Finance for Institutional Clean Cooking Technology, Innovation and Partnership for a Sustainable Future

The High-Level Summit on Unlocking Finance and Investments for Institutional Clean Cooking, held on 28–29 October 2025 in Nairobi, brought together government leaders, financiers, innovators, and development partners to accelerate Kenya's transition to universal clean cooking in public institutions. Hosted by the Office of the Special Envoy for Climate Change under Ambassador Ali Mohamed, CBS, the Summit emphasized clean cooking as both an environmental and technological priority critical to achieving national and global climate goals.

Innovating for Institutional Clean Cooking

With over 80 percent of Kenya's institutions still relying on biomass fuels, the Summit underscored the need for innovative, affordable, and sustainable solutions. Kenyan enterprises such as BURN Manufacturing, Ecobora, IGNIS Energy, Feion Green Ventures, and Faith Energy Saving Engineering Works Ltd showcased scalable technologies that reduce emissions and operational costs while creating green jobs.

The AI Hub for Sustainable Development, under the Office of the Special Envoy on Technology, committed to deploying AI and data analytics to map energy demand, assess carbon-offset potential, and guide investment decisions — building a national data infrastructure to support policy and climate impact tracking. Backed by the Government and Embassy of Italy through the Mattei Plan for Africa, the initiative reflects the power of international partnerships in accelerating Africa's clean energy transition.

Policy, Data, and Finance Alignment

Key outcomes from the Summit included:

Creation of a blended-finance mechanism to de-risk investments;

Establishment of a National Institutional Data Hub;

Development of a pipeline of bankable projects;

Reforms for service-based contracting; and

A multi-stakeholder coalition for coordinated action.

These commitments were consolidated into the Nairobi Action Plan, a roadmap targeting full institutional clean-cooking transition by 2028.

Supported by partners including MaMa Doing Good, The Rockefeller Foundation, CIFF, WRI Africa, UNDP, IEA, CLASP, InvestKenya, and CCAK, the Summit reaffirmed Kenya's leadership in merging technology, innovation, and partnerships to deliver inclusive, data-driven, and sustainable energy solutions that link clean energy with digital transformation for a greener, more equitable future.



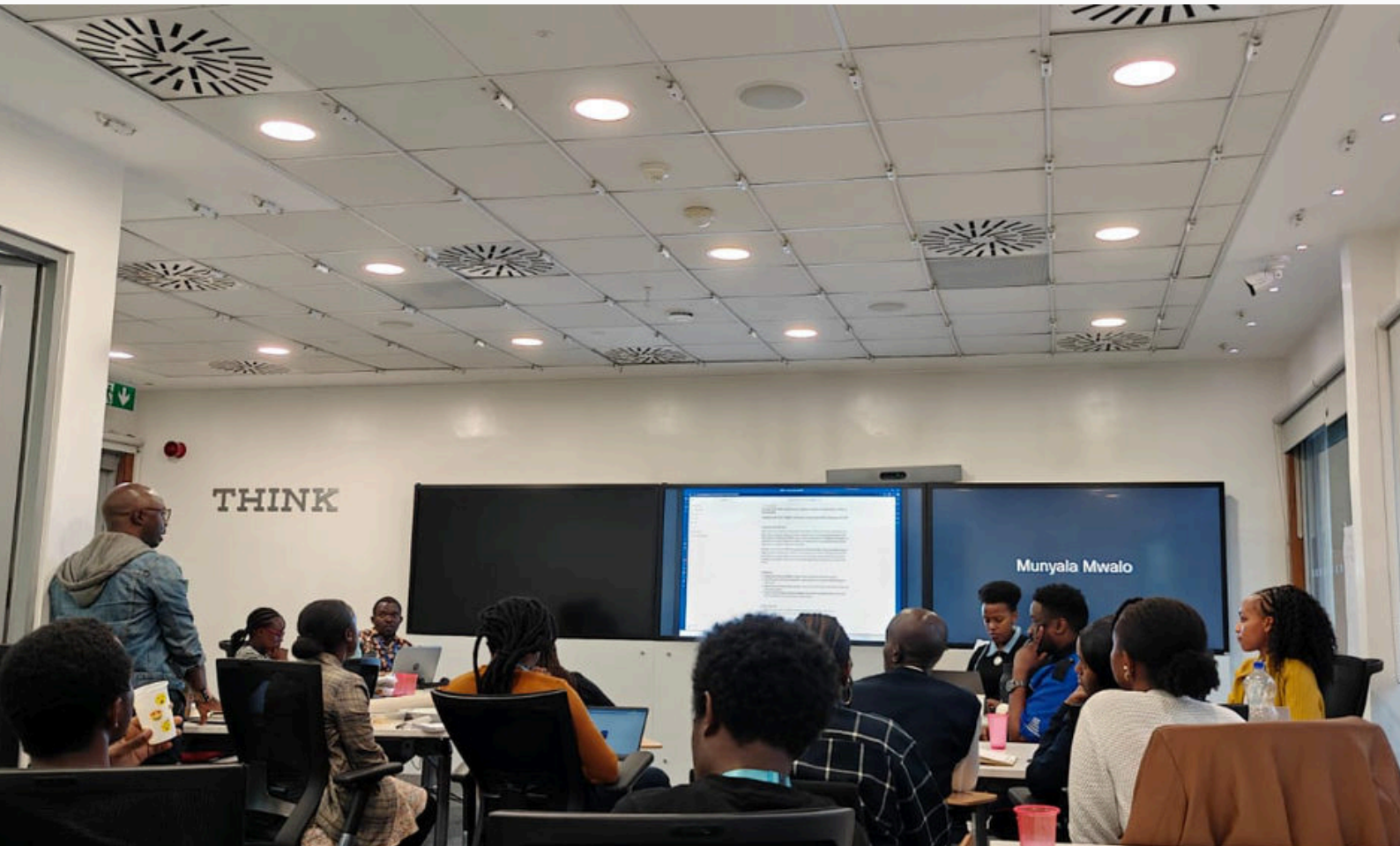
The Decision Intelligence Innovation Fellowship

The Decision Intelligence Innovation Fellowship is progressing remarkably well, bringing together a dynamic community of innovators, designers, and researchers who are shaping the future of data-driven and design-led decision-making in Kenya and beyond. The program has now successfully onboarded county researchers, deepening its local relevance and ensuring that insights are grounded in on-the-ground realities from diverse regions.



Fellows are currently engaging in six thematic tracks — AI in Health, Environment, Food Systems, Education (Talent), Compute & Infrastructure, Data, and SocioTech (Misinformation and Disinformation) — each addressing critical national and continental priorities. Through these tracks, fellows are exploring how AI and data can drive innovation, equity, and sustainability across sectors.

The fellowship's blended learning approach — combining interactive masterclasses, hands-on practicals, and a learn-as-you-do model — has been particularly effective in fostering real-time learning and collaboration. This approach empowers fellows to apply their skills directly to real-world challenges, generating insights and prototypes that contribute to Kenya's growing decision intelligence and sovereign AI ecosystem.



Kenya–South Africa Collaboration on Digital Transformation in the Public Service

This week, the Office of the Special Envoy on Technology held a constructive meeting with Prof. Milly Paile, Chief Director at the National School of Government (NSG), South Africa, Khomotso Radebe, Deputy Director at NSG, and Mr. Ernest Kgopa, Acting Ambassador of South Africa to Kenya.

The discussion centered on advancing collaboration on digital transformation within the public service, anchored in the shared vision of Kenya and South Africa to build efficient, ethical, and data-driven governments. Both countries recognize that the modernization of the public sector is not just about technology adoption, but about transforming service delivery through innovation, leadership, and skills.

Key Areas of Collaboration

Capacity-Building and Leadership Development
The National School of Government (NSG) and the Kenya School of Government (KSG) will work together to design and implement joint programs focused on digital literacy, AI competencies, and leadership in the age of intelligent governance.

Public Sector Innovation

Collaboration with the Centre for Public Service Innovation (CPSI) will focus on co-creating and scaling AI-enabled solutions to improve service delivery, policy design, and citizen engagement.

AI Factories for Public Innovation
In partnership with Cassava Technologies' AI Factories, the two governments will explore the establishment of a Public Sector Innovation Lab—a platform for AI model testing, digital skills incubation, and applied research to strengthen the delivery of public services.

Lecture Series on Digital Transformation
The meeting also agreed to develop a Kenya–South Africa Public Sector Lecture Series on Digital Transformation, bringing together thought leaders, innovators, and policymakers to share lessons and inspire a culture of excellence in governance.

A Shared Vision for Intelligent Public Service
This collaboration marks a new phase in Pan-African cooperation on AI and digital governance, aligning with both nations' aspirations for smarter, more inclusive, and citizen-centered public institutions. By connecting training, innovation, and applied research, Kenya and South Africa aim to build a resilient public service that is not only digitally enabled but also fit for the future.

Anchored in Kenya's Global AI and Digital Diplomacy Agenda

The partnership complements Kenya's broader leadership in Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI) and Digital Public Intelligence (DPIi) — frameworks that integrate technology, data, and governance for inclusive growth. It also reinforces Kenya's role within the UN High-Level Advisory Body on AI, the International Network of AI Safety Institutes, and the AI Capacity-Building Network established with the UN and Saudi Arabia.
Through these strategic partnerships, Kenya continues to position itself — and the African continent — at the forefront of shaping sovereign, interoperable, and human-centered AI ecosystems that deliver tangible benefits for people and planet.



Builders at the Frontier: Showcasing Africa's Next Generation of Web3 Innovators

The Base Founders Fellowship Demo Day marked a defining moment for Africa's emerging Web3 ecosystem, celebrating the continent's next generation of innovators shaping the decentralized future. Over an intensive 10-day program, 20 founders from Kenya, Nigeria, Ghana, Uganda, Cameroon, and Botswana refined their ventures, secured partnerships, and attracted investor interest — achieving 30 partnership deals, 4 global VC engagements, and $1 billion USD in collective transactions.

The event featured pitches to leading investors, including Andreessen Horowitz (a16z Crypto), Electric Capital, 1Confirmation, and CNGN Co., in a dynamic "commit or pass" format that brought Silicon Valley energy to Nairobi.

Delivering keynote remarks ahead of Jesse Pollak, Head of Blockchain at Coinbase, Ambassador Philip Thigo emphasized Kenya's leadership in fostering a trusted, open, and interoperable digital economy.

The highlight of the event was the announcement of the winning founder, awarded an all-expenses-paid fellowship at Balaji Srinivasan's Network School, offering global mentorship and venture acceleration.

Anchored in President Ruto's vision to make Kenya a hub for digital innovation and trust infrastructure, and following the enactment of the Virtual Asset Service Providers Act, the Demo Day reaffirmed that Kenya is open for innovation.

Africa's builders are rising — boldly, responsibly, and globally — charting the next frontier of digital transformation.



OUR GALLERY









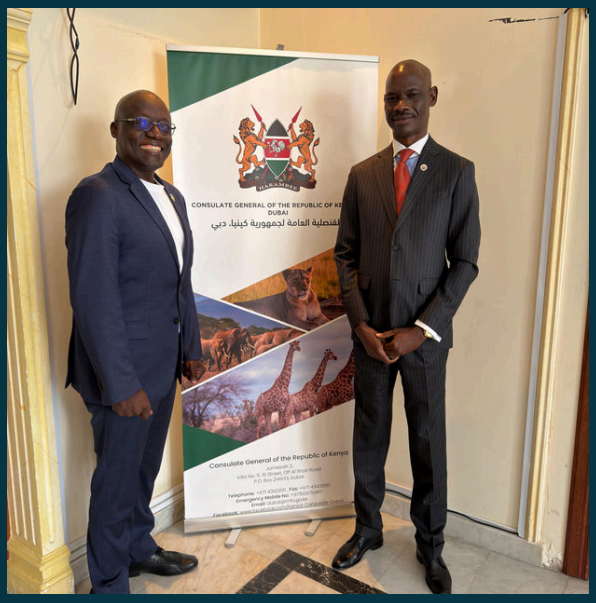





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H.E. Ambassador Philip Thigo, MBS, is an award-winning technology and public policy expert. He is the Special Envoy for Technology for the Republic of Kenya and the first in Africa.