

INFORMATION & COMMUNICATION DIRECTORATE

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Venue: New York City, USA

AU Commissioner highlights the Power of Meaningful Connections and Resilience in the Digital Age



The Broadband Commission for Sustainable Development convened its annual fall meeting in New York, USA, on the margins of the Summit of the Future and the 79th session of the United Nations General Assembly.

In her capacity as a Broadband Commissioner for Sustainable Development, H.E. Dr Amani Abou-Zeid, AU Commissioner for Infrastructure and Energy, highlighted the power of global collaboration in the digital age and in the development and implementation of AI strategies and solutions. *“Through candid discussions and collaborative efforts, the African Union has achieved key milestones, including the AU’s Child Online Policy with the 5Rights Foundation, the Digital Transformation Strategy with ITU, and the AI Strategy with UNESCO - just to name a few,”* she noted. In other words, these valuable connections were drivers of progress. *“As the saying goes, the multitude of the wise is the welfare of the world. We are that multitude of the wise, and we will continue working together for the welfare of the world,”* she added.

H.E. Minister Paula Ingabire, Minister of ICT and Innovation for Rwanda and Co-Chair of the Broadband Commission, remarked: *“To achieve our ambitious objectives, it is imperative that we move beyond traditional, conventional approaches. We must embrace bold, innovative solutions that will not only drive Africa’s digital transformation but also ensure that it is sustainable and inclusive for all”*. Ms. Doreen Bogdan-Martin, Secretary General of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) and Vice Co-Chair, echoed this sentiment while highlighting the ongoing challenges. *“The journey toward digital transformation is filled with challenges, including issues of affordability and the digital divide. We must address these challenges to pave the way for a genuinely inclusive digital future,”* she said.

During the meeting Commissioner Abou-Zeid led discussions on "Reinforcing Resilience against Digital Disruptions". The conversation highlighted the importance access to reliable and affordable infrastructure, close collaboration between public and private sector and importance of agile forward-looking regulations. The discussion also focused on the skills and capacity-building programmes needed to ensure resilience taskforces targeting disruption-free infrastructure as well as ensuring safe and secure ecosystem for all, especially for children

The Broadband Commission is a multi-stakeholder platform that aims to accelerate the adoption of broadband and other digital technologies as essential tools for achieving the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The Annual Fall Meeting leveraged the Broadband Commission’s mandate to develop resilient, safe, and inclusive digital strategies.

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