|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Kenya 2 Flag | Rwanda 2 |  | Uganda Flag |

**JOINT COMMUNIQUE**

**OF THE**

**MINISTERIAL MEETING FOR THE ICT INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT**

**9TH NOVEMBER 2023**

**NAIROBI, KENYA**

**----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------**

1. At the invitation of Hon. Eliud Owalo, FHRM, Cabinet Secretary, Ministry of Information, Communications and the Digital Economy of the Republic of Kenya, the Joint Ministerial meeting of the ICT Infrastructure Development cluster under the Northern Corridor Integration Projects (NCIPs), was held on 9th November 2023 in Nairobi, Kenya.
2. The meeting was chaired by Hon. Dr. Chris Baryomunsi, Minister of ICT and National Guidance of the Republic of Uganda and attended by Hon. Eliud Owalo, FHRM, Cabinet Secretary, Ministry of Information, Communications and the Digital Economy of the Republic of Kenya, Hon. Michael Makuei Lueth, Minister of Information Communication Technology and Postal Services, of the Republic of South Sudan and Mr. Gordon Kalema, Director General, Digital Transformation from the Ministry of ICT and Innovation of the Republic of Rwanda.
3. The Ministers reviewed and exchanged views on the status of implementation of the ICT Infrastructure Development Cluster Directives of the 14th Summit that was held in Nairobi in June 2018 and noted the progress so far made by all the Partner States.
4. The Ministers acknowledged the achievements so far made, including the operationalisation of One Network Area (ONA) for voice, data and SMS, that has led to over 900 times traffic increase among the Partner States, as well as cross border national backbone connections.
5. The Ministers agreed to fast track the modalities of establishing a Regional Owned Satellite for communication that will provide high-quality, dependable broadband internet services and broadcasting capabilities.
6. On cooperation in cybersecurity and emerging technologies, the Ministers directed the technical team to expedite the implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on cybersecurity, in order to address the emerging cyber threats.
7. The Ministers agreed to fast track the establishment of an East African Single Digital Market that will optimize technological efficiency within Partner States by promoting and supporting start-ups, enabling joint access to capital financing, co-financing research, harmonisation of digital infrastructure standards and others. The Ministers were cognisant that this (EAC block of about 174 million people) will enable collaboration with international tech companies.
8. The Ministers welcomed the progress on the implementation of the e-services across the Region, including a data-sharing framework, full integration of mobile financial services and ensuring mutual access to secure and reliable information. They, however, noted the need for accelerated implementation.
9. The Ministers called for policy interventions that can promote the affordability of smart devices.
10. The Ministers further called for a harmonised approach to policies that facilitate data storage and management.
11. The Ministers further welcomed the progress on cross-border broadband interconnectivity which enables the land-locked countries to be connected to undersea cables.
12. The Ministers commended the Republic of Kenya for convening the Joint Ministerial meeting for the ICT Infrastructure Development cluster, expressed gratitude for the warm reception and hospitality accorded to them and their delegations during the visit. They also commended the Republic of Uganda for chairing the meetings and coordinating the ICT Infrastructure Development Cluster.
13. The Ministers agreed that the next Joint Ministerial Meeting of the ICT Infrastructure Development cluster will be hosted by the Republic of South Sudan at a date to be communicated.

DONE AT NAIROBI, KENYA this **9th November 2023**