

# TechPlomacy

Newsletter  
February 2026



Nairobi AI Forum  
India AI Impact Summit

Understanding sovereignty as  
independence within interdependence



OFFICE OF THE SPECIAL  
ENVOY ON TECHNOLOGY

Amb. Philip Thigo, MBS

Office Of The Special Envoy on Technology



# Foreword

February marked a significant month for Kenya's engagement in a fast-shifting global AI landscape. From co-hosting the Nairobi AI Forum to participating in the India AI Impact Summit, the month brought together governments, industry, academia, and multilateral partners around a shared priority: moving AI from conversation to capability, and from pilots to scalable delivery.

The Nairobi AI Forum reinforced the practical requirements for AI adoption across Africa—sustainable infrastructure, accessible compute, trusted data systems, capable institutions, and financing models that can support implementation across priority sectors. Announcements around expanded compute access, new acceleration pathways for innovators, and the co-design of large-scale financing initiatives reflected a growing shift from aspiration to execution.

At the India AI Impact Summit, Kenya contributed to global discussions on AI safety and evaluation, labour market resilience, language inclusion, and sustainability—alongside a wider conversation about how governance must keep pace with deployment. These engagements underscored a simple reality: while AI systems are increasingly deployed everywhere, the ability to measure, evaluate, and shape standards remains unevenly distributed. Closing that gap is essential if the AI economy is to expand opportunity rather than reproduce inequality.

Across both moments, one principle stood out—captured well by H.E. President William Ruto's reminder that no country can develop beyond its knowledge capacity. In the Age of Intelligence, knowledge capacity is not only education and training; it is the full ecosystem of talent, research, institutions, data stewardship, and enabling infrastructure that allows societies to build, govern, and apply intelligence responsibly. This is why Kenya continues to treat talent as sovereign infrastructure, and why we invest in AI fluency across leadership and systems—not only within technical communities.

This edition of TechPlomacy captures that work in motion: advancing sovereign digital infrastructure, strengthening skilling pipelines, supporting AI safety and sustainability efforts, and deepening partnerships that accelerate Kenya's national priorities while contributing to global governance conversations. In this era, sovereignty is best understood as independence within interdependence—building strategic capability at home while collaborating internationally to expand shared progress.

Thank you for reading. I invite you to join us on this journey as we continue to translate ambition into delivery. Your feedback, ideas, and partnership are welcome as we shape Kenya's path in the Age of Intelligence.

***Amb. Philip Thigo, MBS  
Special Envoy on Technology***

## Advancing Kenya's Sovereign Cloud Ambition

The Office of the Special Envoy on Technology met with David Bunei (Oracle) and Sneha Shah (iXAfrica) to mark a major milestone in delivering H.E. President William Ruto's commitment to position Kenya as a sovereign cloud region. The achievement reflects the value of strong public-private collaboration in building trusted digital infrastructure that underpins Kenya's priorities in AI, digital public infrastructure, data sovereignty, cybersecurity, and inclusive innovation. The engagement recognised the leadership of H.E. Dr. Musalia Mudavadi, Prime Cabinet Secretary, in supporting this agenda. While further work is required to expand sovereign compute, data ecosystems, AI-ready infrastructure, skills, and locally anchored innovation, this milestone represents a significant step toward strengthening Kenya's digital and economic sovereignty.



*Amb. Phillip Thigo with David Bunei (Oracle) and Sneha Shah (iXAfrica)*

## Advancing Green Mobility and Platform Innovation in Kenya



The Office of the Special Envoy on Technology engaged Imran Manji, Head of East Africa at Uber, and Fortune Sibande to advance discussions on ride-sharing, green mobility, and platform-driven innovation in Kenya. The engagement explored how digital mobility platforms can deepen their contribution to the economy—now exceeding KES 14 billion annually ( $\approx$  USD 108 million)—while strengthening employment outcomes, expanding driver and partner opportunities, and scaling technology-enabled services. Discussions also underscored the importance of sustainable urban mobility, local innovation, and responsible platform governance in supporting Kenya's broader economic transformation and climate ambitions, with a shared commitment to continued collaboration.

## **Sovereign AI, Space and Emerging Tech: Advancing Kenya–Germany Collaboration**



The Office of the Special Envoy on Technology met Dr. Erik Hansalek, Head of Division for Cooperation with Africa and the Middle East at Germany’s Federal Ministry of Research, Technology and Space, in an engagement convened by the Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany in Nairobi, with the support of Ambassador Sebastian Groth and Kerstin Pfirmann. The discussion explored practical pathways to deepen Kenya–Germany cooperation aligned with Germany’s High-Tech Agenda, including artificial intelligence, critical and emerging technologies, sovereign digital infrastructure, space cooperation, and innovation-led job creation.

The engagement noted strong alignment between the Agenda’s focus on technological sovereignty, research-to-market acceleration, and ecosystem-wide collaboration and Kenya’s efforts to build sovereign capability across the full AI stack—data, compute, talent, and priority use cases—while ensuring adoption remains responsible, inclusive, and value-driven. Both sides underscored the importance of trusted partnerships in shaping the standards, capabilities, and governance of next-generation technologies, and agreed to advance the dialogue toward concrete joint initiatives.

*Amb. Phillip Thigo, and Dr. Erik Hansalek, Head of Division for Cooperation with Africa and the Middle East at Germany’s Federal Ministry of Research, Technology and Space,*

## French Chamber of Commerce & Michelin Delegation – AI Learning Expedition



*Delegation from the French Chamber of Commerce in Kenya and Michelin,*

The Office of the Special Envoy on Technology hosted a delegation from the French Chamber of Commerce in Kenya and Michelin, led by Domitille Guilloton, Executive Director, for an AI learning expedition on the trends, challenges, and opportunities shaping artificial intelligence.

The engagement reviewed the full AI stack—from infrastructure, data, and compute to governance, talent, and real-world deployment—with emphasis on lessons that can be practically contextualised across different ecosystems.

Discussions identified areas for deeper France–Kenya collaboration, particularly on advancing open-source ecosystems, strengthening trusted data governance, building resilient supply

chains, and reinforcing public engagement amid growing information integrity challenges. The dialogue also emphasised the urgency of building AI talent and fluency across leadership and institutions to strengthen public trust and improve readiness for responsible adoption.

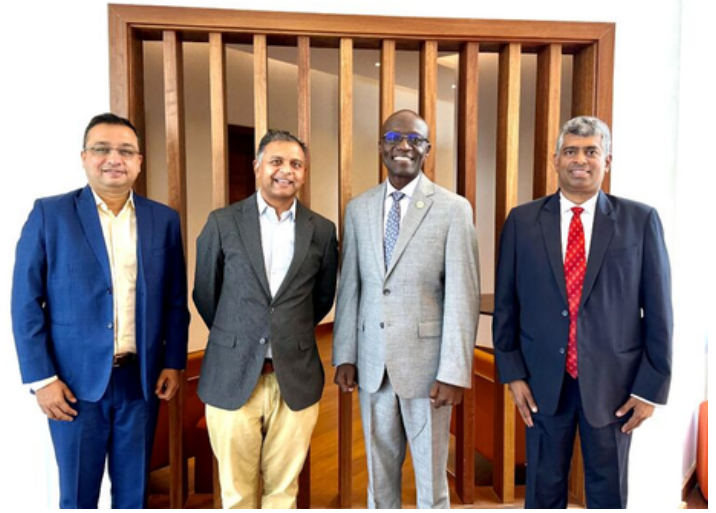
The exchange was timely ahead of the Africa Forward – France–Africa Summit, helping advance shared understanding on how France and African partners can collaborate to enable responsible, inclusive, and sovereign AI development through values-driven, multi-stakeholder partnerships.

## Strategic Dialogue: Advancing Kenya's Digital Sovereignty

Engaged in a strategic discussion with James David, Director at Tata Consultancy Services (TCS), alongside the iXAfrica team, on accelerating implementation of Kenya's Digital Economy Blueprint and National AI Strategy. Drawing on over 25 years of global experience, the dialogue focused on how population-scale digital programmes can be effectively contextualised to Kenya's development priorities.

The engagement centred on three pillars: strengthening Digital Public Infrastructure through interoperable identity, payments, and data exchange systems; advancing sovereign cloud architecture that prioritises data residency, jurisdictional control, and national security; and deploying responsible AI at scale to support public service automation and evidence-based policymaking.

Sustained and inclusive digital transformation will require trusted partnerships that respect sovereignty while building local capacity.



Discussions with James David, Director at Tata Consultancy Services (TCS), alongside the iXAfrica team, on accelerating the implementation of Kenya's Digital Economy Blueprint and National AI Strategy.

## Reimagining Talent Strategy with LinkedIn



Bilateral engagement with Louis Maret from LinkedIn

Held a productive engagement with Louis Maret from LinkedIn on how the platform can support a more data-led, skills-first, and future-ready talent strategy. We discussed how LinkedIn's labour market insights can strengthen workforce planning by mapping talent pipelines, identifying emerging skills, and tracking shifts in demand, alongside how LinkedIn Learning can enable continuous upskilling and reskilling at scale to close critical capability gaps.

Beyond recruitment, we explored how real-time labour market intelligence—including talent availability and compensation benchmarks—can inform smarter attraction and retention strategies, while purposeful talent mobility can create clearer progression pathways that align organisational needs with individual growth. As technology, data, and human capital converge, these tools are increasingly central to building resilient, high-performing institutions and economies, and we look forward to advancing practical collaboration.

## Future of Education in the Era of Intelligence: Aligning for Delivery



*Meeting with Mr. Mukhtar Ogle and the senior leadership of the Kenya National Examinations Council (KNEC)*

The Office of the Special Envoy on Technology met with Mr. Mukhtar Ogle and the senior leadership of the Kenya National Examinations Council (KNEC) to align on the co-hosting of the Future of Education in the Era of Intelligence Conference & Exhibition scheduled for May 2026. The engagement focused on advancing a coordinated, system-wide approach to integrating AI skilling and digital fluency across all levels of education—from foundational learning through Junior and Senior School, TVET, and university. Discussions emphasised the need to move beyond pilot initiatives toward scalable, delivery-oriented implementation anchored in curriculum reform, teacher capability, assessment modernization, and institutional readiness. osystem.

The meeting further underscored the importance of enabling infrastructure—including connectivity, platforms, devices, and responsible-use frameworks—to ensure equitable, safe, and nationally scalable adoption. Collaboration with the Ministry of Information, Communications and the Digital Economy (MOICT&DE) was identified as critical to aligning education transformation with Kenya’s broader digital priorities. The May 2026 conference is positioned as a strategic delivery milestone to accelerate the development of future-ready learners, empowered educators, and a modern, intelligence-ready education ec

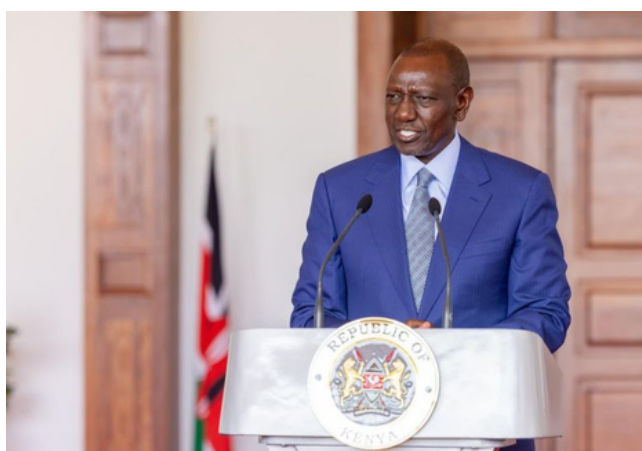
## Inspiration Session: Building Momentum for Nairobi's AI Moment

*The Office of the Special Envoy on Technology held a planning session with Keyzom Ngodup Massally and the AI Hub for Sustainable Development team to shape the objectives and delivery outcomes for Nairobi's AI Moment (9–10 February 2026), convened in collaboration with the Government of Italy, and to align this momentum with the India AI Impact Summit. The engagement focused on positioning Nairobi as a delivery platform for Africa's AI agenda, with emphasis on catalysing practical opportunities for the tech startup ecosystem through stronger partnerships, accessible infrastructure, talent pipelines, and investment-ready use cases that can scale responsibly.*



*Planning session with Keyzom Ngodup Massally and the AI Hub for Sustainable Development team*

## Deepening Kenya–Italy Cooperation on AI, Emerging Technologies and the Economy of the Future



The Office of the Special Envoy on Technology joined H.E. President William Ruto in engaging Hon. Anna Maria Bernini, Italy's Minister for Universities and Research, on the margins of the Nairobi AI Summit to advance Kenya–Italy cooperation in Science, Technology and Innovation. Discussions placed particular emphasis on Artificial Intelligence and other emerging technologies as strategic pillars for preparing both countries for the economy of the future.

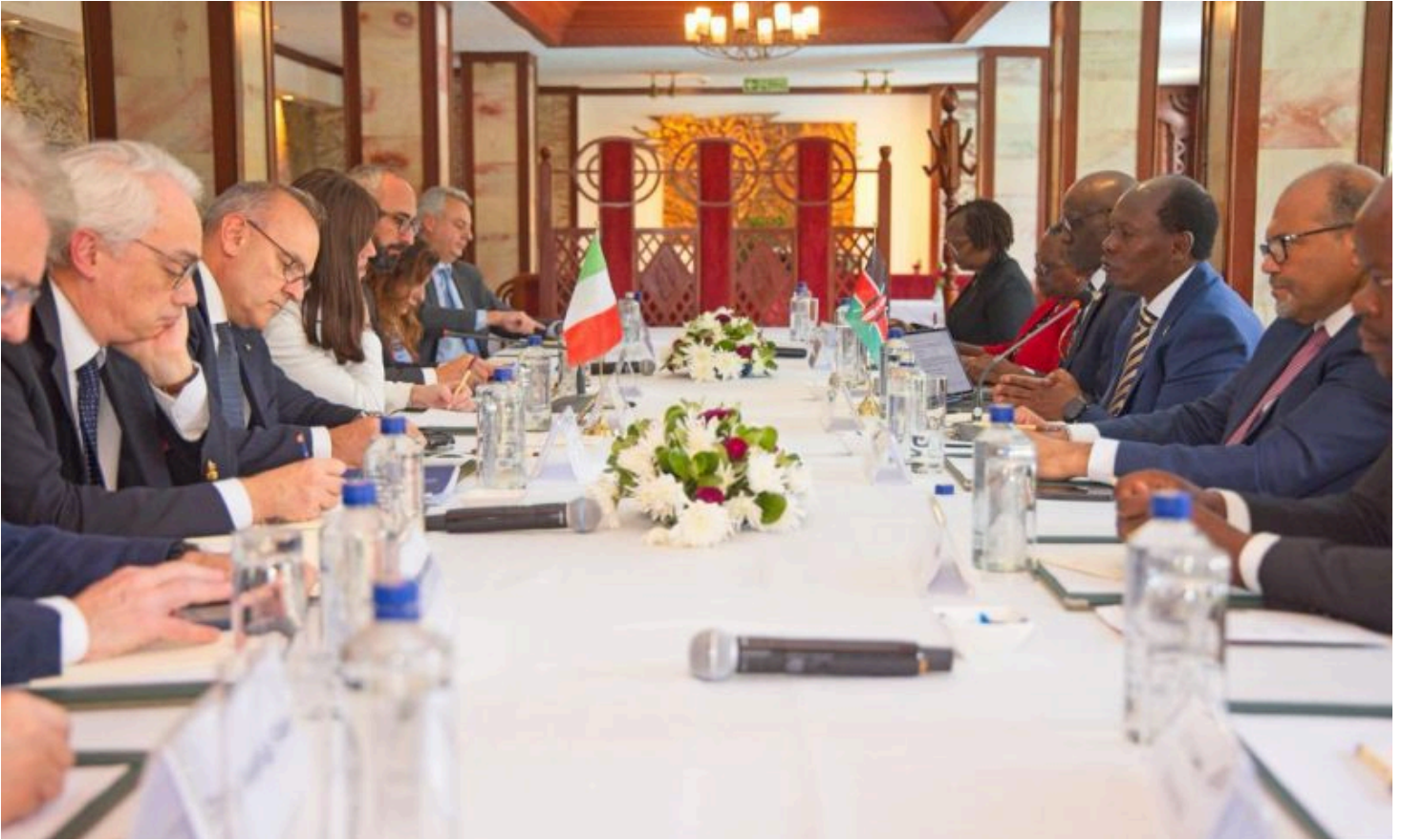
A key milestone in this partnership is the AI Hub for Sustainable Development under Italy's Mattei Plan, which is already supporting ecosystem delivery through expanded access to compute, venture support, and enabling infrastructure for startups and scaling enterprises. The engagement reaffirmed a shared commitment to translate strategic alignment into practical collaboration.

Both sides expressed readiness to accelerate research exchanges and co-creation across the AI stack—including human capital development, compute capacity, talent mobility, and high-impact use cases—anchored in responsible innovation and tangible outcomes.

Also present were Hon. Julius Migos Ogamba, Cabinet Secretary for Education; Dr. Beatrice Muganda Inyangala, Principal Secretary, State Department for Higher Education and Research; and Prof. Shaukat Abdulrazak, Principal Secretary, State Department for Science, Research and Innovation.



## Kenya–Italy: Modernising STI Cooperation for the Age of Intelligence



The Office of the Special Envoy on Technology participated in a bilateral meeting with Hon. Anna Maria Bernini, Italy’s Minister for University and Research, alongside the Kenyan delegation led by Hon. William Kabogo, Cabinet Secretary for ICT and the Digital Economy, and Prof. Shaukat Abdulrazak, Principal Secretary for Science, Technology and Innovation, together with senior officials.

Discussions covered a broad range of priorities in science, technology and innovation, anchored in Italy’s Mattei Plan, with a shared commitment to expand and modernise bilateral cooperation. Key areas of focus included strengthening talent mobility, advancing joint research and co-creation, scaling capacity-building initiatives, and exploring shared digital infrastructure—particularly expanded access to compute resources to support research and innovation ecosystems.

The engagement reaffirmed a common understanding that no country can advance beyond the strength of its knowledge base. In the Age of Intelligence, sustained investment in human capital—paired with the responsible, secure, ethical, and sovereign deployment of critical and emerging technologies, including AI—will define long-term competitiveness and inclusive growth for both nations.





Embassy of Italy  
Nairobi



Ministry of Foreign Affairs  
and International Cooperation

Mattei Plan  
for Africa



Ministry of Enterprises  
and Made in Italy



AI Hub  
for Sustainable  
Development

# Nairobi AI Forum 2026

Accelerating cross-border partnerships  
and financing models that enable  
green, and sovereign AI infrastructure

9-10th February 2026

#NairobiAIForum

## NAIROBI AI FORUM

## Nairobi AI Forum 2026 Drives AI Adoption and Impact Media Release

The Nairobi AI Forum 2026 was co-hosted by the Office of the Special Envoy on Technology and the Government of Italy, in partnership with the Embassy of Italy in Kenya and Italy's Ministries of Enterprises and Made in Italy, University and Research, and Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, alongside the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

The Forum aimed to accelerate AI adoption and impact through sustainable infrastructure, strategic partnerships, and innovative financing. Discussions examined how AI infrastructure, financing, and deployment can be approached cohesively—linking infrastructure providers, industry, innovators, and governments to unlock implementation across priority sectors.

Sessions explored blended finance, public–private partnerships, venture capital, and development finance as mechanisms to scale AI infrastructure and enable responsible, high-impact deployment across Africa.

Key delivery announcements included:

- 1.5 million GPU hours from the AI Hub for Sustainable Development and Cineca to support 130 African innovators working on climate resilience, local-language voice AI, and food security—complemented by cloud credits from AWS and Microsoft.
- Co-design of the AI \$10 Billion Initiative, in collaboration with the African Development Bank and partners, aimed at mobilising up to \$10 billion and unlocking up to 45 million jobs by 2035.
- A new acceleration and investment pathway, including a €50 million platform and the establishment of the first Italian incubator in Africa.
- Advancing space-enabled AI for food security.
- Launch of a cybersecurity readiness open call, delivered with Cyber 4.0 and reinforced through cooperation with the Cisco Cybersecurity Training Center in Nairobi.

A central takeaway from the Forum was clear: scaling AI is not about institutions continually “doing AI,” but about embedding AI into core systems and workflows so institutions can deliver their mandates more effectively, with measurable impact across priority sectors.



Nairobi AI Forum



## From Content to Capability: Education for the Age of AI

On the margins of the Nairobi AI Forum, the Office of the Special Envoy on Technology held a working discussion with Winnie Karanu (AI Skills Director, Microsoft), Farai Ntuli (Partnerships Lead, Canva Africa), and Bianca Sibiya (Marketing Lead, Canva Africa) on strengthening education content and curriculum delivery in the Age of Intelligence. The engagement focused on improving learner experience and teacher capability through stronger instructional design, classroom-ready content, and practical tools that help educators translate curriculum into engaging, outcomes-based learning. The discussion identified a shared opportunity for collaboration between the Government of Kenya, Microsoft, and Canva to support a shift from access to content toward system-wide capability—equipping teachers with usable resources, strengthening delivery at the classroom level, and improving learning outcomes at scale.

At the margins of the Nairobi AI Forum, Amb. Philip Thigo held a substantive discussion with Timothy Torres on TechPlomacy and the geopolitical shifts unfolding in real time, as emerging technologies become foundational to national strategy and global influence. Drawing on his background spanning early technology entrepreneurship and two decades in special operations and intelligence, the conversation explored leadership, negotiation, and decision-making under conditions of uncertainty, and how these lessons now inform work at the intersection of technology and geopolitics. The discussion centred on Africa's place in a shifting world order—not merely as an arena for external competition, but as a co-creator of norms, capabilities, and innovation. As the international system recalibrates, Africa's role as a strategic middle ground carries both risk and opportunity. The exchange underscored the need to strengthen continental capacity across compute access, data governance, standards-setting, talent mobility, and equitable value creation, ensuring that historic inequalities are not replicated in the next phase of the global digital and technological architecture.

## Bilateral Discussion with Timothy Torres



# Nairobi AI Forum 2026



## Nairobi's AI Moment: From Dialogue to Delivery

Published a joint op-ed, "Nairobi's AI Moment: From Dialogue to Delivery," reflecting on the Nairobi AI Forum/Summit and outlining lessons, opportunities, impacts, and priorities for implementation, co-authored with Amb. Vincenzo Del Monaco and Keyzom Ngodup Massally. [Click here to read](#)



## AI in Africa—Beyond the Hype, Toward Real Capability | Africa Tech Festival

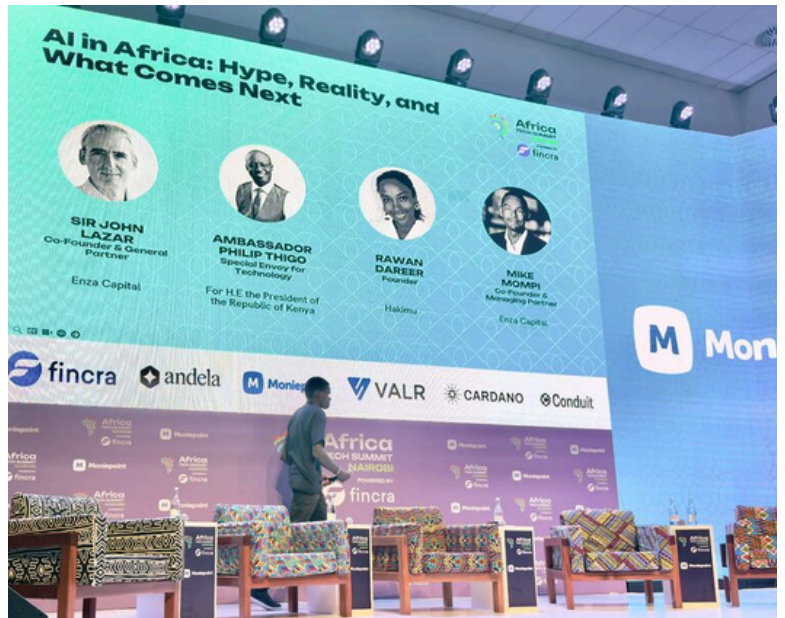
Amb. Phillip Thigo is privileged to have joined a panel at Africa Tech Festival on “AI in Africa—beyond the hype, toward real capability,” alongside Sir John Lazar (Chair, Raspberry Pi Foundation), Richard Muthua (Cassava Technologies), and Rawan Dareer (Hakimu).

The discussion reinforced a core point: AI in Africa is simultaneously hype and reality. Tangible value is already being created—particularly where AI is embedded in operational workflows such as customer operations, fraud detection, credit decisioning, and compliance. However, pilots and demonstrations should not be conflated with delivery.

The binding constraint is end-to-end capability across the AI stack: compute, data, talent, and adoption must advance together. Over-investment in one layer while neglecting others produces fragmentation rather than scale.

In the Age of Intelligence, sovereignty should be understood as independence within interdependence. African countries can leverage global platforms to accelerate deployment while building strategic domestic capability—affordable compute, trusted data pipelines, interoperable standards, and institutions able to govern responsible use.

Priority actions to shift from experimentation to scale include: (coordinated investment across the full AI stack; trusted data-sharing frameworks with strong governance; expanded talent and leadership capability; procurement reform that enables local innovators to sell, iterate, and scale; and practical governance embedded in delivery, including safety, auditability, accountability, and inclusion by design. Africa’s trajectory must be anchored in building capability, institutions, and market pathways—not consumption alone.



## Philanthropy, Democracy, and AI in an Era of Transformation

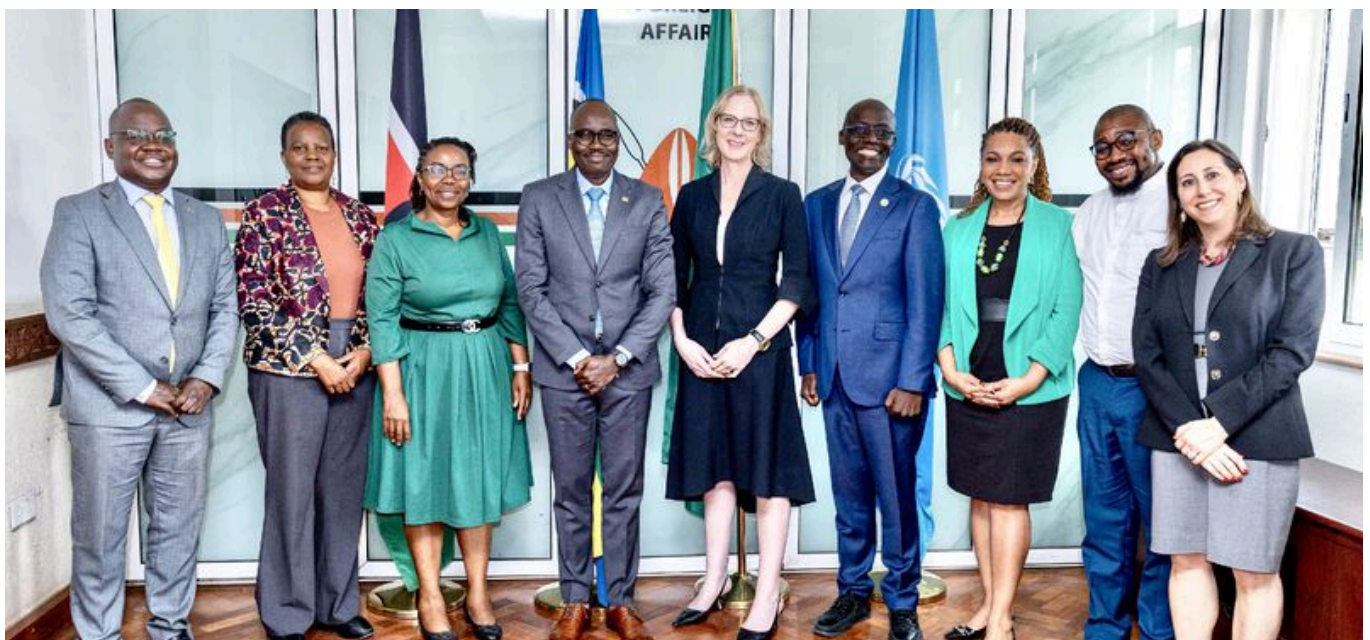
During Ford Foundation President Heather Gerken's inaugural visit to Africa, the Office Of The Special Envoy on Technology was privileged to hold engagements with them, together with with senior Government of Kenya officials, including Prime Cabinet Secretary Dr. Musalia Mudavadi and Principal Secretary for Foreign Affairs Dr. Korir Sing'Oei. Discussions focused on the intersection of democracy, open government, geopolitics, and the evolving impact of artificial intelligence.

Participants examined AI's dual character: its potential to accelerate inclusive development and public-sector effectiveness, alongside emerging risks to information integrity, electoral processes, and democratic discourse. The dialogue noted the growing sophistication of AI-enabled disinformation, pressures on multilateral cooperation, and broader concerns regarding democratic resilience.

There was consensus that these challenges require structured, multi-stakeholder collaboration across government, civil society, media, academia, philanthropy, and the private sector. No single institution can adequately respond to the systemic implications of AI and digital transformation in isolation.

A significant component of the exchange addressed the evolving role of philanthropy in the digital age. Emphasis was placed on moving beyond traditional grantmaking toward catalytic interventions that strengthen democratic infrastructure, support institutional accountability, and ensure that technological deployment upholds human dignity, inclusion, and rights.

The discussions also underscored the growing importance of South-South and North-South cooperation in shaping governance frameworks for emerging technologies. Participants affirmed that democracy, development, and technological advancement must be pursued as complementary objectives, requiring coordinated investment, policy alignment, and responsible innovation.



*Ford Foundation President Heather Gerken's inaugural visit to Africa,*

## Kenya in the Age of Intelligence: AI as Industrial Strategy

Keynote remarks were delivered at a Private Sector Roundtable convened in Nairobi as part of the national process to develop Kenya's Policy on Artificial Intelligence and Emerging Technologies.

The Roundtable noted that AI is already reshaping Kenya's economy across priority sectors—including financial services, commerce, agriculture, health, and education. Stakeholders emphasised that the national priority must now shift from ambition-setting to execution: establishing the institutional, technical, and investment architecture required to deploy AI at scale and convert innovation into measurable productivity and public value. The engagement affirmed the value of a co-design approach bringing together government, private sector innovators, and development partners. The process is being led by the Ministry of ICT and Digital Economy, with KICTANet serving as the lead implementing partner and support provided by the British High Commission. Participants converged on a foundational position: Kenya's AI pathway must be safe, secure, inclusive, sustainable, and trustworthy. It was further agreed that the national AI policy must operate as more than a regulatory framework; it must function as an industrial strategy—clarifying national objectives, mobilising capability, and aligning incentives to drive adoption and competitiveness.



### Priority capability pillars identified

- Predictable governance that enables innovation and trust
- Establish clear and enforceable rules to provide certainty for innovators and investors, complemented by practical enablers such as regulatory sandboxes, privacy safeguards, and approaches that protect data rights and national interests.
- Talent as a core national capability
- Position AI skills development as a strategic investment in sovereignty and competitiveness, strengthening pipelines from foundational digital skills through to advanced technical, product, and governance competencies.

- Compute, data, and delivery capacity  
Accelerate the infrastructure and operational capabilities required to move from pilots to production—ensuring reliable access to compute, trusted data systems, and institutional delivery mechanisms that can sustain implementation.

- Jobs and inclusion by design  
Expand participation in AI-enabled economic growth by supporting adoption across sectors and firm sizes, enabling SMEs and local innovators to compete, and ensuring labour-market transitions are managed through reskilling, job redesign, and inclusion measures.

- Green AI and AI for green growth  
Integrate sustainability requirements into AI deployment, while prioritising use-cases that strengthen climate resilience and resource efficiency across the economy.

The Roundtable concluded that national progress in the Age of Intelligence will be determined by Kenya's ability to build and retain knowledge capacity and to translate policy into scalable delivery. Kenya's strategic opportunity is to act as a creator and collaborator in the global AI economy—not solely as a user of external technologies.

## Appointed Chair of the Board, iamtheCODE

Amb. Philip Thigo is glad to have been appointed Chairman of the Board of iamtheCODE, an African-led global movement advancing STEAMD education and AI literacy for women and girls.

The appointment brings together a multi-sector board and advisory community spanning education, investment, technology, civil society and multilateral institutions.

Fellow leaders referenced include George Pyrgos (Tower Advisory / Wincopter), Vibhuti Choyal (RS Choyal Group), Selma Talha-Jebril (WISE), Beatrice

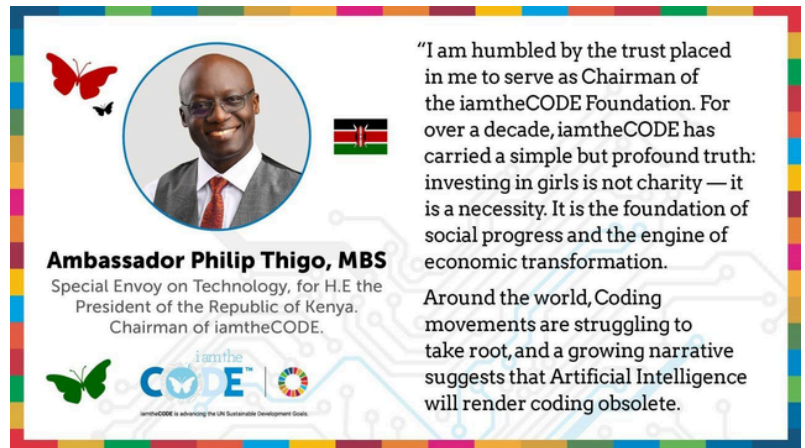
Engstrom-Bondy (Investor AB), Alice Usanase (WEF Young Global Leader), Dr. Roopa Dhatt (Women in Global Health), Ada Osakwe (Agrolay Ventures), Priscilla Idele (UNFPA), Anthony Muiyuro (ISACA Kenya Chapter), H.R.H. Prince Jaime de Bourbon de Parme (UNHCR), Saad Hayat Tamman (WEF Young Global Leader), and Patrick Freeman (Obama Foundation).

The engagement underscored a central policy and delivery priority: in the Age of Intelligence, inclusion cannot be treated as an adjunct to innovation. It must be designed into systems through skills development, access, and structured pathways that enable girls and young women to participate fully in the AI economy.

The initiative emphasises a shift from passive technology consumption to active capability-building—ensuring girls and young women are equipped not only to use digital tools, but to build, create, and lead with them.

The Board will prioritise work at scale, anchored in integrity and measurable outcomes, to expand AI literacy and strengthen STEAMD pathways for girls across diverse learning contexts.

Kenya and Cisco, under the Country Digital Acceleration (CDA) programme, confirmed the next phase of collaboration focused on trusted AI use cases, cybersecurity capacity-building, and innovation enablement. The partnership will advance practical AI applications within the Judiciary to strengthen service delivery and efficiency; scale cybersecurity and digital resilience training, including collaboration with the KDF Academy and the Foreign Service Academy; and establish a pathway for local innovators to build AI agents and new applications on Cisco platforms. Implementation milestones and priority use cases will be defined in the next phase of delivery.



## Cisco Country Digital Acceleration (CDA) x Kenya



Cisco Country Digital Acceleration (CDA) x Kenya

## Techplomacy Connective



Kenya co-hosted the TechPlomacy Connective High-Level Roundtable with the Royal Embassy of Belgium in Nairobi to support the accelerated implementation of the UNEA-7 resolution on the Environmental Sustainability of Artificial Intelligence Systems. Discussions focused on the dual role of AI as both an enabler for climate and environmental applications—such as modelling, biodiversity monitoring, and risk prediction—and a source of environmental pressures through energy demand, water use for cooling, and material consumption across the AI lifecycle. The roundtable underscored the need to translate the UNEA-7 resolution into delivery by supporting UNEP to (i) produce a stocktake report mapping existing initiatives, gaps, and measurable opportunities for action; (ii) collaborate on priority use-case development, beginning with AI-enabled early warning; (iii) convene coordination with other Multilateral Environmental Agreements to align on implementation and identify areas for joint programming; and (iv) build capacity and fluency on AI and environment for diplomats stationed at UNEP. The meeting was hosted at the residence of H.E. Ambassador Peter and Mrs. Maddens.



## Intergenerational AI Governance: Building With Youth, Not For Youth

Amb. Philip Thigo participated in an intergenerational dialogue convened by the Next Generation India Fellowship (UN Foundation and CEEW), where the youth perspective emerged as the defining contribution. Young leaders underscored that AI governance cannot be designed for the next generation; it must be built with them, and they pushed the exchange toward concrete questions of who benefits, who bears risk, and how countries build durable capability across talent, institutions, data stewardship, and enabling infrastructure—while cooperating globally without reproducing historical inequalities. The dialogue featured contributions from Amandeep Singh Gill, Amitabh Kant, Dr Arunabha Ghosh, Dr Claire Melamed, and Safiya Husain, and was moderated by Ruchira Goyal and Selamawit Tezera Chaka, with Kunalika Gautam convening and hosting.



The Office of the Special Envoy on Technology served as Chief Guest at the launch of the Crop Measurement and Evaluation (CroME) Initiative at KALRO Headquarters, Nairobi (10–11 February 2026). CroME is a Kenya-focused programme leveraging artificial intelligence and Earth observation to establish a trusted, nationally owned agricultural data backbone to strengthen food-security planning, risk management, and sector performance. CroME responds to persistent constraints caused by fragmented and inconsistent agricultural data, which undermines decision-making on production trends, climate risk, and supply–demand dynamics. The initiative

## Launch of the CroME Initiative | Kenya’s Agricultural Intelligence Backbone



will deliver operational data products to improve planning and response, including crop type maps (supporting crop area estimation, food balance sheets, and trade analysis), yield forecasting, field boundary mapping, crop condition monitoring, and disaster and damage mapping to strengthen early warning and response systems.

The programme builds on ongoing partnerships with NASA Harvest, Microsoft AI for Good, RCMRD, and the Ministry of Agriculture, including efforts to strengthen the evidence base for food balance sheets and improve disaster risk management workflows. The launch reaffirmed the strategic imperative to ground food security in reliable intelligence, enabling faster, more accurate, and more accountable action across the agricultural value chain.

# Satyendra Nath Bose

Indian theoretical physicist and mathematician

Bose's statistical framework for particles showed how individual entities, when considered collectively, behave according to emergent probabilistic laws. AI models operate on similar statistical principles, learning distributions across vast datasets rather than deterministic rules. Just as Bose-Einstein statistics describe collective quantum behaviour, machine learning describes patterns across populations of data points. His work underscores a shift from certainty to probability, a philosophical and mathematical transition that sits at the heart of modern AI.

$$\sum_{p=1}^n \sum_{q=1}^n$$



**INDIA AI IMPACT  
SUMMIT**



## CSIS Dialogue

A dialogue convened by CSIS, with support from Fathom, marked the opening of the India AI Action Summit, bringing together stakeholders to examine how AI is already reshaping geopolitics and the global balance of access and risk, alongside emerging expectations on evaluation, accountability, safety, and security. Discussions emphasised a shift from headline narratives to practical governance questions grounded in research and real-world deployment, recognising that policy and institutional choices will determine whether AI broadens opportunity or reinforces inequality. The convening signalled a move from ambition to action through shared standards, collaborative research, and partnerships that support domestic capability-building rather than the outsourcing of strategic intelligence, while reinforcing the importance of positioning the Global South as an active co-creator of the evolving AI governance agenda.

## AI Usage-Data for Labour Market Resilience

Today at the India AI Impact Summit 2026 in New Delhi, the Office of the Special Envoy on Technology participated in a panel discussion on “AI usage-data for labour market resilience.” Key emphasis: “global job exposure” matrices should be applied with caution, as they are not universally transferable. In many developing economies, labour markets are anchored in SMEs and the informal economy, where work organisation and pathways to opportunity differ from large-corporate contexts. Accordingly, policy responses should be adaptive. More agile Labour Market Information Systems (LMIS) are required—near real-time,

privacy-preserving, and country-specific—tracking task-level shifts, including where work is being automated, where workers are being augmented, and where new roles are emerging.

As disruption accelerates, social protection should be treated as a core component of AI readiness. Reskilling efforts should be complemented by transition support, portable benefits, and policy measures that protect dignity while enabling productivity.

Panel participants included:

Dr. Shamika Ravi, Economic Advisory Council to the Prime Minister of India; Hector de Rivoire, Director of Public Policy, Microsoft Office of Responsible AI; and Bharat Chandar, Stanford Digital Economy Lab & Institute for Human-Centered AI. The immediate priority is to move from debate to delivery through shared measurement, shared standards, and shared accountability—so productivity gains translate into jobs, enterprise growth, and resilience, rather than widening inequality.



## Flipping the Script: Sovereignty and the AI Economy

Amb. Phillip Thigo delivered remarks on “Flipping the Script: How the Global Majority Can Recode the AI Economy” during a panel alongside Vrushali Sawant (Moderator), Dr. Rachel Adams, Kazim Rizvi, and Reggie Townsend; appreciation is extended to the co-hosts, SAS and the Global Centre on AI Governance. Remarks framed sovereignty in the Age of Intelligence as the capacity to invest in foundational technology while collaborating on shared infrastructure in an era of interdependence. Key points emphasised included: policy as enabling guardrails (context-relevant and aligned with global norms, including the direction of travel under the Global Digital Compact); investment across the AI stack with priority on talent (capability as a built asset); strengthening AI fluency across sectors through domain leadership; and positioning AI as intrinsically transdisciplinary, requiring leadership-level understanding across government and business.



## AI “Red Lines”: From the Mine to the Model (Ada Lovelace Institute)

The Office of the Special Envoy on Technology participated in the Ada Lovelace Institute’s AI “Red Lines” discussion on enforcing unacceptable risks across the AI value chain, alongside Gaia Marcus, Dr. Rumman Chowdhury, Anita Gurumurthy, Marielle Mumenthaler, Guilherme Fitzgibbon Alves Pereira, and the Ada Lovelace team including Cam Rincon. Key points emphasised that red lines must extend from mine to model (including environmental harm, unsafe labour, and exploitative critical-mineral supply chains); that AI risk is socio-technical and harms are unevenly distributed, with heightened exposure in the Global

South; that catastrophic/systemic risks require explicit governance; that multilateral cooperation remains essential (including strengthening the AI Scientific Panel and an actionable Global Dialogue Mechanism); and that enforceability is the test through procurement guardrails, audit rights, impact assessments, incident reporting, and remedies.

## Translating AI Safety Commitments into Real-World Delivery

Amb. Phillip Thigo held a bilateral engagement with former UK Prime Minister Rt. Hon. Rishi Sunak on the margins of the TBI Forum during the India AI Summit. The discussion reflected on the “Bletchley moment” and subsequent progress, noting the shift in global AI safety efforts from awareness to delivery across safety, evaluation, and governance. The Office also highlighted Kenya’s leadership in advancing practical, pro-innovation guardrails, and noted Mr. Sunak’s personal connection to East Africa through his Kenyan and Tanzanian roots.

The engagement underscored the importance of sustaining senior-level commitment to translating early summit commitments into implementable actions and measurable outcomes.



*Bilateral engagement with former UK Prime Minister Rt. Hon. Rishi Sunak on the margins of the TBI Forum during the India AI Summit.*

## Kenya–Canada: Deepening AI Research & Sovereign Capacity

The Office engaged Evan Solomon, Canada’s Minister of Artificial Intelligence and Digital Innovation, to advance Kenya–Canada cooperation in the Age of Intelligence. Discussions focused on three priorities: (1) sovereign AI as investment in data, compute, talent, and use-cases while collaborating through trusted partnerships; (2) multimodal and multilingual model collaboration to reflect local languages, cultures, and contexts; and (3) research and development anchored in longstanding bilateral investments, including opportunities for joint labs, talent exchange, compute partnerships, and responsible AI governance collaboration.



*Bilateral engagement with Evan Solomon, Canada’s Minister of Artificial Intelligence and Digital Innovation,*

# INDIA AI ACTION SUMMIT | FROM PRINCIPLES TO MEASURABLE ACTION

The Office of the Special Envoy on Technology participated in the High-Level Segment of the India AI Action Summit in New Delhi, engaging with counterparts across government and the global AI ecosystem. A key development was the joint endorsement by leading frontier model companies of the New Delhi Frontier AI Impact Commitments; in a fast-moving landscape where governance frameworks often lag, this alignment around measurable impact—beyond aspirational principles—signals a shift toward delivery. The direction of travel highlighted commitments to analyse real-world AI usage at scale, develop anonymised and aggregated datasets to map AI diffusion across economies, ground workforce and education policy in evidence rather than assumption, and establish longitudinal baselines to track adoption, opportunity, and impact over time. Publishing statistical insights on AI usage supports a move from rhetoric to accountability, enabling clearer assessment of AI's effects on productivity, labour markets, and the evolving nature of work.



*High-Level Segment of the India AI Action Summit in New Delhi,*

## Strengthening the UN as the “Dialogue of Dialogues” on AI Governance

The Office of the Special Envoy on Technology co-hosted a private dinner discussion on the UN Global Dialogue on AI Governance, jointly with Tech Ambassadors Anne-Marie Engtoft Larsen and Eugenio Vassallo, in collaboration with Claire Melamed (United Nations Foundation) and Renata Dawn (Simon Institute). The session was joined by the Co-Facilitators—the Permanent Representatives of Ecuador and Estonia—together with other tech ambassadors and leaders shaping the process, for a candid exchange on how the Global Dialogue mechanism can deliver tangible value amid increasing fragmentation in global AI governance.

Key takeaways emphasised that delivery—not convenings alone—must be the measure of success, with a focus on closing the AI divide and expanding access to benefits and opportunity; inclusivity must be designed through clear participation modalities, practical tools for inputs, and resourcing that enables participation, particularly for delegations travelling to Geneva; the process should remain both multilateral and multi-stakeholder, engaging governments alongside the private sector, foundations, academia, and civil society through structured channels; and the Dialogue should drive convergence by complementing momentum under the Global Digital Compact and prioritising practical outcomes—shared learning, capacity building, and cooperation pathways—over protracted plenaries or duplicative mapping exercises.

The UN remains the essential platform for a “dialogue of dialogues”; the priority now is to ensure the Global Dialogue is efficient, action-oriented, and consequential across Geneva and New York.



*Private dinner discussion on the UN Global Dialogue on AI Governance*

## Smaller Footprint, Bigger Impact — Advancing Resilient and Efficient AI Models for a Sustainable Future

The Office of the Special Envoy on Technology contributed remarks during a session at the AI Impact Summit focused on advancing resilient and efficient AI models for sustainability, alongside leaders shaping the global AI agenda.

Opening remarks by Anne Le Hénanff (Minister Delegated for AI and Digital Affairs, France), S. Krishnan (Secretary, MeitY, India), and Tawfik Jelassi (Assistant Director-General, UNESCO) underscored a clear direction: sustainability must move from aspiration to measurable implementation.

The Office participated in a panel moderated by Anne Bouverot (AI Envoy for France), alongside James Manyika (Google), Arthur Mensch (Mistral AI), and Abhishek Singh (IndiaAI Mission).



*AI Impact Summit*

A key milestone discussed was the approval of ITU-T L.1801, introducing a holistic life-cycle framework to assess and compare the environmental impact of AI systems.

From a Kenyan and broader Global South perspective, resilience and efficiency are not optional optimisations—they are pathways to inclusive innovation. Smaller, task-specific, resource-efficient models can expand access while reducing strain on energy systems and supply chains. If AI safety is understood as systemic risk governance, environmental sustainability belongs firmly within that definition—from energy and water use to materials, critical minerals, and e-waste.



## Towards a Safer South: Building AI Safety with the Global Majority

Amb. Philip Thigo delivered keynote remarks at the launch of the Global South Network on AI Safety and Evaluation, highlighting a persistent structural gap: while AI systems are deployed globally, evaluation capacity and benchmark-setting remain concentrated in a limited set of geographies. The remarks emphasised that meaningful inclusivity requires co-authorship of benchmarks by the communities most affected; that AI-related harms are unevenly distributed, including impacts linked to environmental extraction, linguistic exclusion, labour disruption, and infrastructure burdens; that benchmarks function as governance power and can fail in practice where evaluation and deployment contexts diverge; and that capacity—including red-teaming, evaluator pipelines, and compute access—should be treated as sovereign accountability infrastructure rather than optional add-ons.

*Launch of the Global South Network on AI Safety and Evaluation,*

## Redefining AI Safety — From Mine to Model to Community

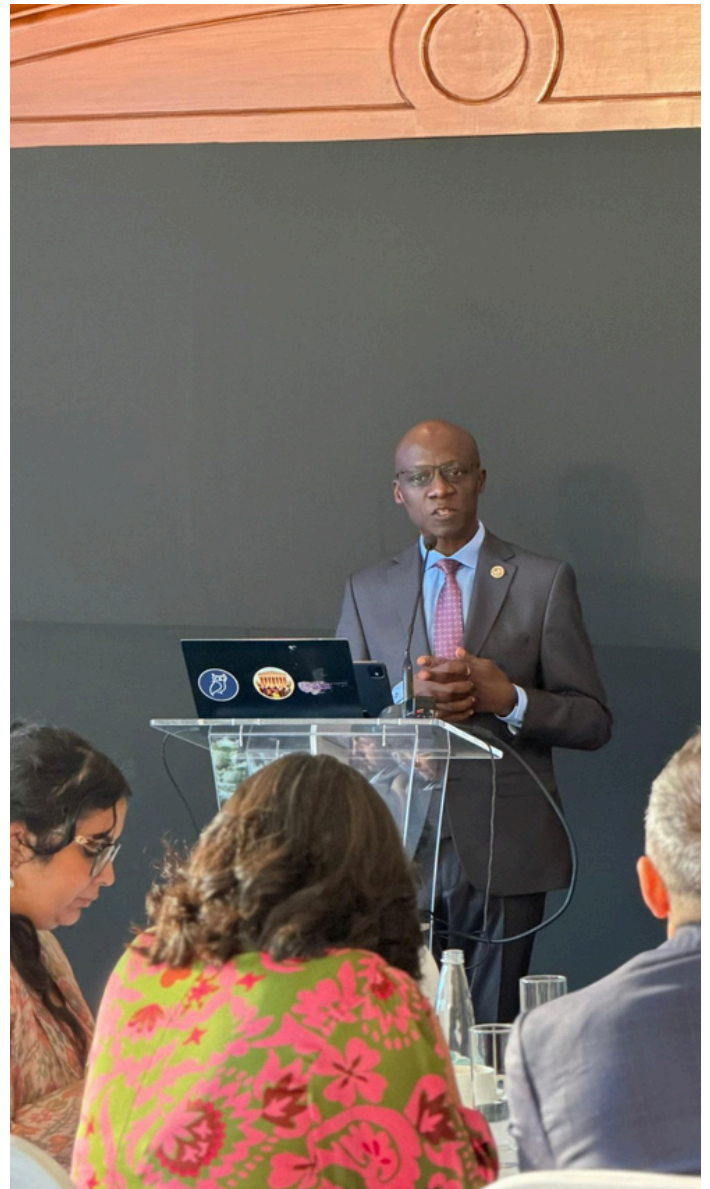
The Office of the Special Envoy on Technology contributed remarks in New Delhi at AI Safety Evaluations for Human Flourishing, convened alongside the India AI Impact Summit, with appreciation to Humane Intelligence (supported by the Gates Foundation) and partners including Digital Futures Lab and the Centre for Responsible AI at IIT Madras for convening a delivery-focused discussion.

A core message emphasised that AI safety should not be defined only through labs and benchmarks, but across the full lifecycle—from mine to model to community.

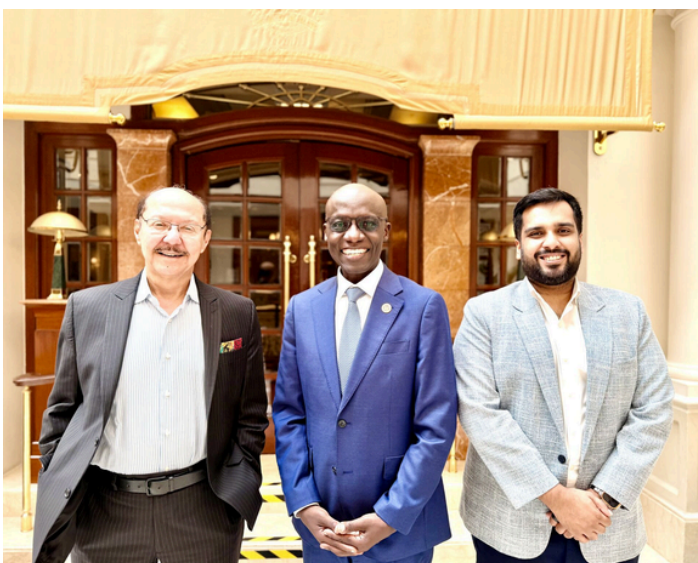
This implies:

- Safety evaluations that function across the languages and cultures where AI is deployed
- Building red-teaming and evaluator capacity in the Global South as critical infrastructure
- Co-authored benchmarks, rather than post-hoc validation
- Expanding “safety” to include environmental and human-rights impacts across the AI stack

As communities are already participating in deployment, use-cases, and consequences, they must also participate in shaping and expanding the definition of safety.



*AI Safety Evaluations for Human Flourishing, convened alongside the India AI Impact Summit*



*Bilateral engagement with Current AI*

## Bilateral Engagement | Current AI — Africa Forward and Startup Support

The Office of the Special Envoy on Technology held a bilateral engagement with Current AI focused on alignment around Africa Forward and practical pathways to move from convening to delivery in startup support. The discussion emphasised that enabling Africa to shape the next wave of AI requires founder access not only to capital, but also to compute, mentorship, policy clarity, and pathways to global markets, with ecosystem design treated as a core enabler.

## Kenya–US AI Engagement at the India AI Impact Summit



*Bilateral engagement with Michael Kratsios, Director of the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP) and Chief Technology Advisor to the President of the United States,*

The Office of the Special Envoy on Technology accompanied the Cabinet Secretary for Information, Communications and the Digital Economy, Hon. William Kabogo Gitau, for a bilateral engagement with Michael Kratsios, Director of the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP) and Chief Technology Advisor to the President of the United States, on the margins of the India AI Impact Summit in New Delhi.

The discussion focused on two pillars shaping U.S. international AI engagement: (1) Enabling sovereign AI implementation, including support for countries to build and deploy AI within their own policy, data, and infrastructure frameworks to strengthen domestic ecosystems and resilience—aligned with Kenya’s view of sovereignty as independence in an era of interdependence; and (2) Standards, exports, and partnership platforms, including collaboration through interoperable standards, trusted AI exports, technical assistance, and structured financing mechanisms to support responsible scale.

The engagement also noted the announcement of the U.S. Tech Corps, an initiative aimed at deploying American technical expertise to partner countries to support AI implementation and capacity building.

For Kenya, the priority remains to leverage global partnerships while investing across the full AI stack.



## Speaking Everyone’s Language: The Key to Inclusive AI Opportunity

Amb. Phillip Thigo participated in a panel convened by the UK Government and the AI for Development Funders Collaborative, with contributions from Rt Hon. David Lammy, Chennai Chair (Masakhane African Languages Hub), Shekar Sivasubramanian (Wadhvani AI), and Dr. Barbel Kofler (Germany’s Federal Development Ministry).

The Office’s intervention emphasised that language inclusion is not a narrow technical gap but a foundational development and cultural question. The discussion noted that much of the Global South’s accumulated knowledge—across science, philosophy, medicine, and ecological practice—has historically been carried through language, oral tradition, and living culture, and that AI systems trained on a narrow slice of the world’s languages risk entrenching exclusion at the infrastructure level. From a Kenyan perspective, the priority is investment across the full AI stack—data, compute, talent, and deployment—with African languages treated as a first-order requirement to ensure inclusion and preserve cultural knowledge. The panel also referenced concrete commitments, including £3m for the Masakhane Hub, Microsoft cloud compute partnerships, and the launch of LINGUA Africa.

The engagement reinforced that sovereignty in this era does not imply isolation, but building national capability while collaborating on shared infrastructure.

*Panel convened by the UK Government and the AI for Development Funders Collaborative,*

## Bilateral Engagement | TCS (Tata Consultancy Services) — AI and Education (K–12 Skilling)

The Office of the Special Envoy on Technology held a bilateral engagement with TCS (Tata Consultancy Services) focused on AI and education, with particular attention to India’s experience scaling AI skilling across K–12. Key implementation lessons discussed included curriculum integration, teacher enablement, strong public–private partnerships, and long-term sequencing to support sustained adoption and impact.



*Bilateral Engagement w TCS (Tata Consultancy Services)*

## Convening of the International Network for Advanced AI Measurement, Evaluation & Science

The Office of the Special Envoy on Technology participated in—and is a founding member of—the International Network of AI Safety Institutes (AISII), now transitioned to the International Network for Advanced AI Measurement, Evaluation and Science, and convened on the margins of the India AI Impact Summit 2026 at a critical moment for global AI governance.

As one of only two members from the Global South in the Network, the Office underscored the shared position that governance will only be as strong as the ability to measure and evaluate advanced AI systems in real-world contexts and to transparently share insights from this work with the wider global community, particularly the Global Majority.

The Network's role is to strengthen international collaboration around:

- rigorous model evaluations
- shared methodologies and benchmarks
- advancing the science of AI measurement
- aligning approaches that underpin safety, standards, and responsible deployment



*Convening of the International Network for Advanced AI Measurement, Evaluation & Science*



*The session “Toward Collective Action: Safe & Trusted AI in Africa” at the India AI Impact Summit 2026*

## Safe & Trusted AI in Africa | India AI Impact Summit 2026 (New Delhi)

The Office of the Special Envoy on Technology participated in the session “Toward Collective Action: Safe & Trusted AI in Africa” at the India AI Impact Summit 2026 in New Delhi, underscoring that AI safety for Africa is foundational and cannot be treated as an afterthought.

Unsafe AI is not only a technical failure; it also occurs when systems:

- extract African data and concentrate value elsewhere (digital neo-colonialism in algorithmic form);
- underperform in African languages, resulting in cultural erasure through design choices;
- scale into critical sectors such as health without accountability, auditability, or redress;
- overlook severe and dual-use risks (cyber, bio, mass persuasion), which are often more acute where safety nets are thinner.

The Office emphasised the need to treat safety capacity as infrastructure, including national safety nodes, shared regional benchmarks, red-teaming collaboration, and procurement standards that require transparency and testing in local contexts. Safety and progress are not trade-offs; unsafe deployment slows development by eroding trust and increasing systemic risk.

## It’s a Wrap — AI Impact Summit, India 🇮🇳

The AI Impact Summit (2026) concluded with the adoption of the New Delhi Declaration, endorsed by 89 countries and international organisations.

The Office of the Special Envoy on Technology contributed through consultations and co-creation on elements of the outcome, ensuring that access, inclusion, sovereign implementation, and sustainability were reflected in the final text.

Beyond the Declaration, the Office maintained an active programme of engagements:

- 11 panels and keynotes delivered
  - 1 strategic dinner co-hosted on global AI governance
  - 1 high-level dinner roundtable actively engaged in
  - 5 high-level bilaterals advanced
  - 1 signature trilateral partnership announcement secured
- The Office acknowledges the Indian High Commissioner in Nairobi for strong partnership and coordination, and recognises the OSET team—Mohamed and Kate—for disciplined preparation and effective execution that enabled delivery. [Click here to read full outcome document](#)



**Engagement: Tony Blair Institute —  
“Sovereignty and Resilience in the Age of AI” (Panel Participation)**

The Office of the Special Envoy on Technology participated in a Tony Blair Institute convening bringing together government leaders, technologists, and policymakers to discuss sovereignty and resilience in the Age of AI.

The Office contributed to the panel on “Sovereignty and Resilience in the Age of AI,” emphasizing that sovereignty in the AI era is not about owning every layer of the AI stack, but about controlling the strategic capabilities that matter most. Panel participants included Mark Surman (President, Mozilla), Paula Ingabire (Minister of ICT and Innovation, Rwanda), and George Osborne (Managing Director & Head of OpenAI for Countries), moderated by Barbara Ubaldi (Senior Director, Government Innovation & AI, Tony Blair Institute).

Key themes highlighted were: (1) sovereignty as sequencing rather than maximalism—prioritising talent, data governance, and interoperability; (2) unmanaged dependence as a central risk, including loss of strategic control through poorly structured procurement and dependency relationships; and (3) for emerging economies, coordinated interdependence as the more strategic path—building domestic capability while negotiating fair terms for participation in shared digital infrastructure.



*Tony Blair Institute convening*



launch of the Global AI for Learning Alliance (GAILA)

## launch of the Global AI for Learning Alliance (GAILA)

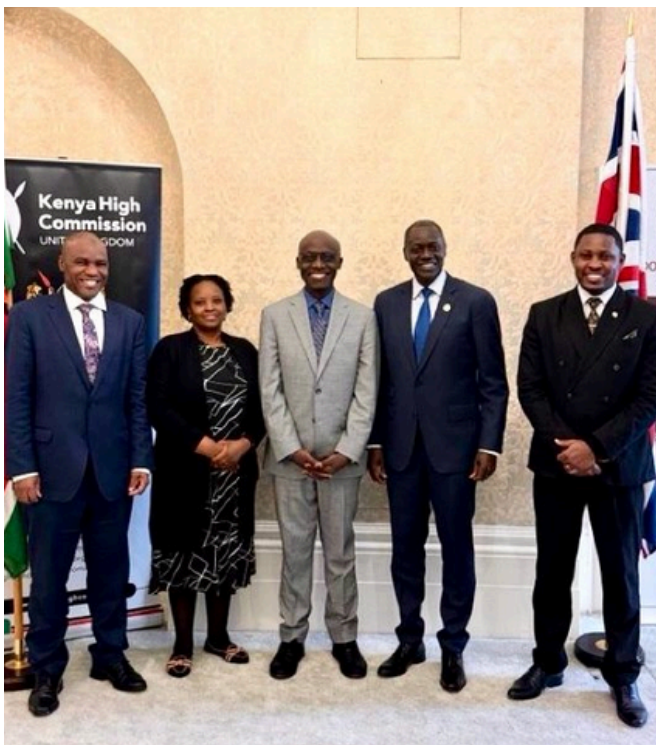
The Office of the Special Envoy on Technology supported the launch of the Global AI for Learning Alliance (GAILA) alongside UNICEF and partners including Anthropic, Google, Kenya, Dalberg, and others, with a focus on moving AI in education from pilots to shared standards, evidence, and scaled impact. Key reflections: (i) talent is sovereignty and the most rapidly buildable capability for the Global South, anchoring evaluation, governance, and local innovation; (ii) education is the primary equalizer for translating AI into broad-based opportunity, beginning with empowering teachers; (iii) equity requires closing the public-private gap by ensuring solutions function in public systems (low bandwidth, local languages, constrained budgets); and (iv) standards are required to reduce fragmentation, including benchmarks for learning impact, safety, privacy, and procurement readiness. Next steps are to strengthen talent pipelines, prioritize public-system design, and scale interventions with demonstrated learning outcomes.

## Delivering the Kenya-UK Strategic Partnership in Science, Technology & Democratic Renewal

The Office of the Special Envoy on Technology paid a courtesy call on H.E. Ambassador Maurice MakOloo, Kenya's High Commissioner to the United Kingdom, for a substantive discussion on delivering the Kenya-UK Strategic Partnership, with emphasis on science, technology, and innovation as pillars of long-term prosperity. The discussion underscored the need for strategic partnership delivery to translate into shared research, talent mobility, digital public infrastructure, and co-investment in frontier technologies.

The Office later joined the High Commissioner for a youth dialogue with Sir Mo Ibrahim, Dr. Luis Franceschi (Assistant Secretary-General of the Commonwealth), and Hafsa Maalim (Senior Advisor to the Secretary-General), focused on democracy, economic transformation, and a vision for a more prosperous and inclusive Global Majority.

The Office noted appreciation for continued engagement and collaboration.



Discussion on delivering the Kenya-UK Strategic Partnership

## Bridging Two Worlds: Economic and Technology Governance | Chatham House

The Office of the Special Envoy on Technology participated in Chatham House’s “Bridging Two Worlds: Economic and Technology Governance” session, focused on the risks and opportunities AI presents for emerging markets and developing economies. The discussion emphasised Kenya’s position at the nexus of finance and technology governance, reflecting both responsibility and leverage given Kenya’s leadership in digital financial systems and its role in shaping governance frameworks that will influence how AI is owned and deployed globally. The engagement reinforced that reform of the international financial architecture—highlighted by President Ruto’s call for fundamental reforms to debt frameworks, development finance, and the terms through which capital reaches Africa—is also a technology imperative: without affordable financing at scale, Africa cannot build the computing infrastructure, energy capacity, and connectivity required by the AI economy. Key messages underscored that AI value chains begin with minerals as well as data; that leapfrogging has limits given the foundational requirements of electricity, connectivity, compute, and skills; and that meaningful participation must translate into co-authorship of the rules and standards being set for the AI age.



*Chatham House’s “Bridging Two Worlds: Economic and Technology Governance”*

### Advancing the Global Dialogue on AI Governance

The Office of the Special Envoy on Technology held a coordination meeting with Dr. Claire Melamed (Vice President, AI and Digital Cooperation Strategy, United Nations Foundation), together with Amb. Maurice MakOloo (Kenyan High Commissioner to the UK), to further progress Kenya’s engagement in support of the Global Dialogue on AI Governance.

Discussions focused on deepening collaboration with the UK Government and the United Nations Foundation under this shared agenda, as part of the Kenya–UK Strategic Partnership 2025–2030, and strengthening alignment between AI governance efforts and broader digital and economic governance priorities.

The meeting built on the earlier co-convening of a dinner discussion with co-facilitators and tech ambassadors, reinforcing multi-stakeholder cooperation toward inclusive, responsible, and forward-looking global AI governance frameworks.



*Bilateral meeting with Dr. Claire Melamed (Vice President, AI and Digital Cooperation Strategy, United Nations Foundation), together with Amb. Maurice MakOloo (Kenyan High Commissioner to the UK), to further progress Kenya’s engagement in support of the Global Dialogue on AI Governance.*

## Africa Aware Podcast | Chatham House

Amb. Philip Thigo participated in the Africa Aware podcast at Chatham House for a discussion on Africa's role in critical and emerging technologies, particularly AI, moderated by Lisa Musumba and Dr Nnenna Ifeanyi-Ajufo, with additional engagement with Hon. Neema Lugangira. Key messages emphasised that Africa's role in the Age of Intelligence should be as a shaper rather than a spectator; that the continent's priority use-cases across sectors such as agriculture, health, climate, and public finance require investment across the full AI stack—energy, compute, connectivity, talent, data, and governance; that Africa sits at the centre of the critical minerals value chain and the strategic opportunity is to move up the value chain and embed intelligence into industrial policy; that debt and development finance are integral to technology strategy and fiscal space shapes digital sovereignty; and that governance is power, requiring Africa's active participation in shaping global AI governance and in reforms to the international multilateral order to reflect current technological realities. The discussion reinforced that the AI economy is not an ICT issue alone, but a development, industrial, and sovereignty question.



*Africa Aware podcast*



*Bilateral engagement with Nima Elmi*

## Regulating for Capital & Confidence — Building the Rails for AI

Amb. Philip Thigo held an engagement with Nima Elmi (VP, Strategy & Policy, Circle) on Kenya's newly signed Virtual Asset Service Providers (VASP) Act, 2025, and the ongoing National Treasury consultations to operationalise its regulations. The discussion noted Kenya's move toward clear, rules-based digital asset markets as a credibility and capital-formation agenda, with well-designed regulation positioned to mobilise long-term capital in support of H.E. President Ruto's National Infrastructure Fund and to strengthen trusted digital rails that underpin Kenya's broader AI ambition—from compliant digital payments and tokenisation to programmable public infrastructure. The engagement also covered the importance of interoperability, including alignment with frameworks such as the U.S. GENIUS Act and leading regimes such as Singapore, to build bridges rather than silos. Amb. Thigo noted intent to showcase these opportunities at the Kenya International Investment Conference in March.

## Cooperating for Trusted AI: Kenya and the UK

Following a panel engagement with Rt. Hon. David Lammy at the India AI Action Summit, Amb. Philip Thigo held a working meeting with colleagues from the UK Government and the UK AI Safety Institute on strengthening Kenya–UK collaboration in the Age of Intelligence.

Together with David Rutter (International Lead, UK AI Safety Institute), Nicole Gregory (Deputy Director, International Tech Department, FCDO), and Nathanael Bevan (Director for Global Technology, FCDO), the discussion reviewed the fast-shifting global AI landscape and the need for agile partnerships grounded in shared values and mutual benefit.

The engagement confirmed readiness to advance an ambitious, practical agenda spanning global cooperation, AI security, standards and evaluations cooperation, responsible innovation, research and talent pipelines, and expanding access to foundational capability to support effective adoption across the public sector and the innovation ecosystem.



*Working meeting with colleagues from the UK Government and the UK AI Safety Institute on strengthening Kenya–UK collaboration in the Age of Intelligence.*

## Innovation Is a System, Not a Product

Amb. Philip Thigo held a bilateral meeting with Andrew Mugoya (Founder & Principal, Strawpath) on the margins of a Chatham House convening in London focused on AI, the economy, and finance.

Two ideas were emphasised: (1) innovation should be treated as an organisational capability rather than a single product outcome, with competitive advantage driven by culture, governance, and sustained R&D capacity that enables learning and iteration over time; and (2) context remains decisive—while frontier AI may be built at global scale, durable value is created through local relevance, and solutions designed for Silicon Valley assumptions may not translate effectively to Nairobi realities.

The discussion reinforced a strategic principle for innovation ecosystems: avoid framing ambition as “catching up”; instead, build from local strengths, needs, data, and realities to shape outcomes on one’s own terms.



*bilateral meeting with Andrew Mugoya (Founder & Principal, Strawpath) on the margins of a Chatham House*



*Engagement with Hannah Wanjie Ryder (CEO, Development Reimagined) focused on geopolitical dynamics*



*The Kenya AI Skills Alliance (KAISA) Partner Breakfast, hosted by the Kenya Private Sector Alliance (KEPSA),*



## **Non-Aligned to Self-Determined: Africa in the Age of Intelligence**

Amb. Philip Thigo held an engagement with Hannah Wanjie Ryder (CEO, Development Reimagined) focused on geopolitical dynamics, including China–Africa relations, and Africa’s strategic options in the Age of Intelligence.

The engagement explored potential collaboration around the upcoming Global Trust Summit in Nairobi, alongside a pipeline of thought pieces, white papers, and insight reports on geopolitics and Africa’s place in the emerging intelligence era.

A central theme was that, as global competition intensifies, Africa’s strategic opportunity is not to “pick a side,” but to build leverage grounded in African interests, values, and long-term development priorities—drawing lessons from the Non-Aligned Movement not as neutrality, but as strategic agency.

The engagement concluded with a focus on translating the discussion into concrete deliverables and next steps.

## **Building the Workforce the Age of Intelligence Demands**

Amb. Philip Thigo participated in the Kenya AI Skills Alliance (KAISA) Partner Breakfast, hosted by the Kenya Private Sector Alliance (KEPSA), convening partners advancing AI skilling across institutions, industry, and government. The engagement emphasised KAISA’s role in ensuring skilling efforts are complementary rather than duplicative, aligning stakeholders under a shared framework so resources are focused, standards harmonised, and impact scaled. The discussion reinforced that adoption without skills creates fragility, and that workforce readiness is the foundation for governance, productivity, and sovereignty. Key messages highlighted that talent is the shortest path to sovereignty and skilling should be treated with the same strategic priority as energy and broadband infrastructure; that co-creation should replace loose coordination through shared frameworks, accountability, and outcomes; and that AI skilling must be grounded in Kenyan realities—languages, economic structures, and development challenges—so talent pipelines produce people able to design the tools the Global South requires.

## Catalysing AI Skilling at Scale — Micro-Credentials, Labour Market Intelligence & Multi-Stakeholder Action

Amb. Philip Thigo held a working discussion with Winnie Karanu (AI Skills Director, Microsoft), Dr. Wanjiru Kariuki (Secretary, State Department for Labour and Skills Development), and Dr. Alice Wairimu Kande (Director General/CEO, Kenya National Qualifications Authority) on the margins of the Kenya AI Skilling Alliance Partners Breakfast, focused on what is required to catalyse AI skilling at national scale.

Three threads were emphasised:

- Micro-credentials that move at the speed of technology: exploring modular, stackable micro-credentials to support continuous retooling amid rapid technological change, while strengthening portability and recognition across institutions and employers.
- A stronger Labour Market Information System (LMIS): noting that disruption cannot be managed without measurement, and discussing collaboration to strengthen Kenya's LMIS to track job shifts, anticipate displacement, and align training with emerging skills demand.
- Multi-stakeholder delivery, with government at the centre: emphasising the need for an aligned coalition across government, regulators, industry, training providers, and development partners to deliver shared standards, data, pathways, and scale.

The engagement underscored that the central question is not whether jobs will change, but whether systems can be built to help people adapt quickly, fairly, and at scale.



*Discussions with Winnie Karanu (AI Skills Director, Microsoft)*



*Discussions with Winnie Karanu (AI Skills Director, Microsoft), Dr. Wanjiru Kariuki (Secretary, State Department for Labour and Skills Development), and Dr. Alice Wairimu Kande (Director General/CEO)*

Amb. Philip Thigo participated in a working session with Verst Carbon and Base Consulting to review how AI agents are being integrated into Africa's development planning and infrastructure investment decisions. The discussion highlighted a core premise: infrastructure without growth can result in capital misallocation—roads without industry, transmission without productive demand, and generation without viable wheeling frameworks.

The session reviewed a practical “economic agent layer” approach mapping comparative advantage, product space, trade flows (noted as still below 15% intra-African), population projections, and energy reliability/cost, and applying these insights to sequence investments across roads, grids, and economic corridors. On the energy side, the discussion covered the application of agents to transmission and right-of-way pathways, grid interconnectors, power wheeling feasibility, and siting new generation for maximum productive output.

The engagement also noted efforts to reduce time from concept to implementation by integrating geospatial constraints, ESG/green requirements, legal and policy layers, and investor risk profiles. A central conclusion was that where AI reduces perceived risk, it can lower the cost of capital—an important determinant of whether projects proceed to delivery.

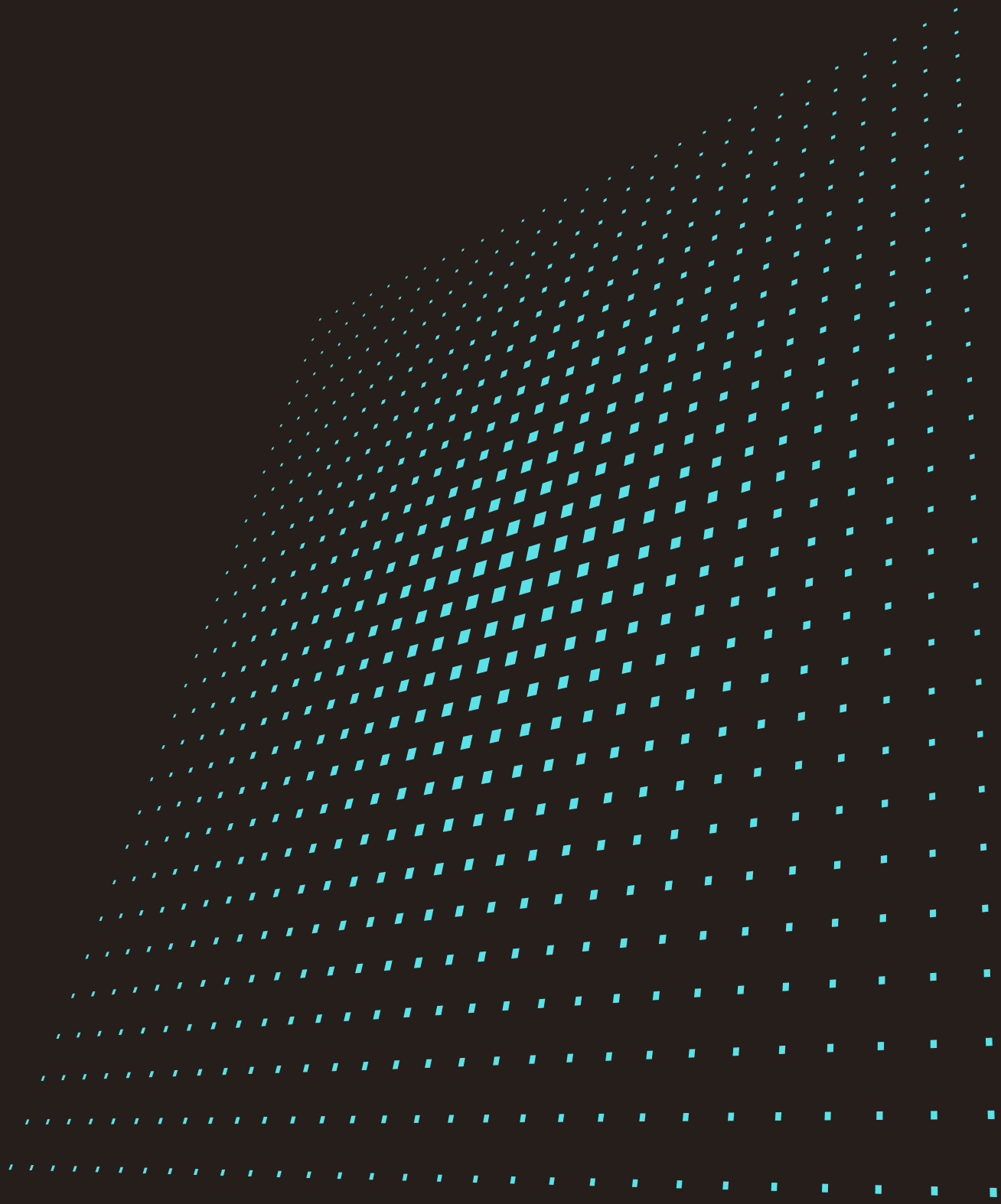


*Working session with Verst Carbon and Base Consulting*

## How Africa Can Re-Imagine Its Artificial Intelligence Future

An op-ed was published in The Standard by H.E. Ambassador Vincenzo Del Monaco, Keyzom Ngodup Massally, and the Office of the Special Envoy on Technology, setting out the practical requirements for building Africa's AI future with a focus on delivery over rhetoric. The article argues that AI adoption will not scale through slogans, but through foundational investments in reliable power, affordable connectivity, accessible compute, trusted data, effective governance, and robust talent pipelines—without which efforts will remain limited to pilots rather than scalable platforms.

The piece further advances a sovereignty agenda suited to an era of interdependence: strengthening local capability while partnering globally to ensure African innovators, SMEs, researchers, and public institutions can create and deploy solutions that deliver measurable public and economic value. It concludes with a call for stakeholders across building, financing, regulation, and deployment to shift from intention to execution in accelerating responsible, inclusive AI development across the continent. [Read here](#)



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ENVOY ON TECHNOLOGY