

DECLARATION ON CYBER CAPACITY BUILDING IN AFRICA (Draft)

We, Ministers and Representatives in charge of Information, Communication Technologies and Digital Economy of African countries, gathered in Geneva, Switzerland on 14 May 2025,

Guided by the Constitutive Act of the African Union and the aspirations of Agenda 2063, which envisions a *prosperous, integrated, and digitally empowered Africa, driven by its citizens and representing a dynamic force in the global arena; and the Global Digital Compact (GDC),*

Recalling the African Union's Convention on Cyber Security and Personal Data Protection (Malabo Convention), which entered into force on 8 June 2024, the Lomé Declaration on Cybersecurity and the Fight Against Cybercrime of 23 March 2022, and other relevant AU decisions and declarations related to digital technologies and cybersecurity,

Recognizing the increasing need for international cooperation and coordination in digital technologies in economic transformation, governance, regional integration, and sustainable development, as well as the growing risks associated with cyber threats that require coordinated responses at national, regional, continental and international levels,

Acknowledging that cyber capacity building (CCB) is fundamental to strengthening Africa's digital infrastructure, enhancing cybersecurity resilience, protecting citizens, and enabling innovation and competitiveness in the global digital economy,

Concerned by the inadequate cyber infrastructure, limited digital skills, and fragmented policies across Member States, which hinder Africa's ability to fully leverage digital opportunities and address cyber threats effectively,

Committed to the principles of inclusivity, cooperation, and multi-stakeholder engagement in developing a robust, secure, and resilient digital environment across Africa,

Emphasizing the need for a holistic approach to cyber capacity building that encompasses policy frameworks, education, skills development, research and development, cooperation, strong institutions and resource mobilization,

We hereby declare our commitment to:

1. **Prioritizing Cyber Capacity Building:** *We commit to integrating cyber capacity building as a strategic priority in national and regional digital transformation agendas to ensure that Africa remains competitive and resilient in the global digital ecosystem.*
2. **Strengthening Policy and Legal Frameworks:** *We will develop, harmonize, and implement national and regional cybersecurity and combating cybercrime policies, legislation, and regulatory frameworks that promote cyber resilience, data protection, and digital rights while enabling a safe and secured cyberspace for all.*
3. **Enhancing Education, Awareness, and Skill Development:** *We will invest in cybersecurity education, training, and research initiatives to build a skilled workforce and capable institutions, promote public awareness on cyber risks, and integrate digital security into national curricula.*
4. **Nurturing Regional and International Collaboration:** *We will enhance cooperation among AU Member States, regional economic communities (RECs), AU mechanisms, specialized agencies and institutions; and global partners to share best practices, intelligence, and resources for strengthening Africa's cyber resilience.*
5. **Mobilizing Resources for Cyber Capacity Building:** *We commit to consolidate and establish a dedicated African Cyber Capacity Building Fund, supported by Member States, international organizations, and private sector partners, to drive sustainable investment in cyber capacity building.*
6. **Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) for Cyber Resilience:** *We will promote strategic collaborations between governments, private sector actors, academia, and civil society to nurture cybersecurity innovation, address cyber risks, and ensure a trusted digital ecosystem.*
7. **Promoting Research, Innovation, and Local Solutions:** *We will support research and innovation in cybersecurity, artificial intelligence, and emerging digital technologies to develop homegrown solutions that address Africa's unique cyber challenges.*
8. **Investing in Secure and Resilient Infrastructure:** *We will prioritize investments in the development and use of robust, inclusive, and resilient digital infrastructure that supports economic growth, public service delivery, and social development across the continent.*

9. **Ensuring Inclusivity and Digital Equity:** *We will ensure that all cyber capacity building efforts address the needs of marginalized groups, including women, youth, and persons with disabilities, encouraging their full participation in the digital economy.*

Enhancing Law Enforcement Capacity and Capabilities: *We will strengthen the capacity and capability of law enforcement and related agencies across Africa to effectively prevent, investigate, and prosecute cybercrime through specialized training, the provision of advanced digital forensic tools, and the fostering of robust collaborative networks at national, regional, and international levels.*

11. Strengthening, Monitoring and Governance; *We will establish continental mechanisms;*

11.1 Monitoring, evaluating, and reporting on the implementation and impact of cyber capacity building initiatives.

11.2 Ensuring transparency, accountability, and continuous improvement in building stronger institutions in cyber capacity.

Furthermore, we hereby:

- **Reaffirm** our collective resolve to build a secure, inclusive, and resilient digital Africa, recognizing that investing in cyber capacity building is key to achieving sustainable development, economic prosperity, digital sovereignty for the continent and well-being of our citizens.
- **Request** member states to demonstrate greater commitment to cyber capacity building in Africa by pooling our resources and capacities to establish a continental mechanism to support the implementation of the Africa Agenda on Cyber Capacity Building.
- **Call on** all local and international stakeholders, *the private sector actors, academia, and civil society* to endorse this declaration by supporting the establishment of a dedicated African Cyber Capacity Building Fund
- **Express** our gratitude to the Cyber Capacity Building Coordinating Committee (CCB-CC), African Cybersecurity Experts (ACE Community), and the African Union.

Adopted in Geneva, Switzerland **on 13 May 2025.**