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A SAMENA Telecommunications Council Publication

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THIS MONTH

FROM CONNECTIVITY TO CAPABILITY

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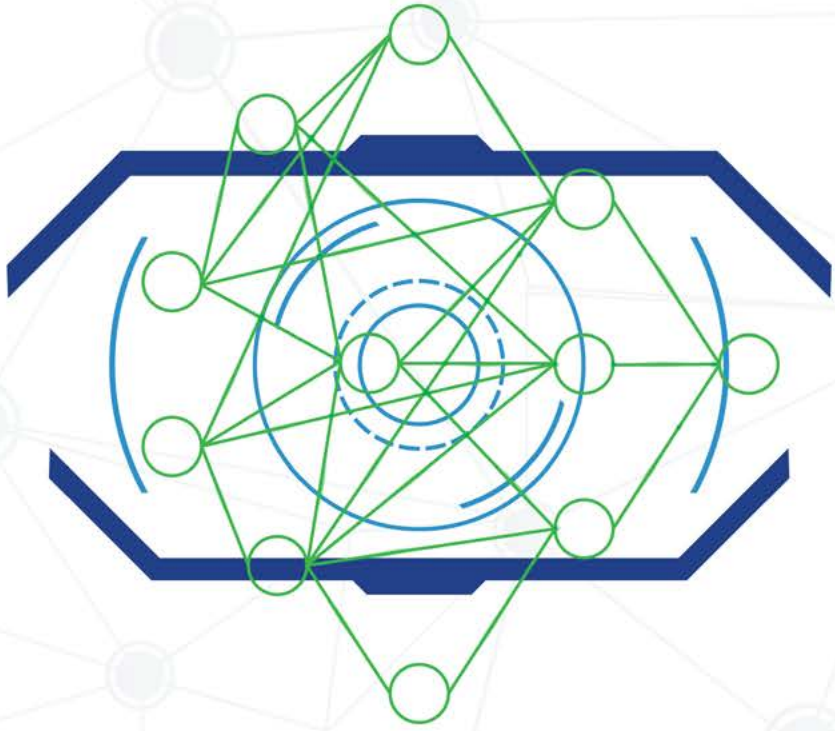

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TRENDS

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CONTENTS

CONTENTS

From Connectivity to Capability

The shift taking place across Africa and the SA-ME-NA region is no longer about expanding networks for their own sake. It is about building capabilities that will shape real outcomes the regions' people and enterprises. This direction has been clear across recent industry gatherings where the SAMENA Council, regulators, regional operators as well as technology providers demonstrated how collaboration, infrastructure development, and focused policy dialogue are moving the region toward a more mature digital future.

At MWC Kigali, the SAMENA Council emphasized that progress depends on turning conversation into design and partnerships into delivery. By aligning Africa's priorities with the broader SA-ME-NA landscape, the Council helped create a more unified approach to digital transformation. This included connecting governments, operators, and industry bodies around practical steps that support growth and inclusion.

The same spirit carried into GITEX 2025, where the SAMENA Council highlighted the growing need for visual intelligence solutions. Operators already have the network, the edge footprint, and the data centers. The challenge now is to use these assets to process visual data securely and at scale. The Council's recommendations, made in collaboration with members including Huawei, outline how unified cloud to edge architectures can support video analytics, machine vision, and compliance ready systems. This is a strong example of how operators can play a role far beyond basic connectivity and create new value streams. In the same multi-regional event, the Council also reiterated that fixed wireless access (FWA) continues to be vital for regional digital inclusion across SA-ME-NA, Africa, and Central Asia, for example. Public-private partnerships will be central in its development, especially in areas where commercial returns are not guaranteed. Governments will need to help lower the risk for operators to ensure high-speed access reaches all communities.

Earlier, at the Global Cybersecurity Forum 2025, digital resilience took center stage. The SAMENA Council stressed that strong cybersecurity frameworks directly influence investment and long-term economic competitiveness. With a global shortage of cybersecurity expertise, the launch of the Global Initiative for Capacity Building in Cyberspace stood out as an important step forward. Led by Saudi Arabia and the United Nations, the initiative aims to strengthen skills and policy development across the region.

Operators, meanwhile, are redefining their own capabilities.

stc Group's partnership with AST SpaceMobile introduces direct to device satellite connectivity, extending service even where terrestrial networks fall short. stc's commercial launch of 5G NSA Cloud RAN with Nokia marks another major milestone, unlocking automation and flexible architecture for future services.

e& continues to push the frontier with new progress in the upper 6 GHz band. This spectrum supports stronger mobile broadband, expands FWA coverage, and enables advanced applications ranging from drones to immersive platforms. It shows that 5G Advanced is becoming a practical tool for operators and enterprises.

Mobily's new Red Sea Cable adds another layer to the region's strategic infrastructure. As the company's first fully owned submarine system, it strengthens resilience, expands capacity, and improves routes toward Europe and Asia. This investment positions Mobily as a more influential player in global connectivity.

Bocar A. BA
Chief Executive Officer
& Board Member
SAMENA Telecommunications Council

Omantel's launch of Enterprise Brain marks an important move toward enterprise intelligence. By giving organizations a smarter way to access and connect their internal knowledge, Omantel is turning AI from a concept into a business tool aligned with Oman's national strategy.

Across all these developments, a common theme is emerging. Operators are no longer defined solely by the reach of their networks. They are becoming capability builders for governments, industries, and communities. With regional collaboration strengthening and infrastructure investments accelerating, the transition from connectivity to capability is already underway.

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SAMENA Council On

Cross-Regional ICT Co-operation & Development

Transform Africa Summit 2025 confirms the continental momentum toward a united and sovereign digital Africa from Guinea

Under the High Patronage of H.E. Mamadi Doumbouya, President of the Republic of Guinea, and H.E. Paul Kagame, President of the Republic of Rwanda and Chairman of the Smart Africa Board, this 7th edition brought together over 7,000 participants from 79 nationalities. This event welcomed 1,552 government representatives, 45 ministers, 584 CEOs and managing directors, and 590 start-ups. Over the course of three days, 14 Memoranda of Understanding were signed, reflecting the growing spirit of cooperation and investment toward a shared ambition: building Africa's Single Digital Market.

A historic edition in Guinea – the beating heart of Africa's digital transformation, praised by Smart Africa

Opening the press conference held on 14 November, Lacina Koné, Director General of Smart Africa, praised the Republic of Guinea for the "exemplary organization" of the Summit and for its strong commitment to advancing the continent's digital transformation. He highlighted the quality of the welcome and the remarkable involvement of the Guinean authorities.

According to him, Conakry perfectly embodied Smart Africa's ambition to build a connected, innovative, and sovereign Africa. The Director General of the Alliance also emphasized the high standard of the discussions, the richness of the exchanges, and the record level of participation – all of which reflect the growing dynamism and interest surrounding Africa's digital transformation.

In her remarks, H.E. Rose Pola Pricemou expressed her gratitude to the Smart Africa Secretariat and its Director General, praising their vision, leadership, and ability to unite 42 African countries around a shared ambition. She emphasized that this edition had served as a catalyst for value creation, a driver of trust, and a true engine for lasting partnerships, stating: "For three days, Conakry was the capital of African digital innovation. We leave this Summit with immense satisfaction, driven by the dynamic exchanges, the human mobilization, and the concrete solutions that have emerged."

The Minister also highlighted the significant progress made by Guinea in modernizing its digital infrastructures: "We have quadrupled the capacity of our national backbone, increasing it from 50 to 200 gigabits, and initiated the landing of a second submarine cable to strengthen the resilience of our connectivity." Guinea is now interconnected with several neighboring countries – Mali, Côte d'Ivoire, Sierra Leone, and soon Senegal, The Gambia, and Guinea-Bissau – thereby helping to boost regional data circulation and laying the foundations for a West African digital integration.

> *"Africa's digital destiny is not a promise to be received, but a vision to be realized together," BA concluded. By turning dialogue into design and partnerships into tangible outcomes, the SAMENA Council continues to position the SA-ME-NA region as a hub of innovation, connectivity, and shared prosperity.*

She also announced the creation of a national TIER III data center, the development of technopoles and smart cities, as well as a large network of digital hubs – six already operational and twenty more planned by 2026 – designed to promote training, innovation, and digital inclusion even in rural areas. On the institutional front, Guinea is strengthening its regulatory and security framework with a new data protection law, the establishment of ANSSI (the National Cybersecurity Agency) and ANDE (the National Agency for State Digitalization). All these advances demonstrate the country's determination

to embody an African model of sovereign, inclusive, and sustainable digital transformation.

Finally, the host country also celebrated the first edition of the Women's Hackathon, led by ANSUTEN, which provided training in web development to more than 130 young women in Conakry, Labé, and Mamou. Five projects were recognized, including Agriloop, Femmes Vertes et Connectées, and Nènè, showcasing the creativity and leadership of women in the tech sector. "These are women who innovate. Guinea is 53% women: they are our strength and our digital future," concluded Rose Pola Pricemou.

Africa prepares for Artificial Intelligence: inclusion, ethics, and infrastructure at the core of the conversation

The final day of the Transform Africa Summit 2025 highlighted the key conditions needed to make artificial intelligence a driver of sustainable and inclusive transformation. During the panel "AI Readiness for African Societies", moderated by Professor Abdoulaye Baniré Diallo, Coordinator of the Guinean City of Science and Innovation, speakers emphasized three essential requirements to effectively prepare Africa for the adoption of artificial intelligence: the strengthening of robust infrastructures, the establishment of an appropriate legal and institutional framework, and the development of human skills. Youssouf Mohamed Aribot, Director General of ANDE, stressed that access to data centers, improved connectivity, sound governance and cybersecurity must necessarily go hand in hand with the upskilling of local talent.

Youth and women take center stage at the closing ceremony

The day continued with the presentation of the Ms. Geek Africa award, which was bestowed upon Branice Kazira (Kenya), co-founder of Signvrse, for her inclusive solution combining innovation and social impact.

This distinction was followed by the closing ceremony, during which the Guinean Prime Minister, Amadou Oury Bah, together with Rose Pola Pricemou and Lacina Koné, unanimously praised the success of the Summit and the strong engagement it generated.

"As we close this edition of the Transform Africa Summit, I want to pay tribute to the warmth, dignity, and generosity of the Guinean people. These three days have shown the strength of a continent united by technology and vision. We have taken a major step forward – with new platforms launched, stronger partnerships, and tangible results. To our partners, I say this: you are the co-architects of Africa's digital sovereignty," concluded Lacina Koné, Director General of Smart Africa.

The SAMENA Council's participation reflects its close and longstanding engagement with Smart Africa and its role as a bridge between Africa, the Middle East, and South Asia. The Council continues to support cross-regional dialogue and cooperation on digital infrastructure, policy alignment, and investment across markets with shared development priorities.

The presence of the SAMENA Council's Chief Executive Officer enabled high-level engagement with government and private-sector leaders on connectivity, digital public infrastructure, and data governance—areas where regional alignment and collaboration are increasingly critical. Through its engagement alongside Smart Africa and its member states, the SAMENA Council also reaffirmed its commitment to fostering practical collaboration, knowledge exchange, and partnerships that support sustainable and resilient digital development.

Launch of the book "Artificial Intelligence and E-Governance in Africa"

On the sidelines of the Summit, H.E. Rose Pola Pricemou, together with H.E. Michel Boukar, Minister of Digital Economy of the Republic of Chad, presented their newly published book titled "Artificial Intelligence and E-Governance in Africa", released by L'Harmattan and prefaced by H.E. Prime Minister Amadou Oury Bah. The book explores the opportunities and challenges of digitalizing Africa's public administration, featuring case studies from Senegal, Guinea, and Chad, and offers policy recommendations to build a more transparent, inclusive, and efficient public sector across the continent.

SAMENA Council On

Shaping Actionable Strategies for Digital Transformation

SAMENA Council Highlights Pathways for Inclusive Digital Growth Across Africa & SA-ME-NA Regions at MWC Kigali

During Mobile World Congress (MWC) in Kigali, the SAMENA Council expressed a vision for advancing digital transformation across Africa and the broader SA-ME-NA region. During the session "Elevating Africa's Voice in the Global Digital Dialogue," the SAMENA Council CEO, Bocar BA, emphasized that Africa's role in the global digital economy is evolving from one of inclusion to one of influence. BA emphasized that progress must go beyond dialogue and declarations, focusing instead on co-designed, measurable frameworks that drive real-world impact. "True collaboration begins when dialogue turns into design," he stated, highlighting the need for partnerships that foster co-creation and investments that build confidence. The SAMENA Council stressed that aligning predictable policies with blended finance strategies over the next 12–24 months is critical to ensuring that investments in infrastructure are matched by investments in local capabilities. Localizing traffic and computing resources ensures that every dollar spent strengthens both network infrastructure and local digital services, benefiting citizens, businesses, and regional economies. The SAMENA Council emphasized that meaningful international collaboration requires turning dialogue into enduring structures and actionable frameworks, measuring progress through tangible improvements in livelihoods rather than connectivity alone, and fostering partnerships that enable Africa to play an active role in shaping the standards of the shared digital future around the globe. The Council also highlighted the importance of maintaining open and competitive markets, supported by predictable digital trade policies, to attract both regional and global investment. The insights delivered by the SAMENA Council have significant relevance for the broader SA-ME-NA region, including South Asia, the Middle East, and North Africa. These regions face parallel challenges in building digital infrastructure, attracting investment, and fostering local innovation. There is a need to accelerate economic growth and digital inclusion while unlocking opportunities for the private sector. The SAMENA Council reinforced its commitment to fostering regional collaboration, facilitating private sector engagement, and enabling investment models that drive sustainable digital economies. "Africa's digital destiny is not a promise to be received, but a vision to be realized together," BA concluded. By turning dialogue into design and partnerships into tangible outcomes, the SAMENA Council continues to position the SA-ME-NA region as a hub of innovation, connectivity, and shared prosperity. Moreover, the SAMENA Council's participation enriched the broader GSMA-led dialogue, highlighting Africa's priorities while connecting them to the SA-ME-NA region. This collaboration between the two industry bodies have further contributed to facilitating industry dialogue, aligning stakeholders, and shaping actionable strategies for digital transformation across emerging markets of Africa, South Asia, the Middle East, as well as neighboring regions such as Central Asia.

> *"Africa's digital destiny is not a promise to be received, but a vision to be realized together," BA concluded. By turning dialogue into design and partnerships into tangible outcomes, the SAMENA Council continues to position the SA-ME-NA region as a hub of innovation, connectivity, and shared prosperity.*

SAMENA Council On

Operators' Role beyond Traditional Connectivity Services

Visual Intelligence: At GITEX 2025, SAMENA Council Paves the Way for Telecom Operators to Lead in another Powerful Role

During GITEX 2025, the SAMENA Telecommunications Council highlighted the central and multi-dimensional role of telecom operators, emphasizing how they must now harness visual data to drive digital transformation. In a keynote delivered by the CEO of the Council, Bocar BA, the whitepaper titled "AI-Driven Visual Intelligence: An Imperative for Telecom Operators & Industries" was unveiled. The paper serves as a call-to-action, urging telecom operators to recognize the vast potential in visual data and the need to rethink policy and regulation to unlock this potential. Bocar BA stated, "Telecom operators are at a defining moment in the digital era. Our future success will not only rely on traditional connectivity services but on how we enable industries, governments, and societies to make real-time, informed decisions using the data around them. The opportunities with visual data are immense, but we must evolve as an industry to fully realize them." The SAMENA Council emphasized that telecom operators are uniquely positioned to be at the center of a visual-intelligence ecosystem. With the growing demand for real-time visual-data gathering and processing in sectors such as healthcare, transportation, logistics, and public safety, telecom operators can expand their traditional role and cement their position as central players in this new era. The convergence of 5G-Advanced (5G-A), AI, machine vision, and cloud-edge computing presents a unique opportunity to build networks that not only connect but understand, interpret, and act on the data they process in real-time. 5G-A acts as the nervous system, enabling real-time, low-latency connectivity, while AI functions as the brain, analyzing data for continuous network optimization. Cloud infrastructure serves as the heart, providing scalable, flexible computing and storage for seamless AI model deployment. With existing 5G networks, spectrum, cloud infrastructure, data centers, and edge presence, telecom operators are well-positioned to provide the critical foundations for the development of visual-intelligence services. As Bocar BA explained, "While the volume of visual data is expanding, true value lies in the ability to use network and computation-level innovations to transform data into trusted, actionable insights that can drive positive outcomes using visual data capture. Telecom operators can leverage their existing infrastructure, edge locations, and localized data centers to provide real-time, scalable solutions to process and interpret this data effectively." The SAMENA Council's whitepaper outlines how, by utilizing a unified network and computing architecture, telecom operators can deliver innovative solutions such as intelligent video analytics, machine vision, and compliance-ready visual data systems that address both business needs and regulatory requirements. Coordinated architecture that integrates cloud, network, edge, and device layers, enabling the development of smarter, more adaptive services creates a foundation for smarter services, operational efficiency, and new socio-economic opportunities. The whitepaper also emphasizes the importance investing in edge infrastructure that allows video data to be processed closer to where it is generated, preparing networks to support fast, reliable, and secure video flows. It also reiterates that operators must work closely with policymakers and regulators to embed compliance into every service, ensuring trust and transparency as countries implement new laws related to personal data protection and visual intelligence. Lastly, the white paper delineates the need for telecom operators to forge partnerships with technology providers, solution providers, and vertical industry players to create complete, end-to-end solutions that meet the growing demands of enterprises across various sectors. The SAMENA Council's whitepaper, carrying input from various valued members, advocates for industry-wide collaboration to reduce fragmentation and ensure that visual intelligence investments create lasting, tangible impact across industries. The Council encourages telecom operators to closely engage to align regional efforts, shape common standards, and create an environment that supports the development of a robust visual intelligence ecosystem. By collaborating with regulators, technology providers, and industry partners, telecom operators can scale visual-intelligence applications in sectors such as traffic management, urban visualization, campus security, industrial process monitoring, and remote healthcare. "Visual intelligence has the potential to transform entire industries and unlock new revenue streams for telecom operators," said Bocar BA. "For example, healthcare can leverage real-time video analytics for diagnostic support, while smart city infrastructure can use machine vision to enhance safety and traffic management. The implications are vast, and telecom operators must take the lead in driving these solutions." By combining investments in infrastructure, close collaboration with regulators, and active partnerships across the ecosystem, telecom operators can cement their position at the heart of a new digital economy, enabling them to expand beyond traditional services and create smarter, more integrated solutions.

SAMENA Council On
The Future of Cyberspace

SAMENA Council Takes on a Vital Role at GCF 2025 to Voice the Region's Digital Resilience, Investment, and Cybersecurity Needs

The Global Cybersecurity Forum (GCF) 2025, recently held in Riyadh, has been a milestone event in furthering discussions on the security of the cyberspace, and brought together thought-leaders, decision-makers, and experts from around the world to speak on cybersecurity, online protection, capacity-building, digital infrastructure investment, and global collaboration. For the SAMENA Council and its Members, the forum provided a crucial opportunity to advocate for the region's priorities and contribute meaningfully to discussions shaping the future of cyberspace. Bocar BA, CEO of SAMENA Council, played a significant role in highlighting the growing importance of telecom and digital infrastructure in attracting foreign direct investment (FDI). During a key panel discussion, BA emphasized that investors are no longer solely evaluating traditional factors like political stability or economic resilience; digital resilience has now become a key consideration. In today's interconnected world, where everything from banking to healthcare and national defense depends on robust digital systems, countries with secure and resilient telecom networks are more likely to attract global capital. The SAMENA Council underlined that nations able to demonstrate strong cybersecurity frameworks and adopt futuristic approaches are better positioned to seize investment opportunities and drive economic growth. The SAMENA Council's message resonated in a broader context, as the forum also addressed the critical need for capacity-building in cyberspace. A global shortage of cybersecurity professionals was identified as a significant challenge, with the forum stressing that countries must act swiftly to close the skills gap. The launch of the Global Initiative for Capacity Building in Cyberspace, a collaboration between Saudi Arabia and the United Nations, was a major highlight, and SAMENA Council welcomed this initiative as a crucial step in improving cybersecurity capabilities across the SA-ME-NA region, especially in the GCC. This initiative aims to

The SAMENA Council underlined that nations able to demonstrate strong cybersecurity frameworks and adopt futuristic approaches are better positioned to seize investment opportunities and drive economic growth. The SAMENA Council's message resonated in a broader context, as the forum also addressed the critical need for capacity-building in cyberspace.

provide training, policy development support, and international collaboration to enhance the skills of individuals working in various cybersecurity domains, from policy practitioners to law enforcement personnel. The SAMENA Council recognizes that such initiatives are essential for equipping countries with the knowledge and expertise needed to safeguard their digital economies in an increasingly complex global cyber landscape. Through its participation in the GCF 2025, building on to its participations in the forum's earlier editions, the SAMENA Council reinforced its commitment to fostering regional collaborations on critical industry-wide issues and challenges, pointing to successful examples such as the GCC Cybersecurity Initiative and the Smart Africa Alliance. These initiatives showcase the power of collaboration in reducing cyber risks and building stronger collective defenses. The Council advocated for a harmonized approach to cybersecurity standards and the sharing of information across borders, noting that such efforts will demonstrate to investors that the region is prepared for future challenges and capable of managing digital risks collectively. The SAMENA Council also highlighted the importance of public-private partnerships, particularly between governments and telecom operators, to develop measurable cybersecurity frameworks and regulatory sandboxes that ensure resilience and transparency in the region's digital infrastructure. While not directly revoiced during the GCF 2025, the Council maintains that cybersecurity compliance should also be incentivized and telecom operators complying with regulatory requirements should be recognized and rewarded accordingly. Additionally, the discussions at GCF 2025 touched upon the emerging challenges posed by quantum computing. Experts at the forum noted that the rapid advancements in quantum technology could potentially disrupt traditional encryption methods, posing a future cybersecurity threat. While the SAMENA Council did not directly engage in the specific discourse on quantum computing, the broader implications of these technological shifts are recognized by the Council as critical to future cybersecurity planning. As quantum technologies continue to develop, the need for foresight in strengthening cybersecurity infrastructures to mitigate such risks is becoming clearer. In this regard, the SAMENA Council advocates for proactive measures to prepare for the cybersecurity challenges of tomorrow (which will indeed be driven by quantum advancements), ensuring that the region is not only ready to handle present-day digital threats but also resilient in the face of future technological disruptions. Throughout the event, the SAMENA Council was a strong voice for the importance of treating cybersecurity as a strategic priority, not just as an IT concern or regulatory checkbox. The Council stressed that governments and business leaders must integrate cybersecurity into national security policies and economic strategies to secure long-term stability and growth. The SAMENA Council's participation in GCF 2025 reinforced its central role in representing the interests of the telecom and digital ecosystem across the region. With its advocacy for stronger cybersecurity frameworks, regional collaboration, investment, incentivization for operators, and capacity-building, the SAMENA Council aims to ensure that the region can compete effectively in the global digital economy. The Council also strives to ensure that its participation continues to represent the interests of the telecom operators, technology providers, and digital ecosystem players across the SA-ME-NA region.

> *Through its participation in the GCF 2025, building on to its participations in the forum's earlier editions, the SAMENA Council reinforced its commitment to fostering regional collaborations on critical industry-wide issues and challenges, pointing to successful examples such as the GCC Cybersecurity Initiative and the Smart Africa Alliance. These initiatives showcase the power of collaboration in reducing cyber risks and building stronger collective defenses.*

SAMENA Council On

Upper 6 GHz Spectrum

SAMENA Council Highlights Upper 6 GHz Spectrum as a Catalyst for Driving Next Stage of Cellular & WLAN Ecosystems

As a part of its recent advocacy work in representation of the shared interests of telecom operators, governments, technology providers, and the wider digital ecosystem, the SAMENA Council has highlighted the growing strategic importance of the Upper 6 GHz (U6) spectrum (6.425 GHz - 7.125GHz) as a key enabler of the next phase of development across both cellular and WLAN ecosystems, emphasizing its role in supporting inclusive digital growth, innovation, scientific progress, and long-term economic value-creation. In a panel discussion, held during the 19th edition of the TR Summit in Dubai, the SAMENA Council emphasized that U6 GHz band, beyond its contribution to expanding capacity and improving performance, offers a unique opportunity to advance digital inclusion, accelerate innovation, and unlock new possibilities across cellular and WLAN environments. While much of the discussion around U6 GHz often focuses on technical performance, the SAMENA Council noted that the band also carries broader, less obvious implications. Izhar Ahmad, Director – Industry Affairs & Communication, representing the Council stated: "In an era increasingly shaped by AI, U6 GHz can support more advanced data-driven collaboration and experimentation across sectors. This joint spectrum and AI capability has the potential to reinforce innovation ecosystems as well as contribute to progress in areas such as scientific research, amplifying new discoveries, transformation across industries, and speeding up wider digital service innovation." "U6 GHz also has relevance for national digital strategies, including emerging approaches to materializing Sovereign AI", he added. From a regulatory and policy standpoint, the SAMENA Council observed that the global approach to U6 GHz allocation remains fragmented. Across regions including Asia-Pacific and South America, countries broadly fall into three groups: those that have allocated the band for IMT use, those that have designated it for WLAN, and those that initially favored WLAN before later shifting toward IMT. Izhar Ahmad mentioned that "In the case of the UAE, we have an exceptional example. Following WRC-23, and through the allocation of this spectrum for IMT use, the advancement of 5G and 5G-Advanced, Fixed Wireless Access, and the issuance of a 6G roadmap, the UAE has demonstrated outstanding regulatory clarity." While varying approaches around the globe reflect individual national considerations, greater coordination and harmonization would help unlock broader ecosystem benefits and improve efficiency, the SAMENA Council emphasized. Looking ahead, the SAMENA Council reiterated the need for a balanced approach to U6 GHz development, with particular emphasis on how value is assessed and extracted from spectrum resources. Regulatory frameworks should be aligned with national ICT visions and be grounded in a clear assessment of how economic, social, and innovation value can be drawn from the newly available spectrum. "Maximizing value from each of the 700 megahertz contiguously available in this precious band will require alignment between cellular and WLAN ecosystems, supported by national ICT priorities, standardization, chipset development, and compelling use-cases. The U6 spectrum should be guided by real-world use-cases that encourage cross-industry innovation, while ecosystem development should advance both cellular networks and WLAN environments to ensure seamless experiences for people, machines, and interconnected devices", Izhar Ahmad concluded.

ARTICLE

U6 GHz: Strengthening the Spectrum Foundation of the AI-Driven Economy, Where Every Megahertz Counts

Izhar Ahmad
Director - Industry Affairs & Communication
SAMENA Telecommunications Council

Expectations on spectrum resources that the Industry uses have dramatically increased as the global digital economy continues its metamorphosis, with artificial intelligence now being a central catalyst. Decisions around spectrum are no longer only about availability or bandwidth blocks, but about how value is created, measured, and sustained. This especially applies to the Upper 6 GHz (U6) spectrum; a precious, contiguous range of frequencies from 6.425 GHz to 7.125 GHz that promise a new capacity layer for cellular ambitions, a new wireless experience for wireless local area networks, and cost efficiencies and prospects of innovation for various digital ecosystems.

> *The Upper 6 GHz spectrum provides the right balance of coverage and capacity for both today and tomorrow, and thus is a strategic asset that requires ever clearer regulatory direction and coordinated ecosystem development.*

The U6 GHz spectrum fits into the practical requirements of modern digital systems and to national digital outcomes in some unique ways. In this context, this contiguous spectrum needs to be approached as a finite national asset with allocations justified by measurable and strategic value drawn from every single megahertz. This is especially true in the current AI contexts, since the U6 GHz spectrum can accelerate AI activity, and AI-driven services depend on continuous data flows, interaction between cloud and edge environments, and reliable connectivity for both human users and machines.

U6 GHz for Infrastructure, AI, and Economy

While U6 GHz can support the creation of new digital services, for example, telemedicine and immersive education, its deeper value lies in how it supports the operational requirements of the AI economy. AI systems increasingly depend on continuous data exchanges, distributed processing, and real-time interaction between cloud, edge, and terminal devices.

Upper 6 GHz offers the scale and flexibility needed to support these requirements across multiple environments, and its contiguous structure ensures that the value of each portion of spectrum can be fully realized. By efficiently leveraging all 700 megahertz, networks can support the high-throughput, low-latency demands of AI-driven services and distributed workloads. In scientific research settings, the spectrum can enable more collaborative and data-intensive experimentation. In industrial and public-sector contexts, it can support AI-driven operations that depend on reliable and responsive connectivity. Over time, U6 GHz can act as an accelerator of scientific discovery and enabling more ambitious experimentation across industries.

What this does is reframe this valuable spectrum not merely as another connectivity input, but as an infrastructure layer that, which, by enabling unprecedented bandwidth, capacity density, and spectrum re-use capabilities, lends new depth to how intelligence is created, shared, and applied cross the digital-age economy.

As sovereign AI becomes a strategic priority for many nations within and beyond the SA-ME-NA region, U6 GHz takes on added significance. Spectrum that supports national-scale AI ecosystems enables countries to build, train, and deploy AI systems aligned with their economic and societal objectives. Upper 6 GHz provides the underlying capacity needed to support distributed AI workloads across public and private sectors, ensuring that innovation remains locally anchored while globally competitive.

Beyond raw capacity, U6 GHz offers low-latency, high-bandwidth connectivity that is essential for edge AI applications, real-time analytics, and industrial IoT integration. This allows for the deployment of AI in critical infrastructure, national research networks. In effect, U6 GHz becomes not just a connectivity layer but a strategic AI infrastructure enabler, supporting sovereign innovation, digital resilience, and cross-industry economic growth.

Upper 6 GHz provides the underlying capacity needed to support distributed AI workloads across public and private sectors, ensuring that innovation remains locally anchored while globally competitive

Assuming that in most markets the overarching consideration is human empowerment and not control, the U6 Ghz and AI synergy could allow for AI applications to be deployed closer to users, fostering edge innovation, real-time decision-making, and locally tailored and citizen-centric services. This synergy can directly fortify cross-sector collaboration, linking public services, private enterprises, and research institutions, while ensuring that data and computational resources remain accessible, secure, and locally governed. In effect, U6 GHz becomes not just a connectivity layer but a new infrastructure foundation for empowering individuals, communities, and businesses to leverage AI in ways that are equitable and societally beneficial.

Maximizing U6 GHz Value

Globally, approaches to U6 GHz allocation remain fragmented. Some countries have designated the band for IMT use, others for WLAN, and some have revised their strategies over time as market conditions and policy priorities evolved. While these choices often reflect legitimate national objectives, fragmentation does limit scale, delays innovation, and reduces the value that can be extracted from each megahertz by all nations. Alignment across regions, with active representation from both the cellular and WLAN ecosystems, can overcome standardization issues, simplify device and network interoperability, unlock economies of scale, and accelerate time-to-market for advanced services, while still allowing countries the flexibility to reflect their specific development priorities, including those directly relating to demonstrating progress on the global Sustainable Development Agenda.

For telecom operators, the relevance of Upper 6 GHz spectrum will increasingly be defined by how effectively spectrum can be translated into services that support real operational needs within the ICT industry as well as across adjacent sectors. Achieving this requires careful alignment between cellular and WLAN ecosystems, ensuring that data flows seamlessly across devices, networks, and AI-enabled systems. This is especially true since WLAN (e.g., Wi-Fi, Wi-Fi 6E, Wi-Fi 7) can no longer be perceived solely as a household connectivity medium but needs to be understood as an enterprise-grade infrastructure for meeting complex, emerging communication and data-flow requirements. Only through such coordination can the full potential of U6 GHz be realized for cross-industry innovation.

To fully realize the promise of Upper 6 GHz, four priorities should be objectively addressed in parallel. From a regulatory perspective, spectrum policy must inherently remain closely aligned with national ICT visions, with decisions guided by disciplined evaluation of how economic, social, and innovation value can be extracted from every megahertz of the contiguously 700 megahertz available in the U6 GHz spectrum. This means designing frameworks that prioritize allocations based on national digital objectives, and which encourage flexible use across cellular and WLAN networks, and provide clear guidance to reduce uncertainty for investors, telecom operators, and technology providers. In this way, each portion of spectrum contributes

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Industry associations and standardization bodies, such as the SAMENA Telecommunications Council and the World WLAN Application Alliance, have a powerful, facilitating role in drawing value out of the U6 GHz allocations. Fragmentation in spectrum allocation and technical approaches increases complexity for the entire value-chain. Collaborative efforts focused on harmonization, shared frameworks, and common technical assumptions can reduce friction, accelerate deployment, and improve return on investment.

measurable value rather than remaining underutilized.

On the technology side, progress in U6 GHz-compatible chipsets, device interoperability, and network processing capability is critical to realizing per-megahertz value in practice. Seamless operation across the U6 GHz band, optimized hardware for low-latency, high-throughput AI applications, and interoperability between devices and networks all combine to unlock the spectrum's full potential.

Telecom operators, meanwhile, need to unearth new possibilities and translate them into real-world outcomes and use-case scenarios through service design and deployment, again in line with their respective national priorities, socio-economic dynamics, and both regional and global trends in digital service adoption. By leveraging contiguous spectrum efficiently, coordinating cellular and WLAN deployments, and prioritizing latency-sensitive or AI-enabled applications, operators can ensure that U6 GHz drives tangible improvements across industries and varying operational environments.
Processes and approaches within the broader digital and increasingly AI-driven ecosystems require calibration as well, to fully capture value from both technologies and spectrum resources. Coordination among industry players, standardization bodies, and policymakers enables harmonization of technical approaches, shared best practices, and interoperability between networks and devices. This collective effort allows wireless transmission technologies to deliver on expectations, AI-driven services to scale effectively, and cross-industry collaborations to identify implementable approaches and yield outcomes, and it ensures that both existing and emerging human experiences and machine-scale interactions benefit from the spectrum's capabilities, and ultimately benefit the human society.

Industry associations and standardization bodies, such as the SAMENA Telecommunications Council and the World WLAN Application Alliance, have a powerful, facilitating role in drawing value out of the U6 GHz allocations. Fragmentation in spectrum allocation and technical approaches increases complexity for the entire value-chain. Collaborative efforts focused on harmonization, shared frameworks, and common technical assumptions can reduce friction, accelerate deployment, and improve return on investment. These collective actions, which such industry bodies can enable, allow spectrum to become an enabler of cross-industry collaboration rather than a constraint.

What to Take Forward

The way Upper 6 GHz is deployed and leveraged today will shape the next phase of the digital economy. With WRC-23 having formally allocated this band for IMT use, countries have a unique opportunity to extract maximum value from U6 GHz contiguous spectrum, aligning cellular and WLAN ecosystems, and enabling national-scale AI applications. Decisions made now on network deployments, cross-industry use -cases, and technology enablement, in general, will influence discussions at WRC-27 – which is expected to delve into next-generation satellite broadband and direct-to-device connectivity, IMT expansion into other bands, protecting scientific and passive, exploration services, and ensuring equitable access to evolving high-capacity bands."

The Upper 6 GHz spectrum provides the right balance of coverage and capacity for both today and tomorrow, and thus is a strategic asset that requires ever clearer regulatory direction and coordinated ecosystem development. By focusing on practical use, measurable outcomes, and ecosystem coordination, Upper 6 GHz can become a platform that not only supports immediate connectivity needs but also accelerates AI innovation, sovereign infrastructure and AI capabilities, strengthens industrial digital capabilities, and which can position nations for long-term digital and socio-economic competitiveness.

6G NEWS

TDRA Announces the Launch of the 6th Generation (6G) Initiative in the United Arab Emirates

The Telecommunications and Digital Government Regulatory Authority (TDRA) has announced the launch of the 6th Generation (6G) Initiative in the United Arab Emirates. The announcement was made during the inaugural meeting of the 6G Committee, hosted by TDRA with the participation of key partners from federal and local government entities, telecommunications service providers, universities, research and development centers, and leading global mobile technology providers. The meeting was opened by H.E. Eng. Mohammed Al Ramsi, Deputy Director General of the Telecommunications Sector at TDRA, who emphasized that the launch of the 6G initiative through the establishment of the 6G Committee aligns with the UAE's vision of leading the future of communications and information technology. He highlighted the country's proactive approach in anticipating global technological shifts and fostering a national environment that encourages innovation and scientific research in advanced telecommunications. H.E. Al Ramsi stated: "In 2015, we began our preparations for the 5G journey, which culminated in its commercial launch in 2019—making the UAE the first country in the region to achieve this milestone. Today, we celebrate coverage exceeding 99.5% of populated areas, with more than 23,000 5G sites serving over 10 million subscribers. These achievements pave the way for a new phase in which we work with our partners to develop a national 6G roadmap that will revolutionize connectivity by integrating digital and cognitive worlds, leveraging artificial intelligence, quantum computing, and satellite networks to enable the applications of the future. At TDRA, we believe that the shift toward 6G technologies is not merely a technical evolution, but a strategic step toward building a sustainable knowledge-based economy founded on innovation, artificial intelligence, and the integration of digital infrastructure across all sectors. We are building on a legacy of innovation and achievement, striving together toward a hyper-connected smart society that fosters innovation and national prosperity." Through this initiative, the committee aims to develop a comprehensive national 6G ecosystem by strengthening collaboration among national partners, establishing research and innovation programs in future communications through universities and research centers, accelerating the adoption of emerging technologies in key sectors, and supporting the development of international 6G standards and specifications. Additionally, the initiative seeks to establish a robust regulatory framework and integrated spectrum management approach to meet the requirements of the next technological era. In this context, two specialized subcommittees have been formed to support the main committee's objectives. Dr. Marwan Dabbah from Khalifa University chairs the Research and Development Working Group, while Dr. Khaled Al Awadhi from TDRA leads the Integration and Strategic Partnerships Working Group. Commenting on this milestone, Dr. Al Awadhi said: "This step reflects TDRA's commitment to adopting a proactive approach in shaping the next generation of communications and strengthening the UAE's position as a global hub for developing and implementing future technologies." The launch of the 6G Committee marks a significant milestone in the UAE's journey toward global technological leadership. It reflects the nation's continuous efforts to prepare for the post-5G era and to advance digital transformation and sustainable innovation. The committee will serve as a unified national platform to coordinate and empower national efforts in 6G technologies, positioning the UAE at the forefront of the future of advanced communications

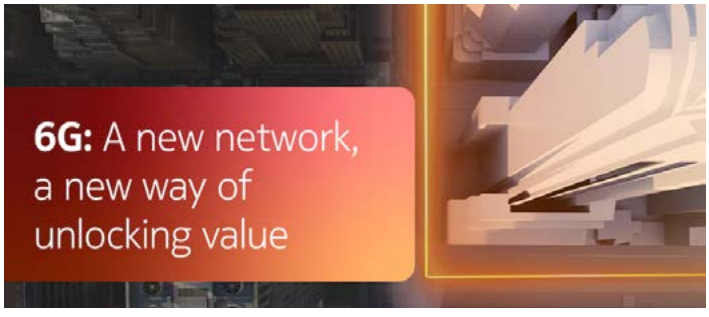
UAE Makes History: e& and NYU Abu Dhabi Achieve 145 Gbps in First 6G Terahertz Trial

In a landmark achievement for regional and global connectivity, e& UAE and New York University (NYU) Abu Dhabi have jointly demonstrated the first 6G Terahertz (THz) pilot in the Middle East, achieving record-breaking throughput of 145 Gbps. This pioneering trial marks a significant step in the UAE's journey to shape the future of intelligent, immersive, and sustainable connectivity. The pilot validates the potential of THz frequencies to deliver ultra-high-capacity, ultra-low-latency links, enabling transformative use cases such as holographic telepresence, extended reality (XR), terabit-class backhaul, and digital twins. By advancing research at the frontier of 6G spectrum, this initiative cements the UAE's position as a global leader in technology innovation. Marwan Bin Shaker, Acting Chief Technology and Information Officer, e& UAE, said: "Achieving 145 Gbps milestone is a breakthrough moment for the industry and for the UAE. This achievement demonstrates our ability to pioneer at the edge of technology, exploring the transformative potential of 6G to reimagine how people, businesses, and cities connect. Our collaboration with NYU Abu Dhabi underscores the critical role of academia–industry partnerships in shaping the future of connectivity." Echoing this sentiment, Sehamuddin Galadari, Managing Director of the Research Institute, NYU Abu Dhabi (NYUAD), emphasized the importance of collaboration: "This pilot is a major milestone for the region, demonstrating how joint collaboration can unlock new frontiers in wireless technology. By combining academic excellence with real-world operator expertise, the UAE is positioning itself as a co-creator of the 6G era." Prof. Murat Uysal, Founding Director of the Research Institute NYUAD Wireless Center, added: "This pilot provides critical validation of THz bands, considered a key enabler of 6G. Their unique propagation characteristics, hardware constraints, and processing demands require fundamentally new system

architectures beyond today's solutions. Through this collaboration, we are building local expertise and testbed infrastructure to tackle these challenges and contribute to global 6G standardization." The demonstration is accompanied by the joint white paper "Building the Fabric of 6G: Spectrum Frontiers and Enabling Technologies", co-authored by experts from e& UAE and Research Institute NYUAD Wireless Center. The paper outlines the strategic role of spectrum evolution — from sub-7 GHz to THz — and highlights how enabling technologies such as AI-native network, reconfigurable intelligent surfaces (RIS), and integrated sensing and communication (ISAC) will shape the 6G era. This milestone builds on the earlier 6G Collaboration MoU signed between e& UAE and NYU Abu Dhabi, which laid the foundation for joint research, knowledge sharing, and 6G testbed development in partnership with global standards bodies. Together, these initiatives reflect the UAE's commitment to not just adopting 6G early but actively contributing to its global development and standardization, driving forward the vision of intelligent, immersive, and sustainable future networks.

Nokia Takes Aim at 6G Deployment Challenges

Nokia and German electronics group Rohde & Schwarz unveiled an AI-powered 6G receiver designed to tackle coverage challenges and accelerate next-generation network rollouts. The new technology uses machine learning to counter limited coverage and signal distortions in high-frequency 6G bands, an issue the partners identified as one of the most significant technical hurdles to 6G deployment. According to Nokia Bell Labs, the new AI-driven tool boosts uplink coverage by between 10 per cent to 25 per cent compared to today's receivers. This allows operators to deploy 6G on existing 5G infrastructure, reducing network rollout costs and time to market. The AI-powered design also promises gains in throughput and power efficiency. "One of the key issues facing future 6G deployments is the coverage limitations inherent in 6G's higher-frequency spectrum," said Peter Vetter, president of core research at Nokia Bell Labs. "By boosting the coverage of 6G receivers, however, AI technology will help us build 6G infrastructure over current 5G footprints." The prototype was developed by Nokia Bell Labs and validated using Rohde & Schwarz test equipment. The pair plan to showcase a proof-of-concept demo at next week's Brooklyn 6G Summit. Commercial 6G services are expected to launch in 2030. Nokia's own 6G roadmap points to early standardization kicking off alongside broader 5G Advanced rollouts this year, paving the way for deployment at the end of the decade. Last week, the Finnish vendor joined forces with Ericsson on 6G research to unveil a new video coding technology aimed at supporting high-performance, immersive media for next-generation networks.



European Bodies Dock for Satellite 6G Project

The European Space Agency (ESA) and an EU-funded organization charged with pushing advanced wireless technology agreed to collaborate on work towards integration of terrestrial and satellite infrastructure for 6G. The Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the ESA and public-private partnership Smart Networks and Services Joint Undertaking (SNS JU) is intended to bring together players from the mobile and satellite sectors to help shape next-generation networks. Among the joint activities planned are large-scale trials of 6G terrestrial and non-terrestrial connectivity for industries including utilities, agriculture and media, as well as consumer mobile services. Tests will be shaped to generate data and performance benchmarks with the ultimate aim of improving interoperability between the infrastructure types. The pair also plan to pool expertise to develop 6G use cases in areas including edge computing. In its statement on the pact, SNS JU noted its project teams would gain access to ESA ground and in-orbit laboratories, and demonstration satellites. It added the pair aim to "accelerate innovation and ensure Europe remains a robust, leading force in shaping the future of ubiquitous connectivity". ESA director of connectivity and secure communications Laurent Jaffart explained the organization's ambition is "to ensure that everyone is connected, everywhere and at all times", adding "the fusion between networks in space and on the ground is a key ingredient to truly serve the connectivity needs of our member states". SNS JU executive director Erzsebet Fitori said the collaboration with the ESA is "an important step" in a goal to provide "European technology sovereignty in 6G".

China Builds World's Largest 5G Network While Developing 6G Technology

China plans to increase its resources to advance the construction of 5G networks. The country also wants to expand the implementation of 5G in various sectors. At the same time, China is also starting to develop a 6G network. The country, located in East Asia, has started its research in developing the 6G network. That way, China could be at the forefront of adopting 6G. Zhao Ce, Deputy Head of the Information and Telecommunication Development Department of the Ministry of Industry and Information Technology of China, explained that the development of the 6G network is very important at this time. What's more, their 5G network is strong enough. "China has built the world's largest 5G network with the most advanced technology. The number of 5G base stations in the country has surpassed 2.64 million by the end of March this year," Zhao Ce said at the 6th China Digital Summit, launching from China Daily on Thursday, November 6. To date, China has implemented its 5G wireless technology in 52 of the country's 97 main economic categories. Its implementation is now being expanded to a larger scale, such as to the mining, port and electricity sectors. Meanwhile, to focus on developing the 6G network, China has formed the IMT-2030 (6G) Promotion Group. This platform will be used as a means to promote 6G and international collaboration. Zhang Wang, deputy head of China's Maya World Administration informatization development bureau, stressed the importance of 5G's role as a foundation. He said efforts to explore 5G application scenarios should be improved to support artificial intelligence, large data, and industrial transformation. Cui Chunfeng, President of China Mobile Research Institute, explained that 6G research is still in its early stages around the world. According to him, this technology will, "integrated with telecommunications, perceptions, cloud, Artificial Intelligence (AI), large data, and security". Although the definition of 6G does not yet exist universally, this technology is predicted to offer a much higher speed than 5G. In addition, latency is believed to be much lower than the previous generation.

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MEMBERS NEWS

stc Group and AST SpaceMobile Join Forces at FII9 to Deliver Space-Based Wireless Connectivity

stc group, a leading digital enabler, has signed a strategic agreement with AST SpaceMobile, a U.S.-based satellite communications company, on Day 2 of the Future Investment Initiative (FII9) to develop space-based telecommunications services. The global investment event, hosted at Riyadh's King Abdulaziz International Conference Center, brings together international leaders, investors, and innovators focused on unlocking new opportunities for growth. The agreement will bring space-based wireless connectivity across Saudi Arabia and select markets in the Middle East and Africa, expanding mobile coverage to remote and underserved areas. Using AST's low Earth orbit (LEO) satellite network, the service will enable direct-to-device (D2D) mobile connectivity, allowing users to stay connected, even in areas with limited or no terrestrial network using standard mobile devices. This innovative solution will integrate seamlessly with stc group's existing mobile infrastructure, ensuring uninterrupted connectivity. With this step, stc group becomes one of the region's first telecom operators to deliver D2D satellite connectivity. In Saudi Arabia, stc will serve as the main operator, providing services in compliance with regulations directly to stc subscribers and offering wholesale services to Mobile Network Operators (MNOs) and Mobile Virtual Network Operators (MVNOs), The service is expected to be launched during the fourth quarter of 2026 after completing the regulatory and technical procedures. This strategic move supports stc's goal to expand digital access, invest in next-generation infrastructure, and shape the future of mobile connectivity across the Kingdom and beyond. Olayan Alwetaid, CEO of stc group, said: "By expanding coverage by using the latest innovations in telecommunications technology, stc and AST SpaceMobile are bridging connectivity gaps and ensuring no one is left out of the digital future. It's a step forward in our ambition to lead in digital infrastructure and deliver world-class connectivity access to everyone, no matter where they are." Mr. Abel Avellan, Founder, Chairman, and CEO, AST SpaceMobile, added: "We are pleased to partner with stc as the first regional operator to collaborate with us on this groundbreaking initiative. Their regional leadership and commitment to innovation, combined with our pioneering space-based network, will create a paradigm shift in how people connect. This partnership is another major leap forward to deliver on the promise of truly universal mobile broadband coverage, bridging the digital divide and empowering millions with reliable and easy-to-use connectivity." Senior executives from both organizations attended the signing ceremony at FII9, highlighting the strategic importance of this collaboration within the region's digital transformation journey.

stc Group Showcases Digital Leadership as Founding Partner of Connected World 2025

stc Group, Saudi Arabia's leading digital enabler, demonstrated its commitment to shaping the Kingdom's digital future at Connected World 2025, held on November 18-19 at Roshn Front. As a Founding Partner, the group showcased its latest digital solutions and entered into three strategic agreements with tech innovators to further enhance the Kingdom's digital ecosystem. Among the innovative technologies showcased, highlights included newtrack, a neutral host network providing high-quality digital infrastructure for Saudi gigaprojects, and the GCT Program, a comprehensive platform for international IoT connectivity that supports next-generation call services for seamless and secure data transmission. These solutions exemplify stc's digital leadership and commitment to laying the foundation of the Kingdom's digital ecosystem. Reinforcing its commitment to world-class connectivity, stc announced three partnerships at the event. In collaboration with Comfone, stc will enhance and expand IPX signaling services, ensuring smoother and more secure global connectivity. By leveraging Comfone's global network, diverse routing paths, and extensive roaming partner ecosystem, stc aims to strengthen its international footprint and deliver an exceptional roaming experience to customers worldwide. Additionally, stc signed agreements with Ameex and MADA to advance the management and routing of international A2P SMS traffic. These partnerships will optimize delivery efficiency, improve service reliability, and enhance the protection of traffic routing. Through Ameex's and MADA's expertise in hub management and intelligent routing, stc will streamline traffic flows, ensure higher-quality message delivery, and unlock new opportunities for value and growth within the global A2P ecosystem. stc group further demonstrated its industry leadership by sharing insights on the future of digitalization at the event. The Group Chief Carrier and Wholesale Officer Mohammad AlAbaddi participated in a keynote interview, highlighting advancements across Saudi Arabia's digital infrastructure. The group also contributed to panel discussions on developing future-ready infrastructure and building a thriving digital ecosystem through strategic alliances, providing valuable perspectives on Saudi Arabia's emergence as a leading digital hub. stc group's leadership and innovation were also recognized at Connected World 2025, where the group received the Borderless Connectivity Award for its advanced Bandwidth on Demand and automated assurance services, ensuring faster, automated connectivity and enhanced customer experience across the region. stc's achievements at Connected World 2025 underscore the group's dedication to driving digital progress across Saudi Arabia and the MENA region. By forging impactful partnerships and pioneering innovative solutions, stc group continues to empower businesses, communities, and individuals to thrive in an increasingly connected world.

stc Group Achieves Outstanding Financial Performance with Highest Historical Revenues Reaching 58 Billion for the 9 Months Period

stc announced the company's preliminary financial results for the period ending at 30 September 2025: Revenues for the 9 months period of 2025 reached 57,924 million with a growth of 2.58% as compared to the comparable period last year. Gross Profit for the 9 months period of 2025 reached 27,908 million with an increase of 5.70% as compared to the comparable period last year after excluding the non-recurring items. Operating Profit for the 9 months period of 2025 reached 10,834 million with an increase of 2.42% as compared to the comparable period last year after excluding the non-recurring items. Earnings before Interest, Taxes, Zakat, Depreciation and Amortization (EBITDA) for the 9 months period of 2025 reached 18,497 million with an increase of 5.72% as compared to the comparable period last year after excluding the non-recurring items. Net Profit for the 9 months period of 2025 reached 11,579 million with an increase of 3.08% as compared to the comparable period last year. After excluding the non-recurring items, the net profit would have a grown by 14.84%. stc distributes 0.55 per share for the 3rd quarter of 2025, in accordance with the dividends distribution policy approved by General Assembly. Commenting on the financial results for the nine months period of 2025, Eng. Olayan Alwetaid, CEO of stc Group, noted that the Group continues to maximize its revenues from various business segments, and is proceeding with the implementation of its

strategic cost efficiency program in order to achieve sustainable profitability and maximize shareholders' value. The Group recorded revenue growth of 2.6%, while EBITDA and net profit (after excluding non-recurring items) increased by 5.7% and 14.8%, respectively. This performance reflects the Group's success in implementing its strategy aimed at strengthening its leadership in the telecommunications sector, making targeted investments in digital infrastructure and the development of digital services and solutions. The GCEO further added that the Group is continuing to strengthen the digital infrastructure in the Kingdom and the region, as its subsidiary center3 announced an investment, aimed at accelerating the expansion and development of its data center infrastructure to reach a total capacity of 1 gigawatt by 2030. This strategic direction comes in response to the growing demand for AI and cloud computing services, reinforcing the Kingdom's position as a strategic digital hub in the region. As part of its pioneering role in supporting various national activities, stc Group has entered into several strategic partnerships in diverse sectors. In sports, stc signed a partnership with Thmanyah extending until 2031, to enhance the experience of following Saudi football competitions. In eSports, it partnered with the Saudi eSports Federation to expand its Job Attachment Program, fostering the development of future digital skills. In tourism, the Group sponsored the first edition of the "TOURISE 2025" forum in collaboration with the Saudi Tourism Authority, supporting the development of innovative technological solutions that empower the tourism sector and strengthen the Kingdom's position as a leading global destination. The GCEO concluded by emphasizing his pride in the Group's achievements in supporting the national economy, highlighting a 14% increase in the local content score, reaching 50.7% in 2025, with total annual spending of 21.31 billion. This achievement is a direct outcome of the "rawafed" program, which focuses on maximizing local spending, fostering innovation, attracting investments, and enriching local talent. This reflects stc's commitment to continue developing the local content ecosystem and contributing to the building of a sustainable digital future.

stc Group completes First 7 GHz (6G-Enabled) Band Trial in MENA, Setting a New Standard for Next-Generation Connectivity

stc Group, Saudi Arabia's leading digital enabler, has successfully conducted the Middle East and North Africa's first trial of the 7 GHz frequency band, a key component of sixth generation (6G) technology, in collaboration with the Communications, Space & Technology Commission and Nokia. This pioneering trial assessed the potential of the 7 GHz band for 6G networks, strengthening Saudi Arabia's capacity to lead in global technology and innovation, and reinforcing its position as a regional pioneer in digital advancement. 6G is widely expected to bring forth unprecedented opportunities, including ultra-fast connectivity, smart city infrastructure, immersive digital technologies, and next-generation industrial applications. As technology providers worldwide prepare for the new wave of emerging technologies, early adoption of 6G will be crucial for enabling seamless cross-border trade, powering data-driven economies, and attracting international investment. With this milestone in 6G innovation, Saudi Arabia is well positioned for its role as a hub for technology, commerce, and economic growth in the region and beyond.

stc, in Collaboration with Nokia, is the First Operator in the Middle East & Africa (MEA) to Successfully Launch Commercial 5G NSA Cloud RAN

stc in collaboration with Nokia, has announced the first successful commercial deployment of 5G Non-Standalone (NSA) Cloud RAN in the Middle East and Africa's (MEA) region. This great achievement shows stc's leading role in technology and its commitment to making Cloud RAN deployments a reality in the region. The deployment is based on Nokia leading Cloud RAN solution, enabling a smooth transition towards a hybrid radio access networks of the future while ensuring network performances and consistency. It's built on advanced cloud technology and modern equipment from Dell, RedHat, and Nokia to ensure the network is powerful, flexible, and efficient. This deployment marks a significant milestone in stc's journey to enable Cloud RAN adoption in commercial network. Furthermore, it prepares the way for future network technologies such as 6G. By leveraging Nokia's Cloud RAN capabilities, stc is targeting to gain the benefits of Cloud RAN including network automation, programmability, architecture agility and flexibility as well as the introduction of new services and use cases. Haitham AlFaraj, Group Chief Technology Officer at stc, said: " This deployment underscores stc's strategic vision to lead the evolution of Cloud RAN technologies, which serve as a foundation for driving digital transformation across the region. By prioritizing flexibility and scalability, stc is accelerating the shift towards cloud-native networks and laying the groundwork for the transition to AI-driven RAN, enabling smarter, more adaptive, and efficient networks for the future." Mikko Lavanti, Senior Vice President for MEA Mobile Networks at Nokia, said: "This milestone enhances stc's role in driving innovation and reinforcing Saudi Arabia's role as a key technological hub in the Middle East region. By supporting future-proof, cloud-based and open network topologies, Nokia's AnyRAN approach enables operators and enterprises to unlock the full potential of advanced network solutions and accelerate their digital transformation journeys." Tibor Fabry-Asztalos, Senior Vice President & Product Engineering for Telecom Systems Business, Dell Technologies, said: "stc's network cloud transformation, supported by our collaboration with Nokia and Red Hat, provides the foundation for Middle East and Africa's first 5G Cloud RAN deployment and will help accelerate new opportunities for businesses across the region."

stc Group Boosts Global Network Capacity and Analytics with iBASIS

stc group, a leading digital enabler, has announced an expanded partnership with iBASIS, a leading communications solutions provider, to offer a multi-service IP exchange (IPX) solution and the signing of a Flash Call Proof of Concept (PoC) agreement. This expanded collaboration will strengthen stc group's global digital infrastructure by boosting network capacity and integrating advanced analytics. The multi-service IPX expansion will build a secure, dedicated global network across stc group digital infrastructure that will facilitate the exchange of all IP-based traffic across data roaming, voice, and signaling on operators worldwide. By leveraging iBASIS's sophisticated IPX infrastructure and analytics platform, stc group will gain real-time, granular visibility into global data traffic. This advanced capability enables proactive network management, faster incident resolution, and continuous quality monitoring. Global data traffic will ensure optimal network performance and superior customer experience, especially during high-traffic events, such as Hajj and Saudi tourism events like Riyadh Season, which are all powered by stc group's networks.

Mohammed Alabbadi, Group Chief Carrier & Wholesale Officer, said: "This strategic investment firmly positions stc group as a global leader in delivering intelligent and resilient infrastructure to serve our region and beyond. We are excited to build on two decades of our trusted partnership with iBASIS to expand our capabilities and better serve our stc community." Patrick George, CEO of iBASIS, added: "We are honored to strengthen our partnership with stc group. Our advanced IPX capabilities and analytics-driven approach will enable stc group to meet rising data demands and deliver exceptional connectivity experiences worldwide."

e& Chief Calls on Operators to Stop Being Invisible

Hatem Dowidar, group CEO at e&, wants operators to take back control of their destinies and establish more relevance for customers by moving beyond connectivity, as he opened up on a push around private networks, sovereign AI cloud and drones. Dowidar told delegates telecoms was increasingly seen as a utility, with people caring more about their smartphone than the SIM inside it, making the operator's role essentially "invisible". However, he insisted the operator was still essential, doing things that no one else can, arguing more people would tolerate a power cut than a connectivity outage. "We are empowering supply chains, healthcare, commerce and much more," said Dowidar. "Without connectivity, these activities cannot happen. They will grind to a halt. So with the right connectivity and with the right solutions, industries will flourish and economies will thrive. We can do a lot more in every country where we operate." To that end, Dowidar said e& has invested heavily in an evolution beyond basic connectivity, highlighting three areas where the operator was having the most impact, underpinned by standalone 5G. First, he pointed to a private 5G deployment with Abu Dhabi oil giant ADNOC, which covers 11,000 square kilometers and ensures its connectivity covers onshore and offshore island activities. "This is not just for show, this is delivering real returns," he said. Second, the executive highlighted a sovereign cloud push in partnership with AWS. He said this would benefit all sorts of enterprises across the region with data sovereignty

requirements. Thirdly, Dowidar pushed advancement in drone technology, with e& working with the UAE's Cyber Security Council and civil aviation authorities to deploy the devices for delivery, traffic management, public safety and more. On the customer side, he added it was looking to advance services around digital banking and lifestyle and entertainment. "That's what we mean by a techco", concluded Dowidar. "We're not just connecting people. We are creating platforms and generating new revenue streams."

e& Leads the Way in 5G-Advanced with Upper 6 GHz Breakthrough

e& UAE, the flagship telecom arm of global technology group e&, has achieved a landmark milestone in 5G-Advanced technology. By successfully aggregating 6.35 GHz of total bandwidth across frequency ranges FR1 and FR2, with a particular focus on the upper 6 GHz band, the breakthrough highlights the unique potential of this licensed mobile spectrum. Conducted on the live network, this innovation provides the vast capacity needed to accelerate the UAE's 10 Giga Nation Vision, positioning the UAE as one of the most advanced and hyperconnected nations in the world. At the heart of the trial was the deployment of 256T256R Massive MIMO antennas on the upper 6 GHz band, combined with advanced techniques such as Inter-gNodeB Carrier Aggregation (CA) and MU-MIMO. By blending the lower and higher bands with upper 6 GHz, the network achieved multi-gigabit throughputs approaching 100 Gbps, proving this band's capability to deliver ultra-fast, reliable, and scalable connectivity for the future. Abdulrahman Al Humaidan, Senior Vice President Access Network Development at e& UAE, said: "By bringing together different 5G bands, including the upper 6 GHz range, we reached close to 100 Gbps on our live network. In simple terms, this unlocks much more capacity for busy cities, better 5G home broadband, and headroom for new experiences like immersive video and AI-powered services. Because it runs on licensed spectrum, customers also get mobility, security, and consistent quality, moving us closer to the UAE's 10 Giga Nation vision." The upper 6 GHz band offers unmatched advantages for mobile broadband. It provides higher cell capacity in dense urban areas, extends the reach of Fixed Wireless Access (FWA), and supports massive IoT applications such as smart surveillance and drones. It also powers immersive consumer services like XR and real-time smart city platforms, while enabling enterprises to benefit from network slicing for tailored connectivity. Crucially, when deployed under 5G, the upper 6 GHz band delivers seamless mobility, carrier-grade security, and guaranteed quality of service—capabilities that shared unlicensed systems such as Wi-Fi cannot consistently match. According to the GSMA's Mobile Evolution in 6 GHz report (September 2024), assigning the upper 6 GHz band for licensed mobile use could generate economic benefits equivalent to 0.39 per cent of the UAE's expected GDP in 2035. These benefits underline why the upper 6 GHz is better aligned with the long-term requirements of mobile networks than with unlicensed alternatives. With this achievement, e& UAE cements its role as a global leader in 5G-Advanced, placing the upper 6 GHz band at the center of future mobile innovation and redefining the standard for next-generation connectivity. This vision cements the UAE's ambition to become a global model for next-gen connectivity, fueling competitiveness, technological sovereignty, and a knowledge-based economy by 2031.

e& and Motorola Mobility Join Forces to Drive Tech Innovation, and Regional Expansion

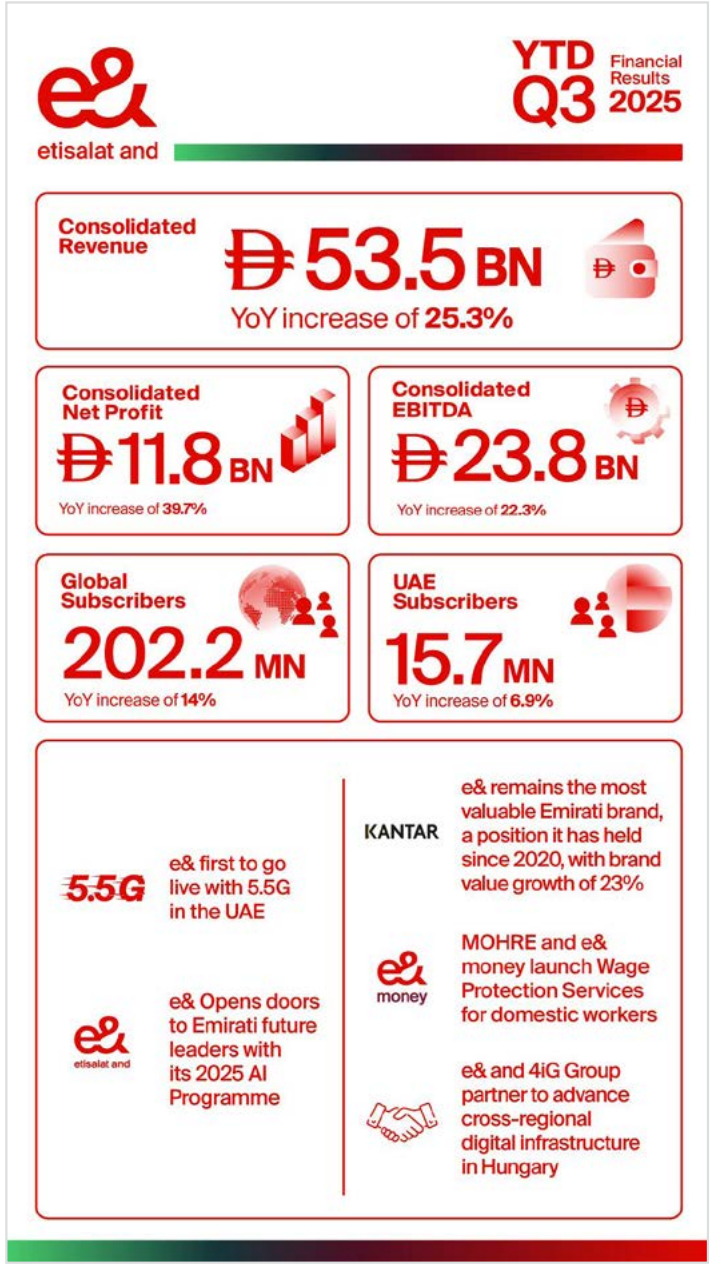
Global technology group e& and Motorola Mobility, a Lenovo company, have signed a strategic Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to establish a collaborative framework to bring innovation and expand market reach in the Middle East region. This partnership brings together two industry leaders to explore new market opportunities, including the development of AI applications and tools to enhance user experience in the region. As part of the agreement, e& and Motorola Mobility will work together to expand the presence of Motorola's device portfolio, services and solutions for consumers across e&'s subsidiaries, leveraging its extensive retail network, digital platforms and wholesale distribution channels. This initiative will expand Motorola's market footprint while offering customers greater choice, convenience, and value. Tamer B Eltoni, Senior Vice President, Digital Adjacencies & Devices, e& UAE, said: "Partnering with Motorola Mobility enables us to deliver a broader range of innovative devices and intelligent services to our customers. This alliance is built on a shared commitment to innovation, combining Motorola's trusted hardware and product innovation with e&'s deep market insights, advanced telecom infrastructure and expansive customer base." Sergio Buniac, Senior Vice President of Lenovo Mobile Business Group and President of Motorola Mobility, said: "This collaboration represents a significant milestone in Motorola Mobility's commitment to empower consumers across the Middle East. We will bring innovative and high-performance devices to consumers through e&'s expansive retail and digital channels. Together, we're not just expanding market presence, we're co-creating smarter experiences that reflect the region's dynamic digital ambitions." Motorola Mobility and e& will co-invest in localized, AI-driven digital services, designed to meet the unique needs of regional markets. The MoU also outlines a joint commitment to develop and execute marketing initiatives and campaigns tailored to specific markets. Beyond commercial and technological collaboration, this partnership also brings together a mutual dedication to sustainability, where both partners will explore initiatives targeting e-waste reduction and device recycling.

e& Completes the World's First IP+DWDM 800GE Solution Trial

e& UAE, the flagship telecom arm of global technology group e&, unveiled the successful completion of the world's first IP+DWDM dual-800GE innovation. This groundbreaking achievement lays a solid foundation for accelerating digitalization and the application of emerging technologies such as 5.5G, cloud computing, big data, and artificial intelligence. The UAE technical team conducted comprehensive testing and validation of an end-to-end IP+DWDM dual-800GE solution. The trial simulated e& UAE's EMIX production core connectivity over an 800G DWDM network. EMIX, operated by e& UAE, serves as a regional gateway, providing IP transit services to ISPs (internet service providers) across the Middle East. Khalid Alkhaja, Vice President of Business & IP Core at e& UAE, said: "This trial shows that higher capacity doesn't have to mean higher complexity or energy use. Dual-800GE over 800G DWDM delivered cleaner transmission, lower latency and better economics, while AI-enabled optimization reduces consumption in line with traffic patterns. It's a practical step that helps us deliver faster, cleaner and more reliable experiences for consumers, enterprises and carriers connected to our EMIX gateway." The test results demonstrated the 800GE transmission quality and reduced IP packet latency, it effectively optimized the cost per bit and integrating AI capabilities enabling traffic prediction and AI-driven dynamic energy-saving based on traffic patterns, making the entire network greener and energy-efficient. The combination of 800GE and AI will lay a robust foundation for AI WAN networks.

e& Continues Strong Growth in Q3 2025 with Consolidated Revenues Up 29.2% to AED 18.6 Billion

e& announced its Q3 2025 consolidated financial results, reporting consolidated revenue of AED 18.6 billion, growing 29.2 per cent year-over-year (YoY), while consolidated revenues for the first nine months of 2025 recorded AED 53.5 billion, up 25.3 per cent YoY, reflecting the Group's resilient business model and its ability to build on record-breaking first-half results. The group maintained its strong growth trajectory across its business verticals, with consolidated net profit in Q3 reaching AED 3.0 billion, while consolidated net profit for the first nine months of 2025 recorded AED 11.8 billion, a 39.7 per cent YoY increase. In Q3, EBITDA rose by 29.2 per cent YoY, reaching AED 8.4 billion with a margin of 45.0 per cent. For the first nine months of 2025, EBITDA reached AED 23.8 billion, a growth of 22.3 per cent YoY, with a margin of 44.4 per cent. e&'s total subscriber base reached 202.2 million in Q3 2025, representing a 14.0 per cent YoY growth. In the UAE, the number of subscribers reached 15.7 million, up 6.9 per cent YoY, driven by strong demand for advanced digital services and intelligent connectivity solutions. During the third quarter, e& delivered strong performance across all verticals, reinforcing its position as a global technology group. The period saw strong operational execution, landmark partnerships, and several first-in-market achievements that further strengthened e&'s foundation for long-term value creation. Following the close of the quarter, e& extended this momentum into GITEX Global 2025, unveiling new milestones that demonstrate the depth and direction of e&'s AI, cloud, and connectivity strategy. Hatem Dowidar, Group Chief Executive Officer of e&, said: "Our strong performance in the third quarter builds on the momentum of the first half, with consolidated revenue growth of 29.2 per cent YoY to AED 18.6 billion during the quarter. This growth in revenues was carried through to our EBITDA, rising by 29.2 per cent YoY, reaching AED 8.4 billion with a margin of 45 per cent, reflecting the pace and progress of our transformation journey into a global technology group with a strong impact, powering economies, empowering people, and advancing digital progress across the communities we serve." He added: "Across our verticals, we are delivering strong growth while investing in next-generation digital infrastructure, AI capabilities, and partnerships. This is the outcome of a deliberate strategy to build long-term advantages through talent, capabilities, and infrastructure that creates lasting value for our customers and shareholders. This quarter's results also reinforced e&'s role as a national and regional growth engine, advancing the UAE's digital leadership and expanding our global reach. From launching the region's first 5.5G network to empowering new Emirati talent, we strengthened both our competitiveness and our contribution to the UAE's knowledge-based economy. We also deepened regional connectivity and intelligent infrastructure by extending advanced sovereign cloud and AI capabilities and forging new cross-regional and international alliances and partnerships." Dowidar concluded: "Approaching its 50-year milestone, e& is building the next decade now—strengthening the UAE's digital backbone and backing high-impact innovation with trusted, inclusive, locally anchored technologies—to deliver sustainable value well beyond our Golden Jubilee."



e& Partners with One Punch Solutions on Humanized AI that Puts Customers First

e& UAE, the flagship telecom arm of global technology group e&, has signed a strategic Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with One Punch Solutions to design next-generation AI-powered customer support experiences that effortlessly blend human empathy with machine intelligence. This partnership is not just about developing AI-powered virtual assistant use cases. Driven by an obsession with offering a superior customer experience, it is about dissolving the boundaries between machine and human interaction. By integrating an emotionally intelligent conversational AI solution into e& UAE's customer care ecosystem, the two companies aim to deliver experiences that feel natural, intuitive, and deeply personal. "At e& UAE, we're using AI not just to automate, but to replicate the warmth and empathy of human interaction," said Chris Lipman, Chief Customer Experience Officer at e& UAE.

"Our partnership with One Punch is about delivering customer support that feels natural and emotionally aware, because when technology speaks like a human, people feel truly heard. The outcome we're focused on is simple: faster resolutions and higher satisfaction across the channels our customers use every day." The joint initiative will focus on embedding AI across e& UAE's customer care channels, with a design philosophy that prioritizes empathy, cultural sensitivity, and operational excellence. Customers will engage with AI that not only understands their needs, but mirrors human tone and emotional depth, creating a support experience that feels indistinguishable from speaking to a live agent. "Customers want conversations that are real and trustworthy. Our AI agents connect with empathy and deliver accurate solutions in real time. And we're proud to support e& UAE in their journey to set new standards for customer experience," said Vaha Malsk, Founder & CEO of One Punch Solutions. This MoU highlights e& UAE's relentless focus on customer obsession and innovation, ensuring every interaction builds trust, deepens loyalty, and enhances the customer experience by applying technology thoughtfully and always with the customer's needs at the Centre.

e& Unveils World's First 200G PON Prototype at GITEX GLOBAL 2025

e& UAE, the flagship telecom arm of global technology group e&, announced the successful demonstration of the world's first 200G Passive Optical Network (PON) prototype at GITEX GLOBAL 2025, positioning the company at the forefront of next-generation connectivity. This marks a significant leap in fixed network technology, reinforcing e& UAE's commitment to delivering ultra-fast, future-proof connectivity to homes, enterprises, and smart city ecosystems. 200G PON technology introduces a new era of fiber broadband by delivering unprecedented capacity, supporting data rates of up to 200 gigabits per second per fiber. This enables

the delivery of multi-gigabit services to a wide range of users, including households, enterprises, and industrial campuses. Built on advanced optical wavelength multiplexing, 200G PON ensures future-proof scalability, allowing for a smooth transition from existing GPON, XGS-PON, and 50G PON deployments. Abdulrahman Al Humaidan, Senior Vice President/ Access Network Development at e& UAE, said: "200G PON lifts the ceiling on what a single fiber can do, enabling multi-gigabit plans for more customers, while giving enterprises and cities the headroom they need for AI, video and real-time operations. We're demonstrating what the next decade of fiber can deliver, multi-gigabit access for homes and enterprises on the same network that also carries 5G transport and smart-city services. It's a clear path to scale today's GPON (Gigabit-capable Passive Optical Network) and XGS-PON (10-Gigabit Symmetric PON) footprints into a much higher-capacity era, with minimal disruption to the existing fiber plant." He added: "It aligns seamlessly with the UAE's digital transformation agenda and supports e&'s broader ambition to build world-class gigabit societies. By pioneering advanced connectivity solutions, e& UAE is not only driving progress within the region but also setting new global benchmarks for high-speed, future-ready digital infrastructure." In addition to high performance, 200G PON prioritizes energy efficiency through advanced modulation techniques and digital signal processing, reducing power consumption while maximizing throughput. It also enables multi-service convergence by supporting broadband access, enterprise connectivity, 5G transport, and smart city infrastructure within a unified fiber platform. Furthermore, its backward compatibility with current optical access infrastructure ensures operational flexibility and seamless upgrades for network operators and end users alike.

e& Launches RedCap Technology in UAE; Ready for Industrial 5G SA Applications

e& UAE, the flagship telecom arm of e&, has enabled Reduced Capability (RedCap) on its 5G Standalone (5GSA) network, activating a smartwatch as the first live RedCap use case in the UAE. This milestone enhances wearable technology with seamless connectivity and robust security, while signaling e& UAE's readiness to support diverse industrial RedCap-enabled applications. RedCap is a streamlined 5G technology which optimizes device performance for mid-tier IoT applications. It allows e& UAE to introduce services beyond enhanced mobile broadband (eMBB) on its 5GSA architecture, broadening the 5G ecosystem and offering new monetization opportunities in both the consumer and industrial spaces. Abdulrahman Al Humaidan, Senior Vice President of Access Network Development, e& UAE, said: "This smartwatch launch showcases the power of RedCap on our secure 5GSA network. Beyond wearables, our network is fully equipped to enable industrial use cases, driving secure and innovative solutions across the UAE." The smartwatch use case delivers reliable, high-speed connectivity and extended battery life, ensuring secure and efficient performance for consumers. With e& UAE's 5GSA network, users benefit from enhanced security features, including advanced encryption and network slicing, safeguarding data and communications. For industrial needs, RedCap can provide deterministic performance using e&'s 5GSA network for business-critical applications in manufacturing, logistics, utilities and smart cities. The network ensures compatibility across time division duplex (TDD) spectrum, positioning the UAE as a leader in secure 5G IoT innovation. RedCap can effectively scale down the complexity, size, and capabilities of a new array of 5G Internet of Things (IoT) devices to enhance cost efficiency while still providing sufficient data speeds. e& UAE has implemented a certification process for RedCap devices to ensure performance and security, with plans to expand adoption across wearables and industries, progressing toward 5G-Advanced capabilities.

Mobily Marks 20 Years with Strategy Pledging to be 'Ever Closer'

Etihad Etisalat (Mobily), the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia's leading telecom, media and technology pioneer, celebrated its 20th anniversary with its new corporate strategy for the period throughout 2030 aimed at strengthening customer experience leadership by deepening and scaling integration of artificial intelligence across the fabric of its internal operations, improving operational efficiency, and expanding digital infrastructure—in alignment with Saudi Vision 2030's objectives toward a thriving and sustainable digital economy. The announcement of the new strategy came on the sidelines of Mobily's 20th Anniversary celebration, where the company reaffirmed its customer centricity embodied in its new slogan "Ever Closer." Attending Mobily's 20th Anniversary celebrations held in Riyadh, were dignitaries, senior government officials, business leaders, and customers, as well as senior members of the press corps and social media influencers. Marking their two decades of achievements, the company ran a documentary film highlighting milestones, and local, regional and international successes, locally, regionally, and internationally, casting lights on its pioneering role in supporting and enabling digital transformation across the Kingdom. Commenting on this occasion, Eng. Nezar Banabeela, Chief Executive Officer of Mobily, said: "Today, we celebrate 20 years of excellence and innovation, and the launch of our new strategy, our roadmap for a better digital future. This strategy focuses on greater investment in artificial intelligence to deliver more advanced and accessible digital services to serve the diverse needs of our wide array of customers, allowing us to continue to pioneer experiences based on the latest technologies." Banabeela added: "Today's 20th Anniversary is not just about celebrating our achievements, it is the start of a new phase of sustainable innovation, where we reaffirm our commitment to upgrading our digital infrastructure and widening the scope of our services in alignment with the rapid pace of evolution in the telecom, media and technology, and address the aspirations of our customers." And noted: "Mobily played a vital role in supporting digital transformation and sustainable development in the Kingdom over the past two decades, through its continuous investment advanced technologies and delivering innovation solutions improving the digital quality of life for its customers." Through this, Mobily affirms its role as a trusted digitization partner for national transformation, contributing to strengthening the Kingdom's position as a global hub.

Mobily Signs Contract with Power Sub Link (PSL) to Build Its First Fully Owned Submarine Cable System, The Mobily Red Sea Cable

Mobily, a leading Technology, Media, and Telecom (TMT) company in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, has signed a contract with Power Sub Link (PSL), a global leader in advanced subsea installation and marine engineering technologies during Capacity Europe international conference held in London. Under this landmark agreement, Power Sub Link will be responsible for the complete execution of the Mobily Red Sea Cable (MRSC) System, including detailed design, surveying, manufacturing, installation, jointing, testing and commissioning. The Mobily Red Sea Cable (MRSC) marks Mobily's first fully owned submarine cable system, extending across the Red Sea from Duba, Saudi Arabia, to Sharm El-Sheikh, Egypt. This landmark project represents strategic milestone in enhancing regional connectivity and reinforces Mobily's position as a leading global telecommunications player. Mobily's MRSC will open new routes for expansion into Europe and Asia through diversified connectivity options. It also enhances Mobily's international infrastructure, delivering greater reliability, expanded capacity, and scalability to meet rising demand for data and resilient connectivity services in both domestic and global markets. The cable system will land at two cable landing stations along the Red Sea: Duba in Saudi Arabia and Sharm El-Sheikh in Egypt. From these strategic two points, it will links the Arabian Gulf and neighboring countries to Egypt through Mobily's advanced digital corridors, while also providing connectivity access to multiple subsea cable systems landing in Egypt. This agreement aligns with Mobily's long-term strategy to expand its global infrastructure, reinforcing the company's investments in subsea cables and international capacity. Building on earlier subsea projects that connect Mobily to multiple regions worldwide, the new cable system further enhances the company's international network and capabilities. Commenting on this, Thamer Alfadda - Senior Vice President Wholesale & Carrier Services at Mobily said: "The Mobily Red Sea Cable is a strategic milestone for both Mobily and the Kingdom, reinforcing Saudi Arabia's role as a central hub for global digital connectivity. This fully owned subsea system will enhance our capacity, reliability, and flexibility in connecting the Middle East to Europe, while creating new opportunities for regional collaboration and growth. It also reflects Mobily's commitment to investing in future-ready infrastructure that supports reliable advanced technologies such as cloud computing and artificial intelligence, in full alignment with the ambitions of Saudi Vision 2030." "This project constitutes a significant milestone for Mobily and the wider region. We are proud to support the realization of Mobily's vision to expand critical and diverse routes, enhancing the resilience of global subsea connectivity", said Eng. Byron Skaftouros, Managing Director of Power Sub Link SA. "We are proud to partner with Mobily on this historic project, which showcases Power Sub Link's expertise in delivering complex subsea infrastructure with precision and reliability. The Mobily Red Sea Cable is not only a landmark for the Kingdom but also a symbol of technological excellence and regional collaboration. Through our integrated capabilities in subsea design, engineering, and installation, we are committed to ensure the successful delivery of a world-class system that will contribute to Saudi Arabia's digital transformation and its growing role in global connectivity." By entrusting Power Sub Link with this turnkey delivery, Mobily reaffirms its confidence in PSL's ability to execute complex subsea projects with technical excellence, operational efficiency, and safety at the highest international standards. This landmark project also reinforces Power Sub Link's global footprint and its expanding presence across the Middle East. It demonstrates the company's capacity to manage and execute critical subsea infrastructure projects that shape the future of global connectivity.

Omantel Board Appoints Eng. Aladdin Bait Fadhil as Chief Executive Officer

The Board of Directors of Oman Telecommunications Company (Omantel) is pleased to announce the appointment of Eng. Aladdin bin Adbullah Bait Fadhil as the company's new Chief Executive Officer. Prior to this appointment, Eng. Aladdin was the Chief Commercial Officer at Omantel, where he contributed to shaping Omantel's commercial strategy, driving digital transformation, and strengthening the company's position as a leading integrated telecommunications provider in the region. With more than 20 years of experience in the telecom sector, Eng. Aladdin brings a vast industry knowledge, strategic insight, and understanding of market dynamics. He contributed to expanding Omantel's enterprise and wholesale portfolios, enhancing customer experience, and forging key partnerships that support the Sultanate's digital economy ambitions. His appointment also reflects Omantel's commitment to empowering national talents and nurturing Omani leadership across all levels of the organization. This leadership transition comes at an important moment in Omantel's journey, as the company advances its bold strategic vision - "Portal to the Future" - which positions Omantel as a regional digital powerhouse, enabling innovation, connectivity, and sustainable growth across the region. Aladdin holds a bachelor's degree in Electrical and Electronics Engineering from Sultan Qaboos University and has completed advanced executive programs at Harvard Business School, London Business School, and Manchester Business School. The Board expressed its confidence in Eng. Aladdin's ability to lead Omantel into its next phase of innovation and growth, building on the company's strong foundations and commitment to delivering value to customers, shareholders, and the nation.

Omantel and Kingsoft Explore Strategic Collaboration to Launch Oman's First Sovereign Productivity Software

Omantel has announced a strategic collaboration with Kingsoft to explore the development of a sovereign productivity software hosted entirely on Oman's National Cloud. This initiative marks a pivotal step in Oman's digital transformation journey, offering Omani businesses and government entities a secure, locally hosted alternative to global cloud-based productivity platforms. The proposed solution would be the first of its kind in the region, an enterprise-grade software designed to meet the unique needs of Oman's digital economy while ensuring full compliance with national data sovereignty laws. The proposed productivity software offers a transformative set of advantages tailored to the needs of Omani enterprises

and government entities. By ensuring that all data is stored within Oman's borders, it guarantees full compliance with national data sovereignty laws; an essential requirement for organizations handling sensitive citizens' financial information. Built on the certified infrastructure of the National Cloud, the software delivers national-grade security that surpasses typical enterprise standards, offering a level of trust and protection unmatched by global providers. Financially, it enables predictable cost savings by eliminating cross-border data fees and currency fluctuations, allowing businesses to budget confidently in Omani Riyals. Performance is also optimized through local hosting, which ensures faster access speeds, lower latency, and responsive support from teams familiar with the local business landscape. Seamless integration with existing systems further reduces friction and protects prior IT investments, while the software's alignment with Oman's digital strategy positions it as a cornerstone of a sovereign, future-ready digital ecosystem. This collaboration is more than a technical deployment; it is a strategic move to empower Oman's public and private sectors with tools that reflect national priorities and global standards. It positions Omantel as a multi-service enabler of Oman's sovereign digital future. Aladdin Baitfadhil, Chief Commercial Officer of Omantel comments "This strategic collaboration with Kingsoft represents a foundational step in Oman's digital evolution. Together, we are exploring the development of a sovereign productivity software hosted on the National Cloud, one that offers Omani enterprises and government entities a secure, locally governed, and future-ready platform for innovation. This initiative reflects our commitment to enabling national progress through trusted digital infrastructure and aligns with Oman's broader economic and technological vision" Omantel's leadership in operating the National Cloud, combined with Kingsoft's global expertise, creates a powerful alliance aimed at delivering a secure, scalable, and sovereign digital ecosystem. As Oman continues to invest in its digital infrastructure, this collaboration reinforces the nation's ambition to become a regional hub for innovation, connectivity, and cloud services.

Omantel and stc Group Sign Strategic Partnership to Accelerate Tech Startup Growth

Omantel Innovation Labs and inspireU, the startup accelerator arm of stc group have signed a strategic partnership during GITEX GLOBAL, aimed at fostering innovation and accelerating the growth of digital startups across the region. The partnership underscores the shared commitment of both entities to nurture a thriving innovative ecosystem, empower entrepreneurs, and drive growth through technology and knowledge exchange between the two countries. Both parties will collaborate to support startups accelerated within their respective programs by providing access to expert mentorship, technical guidance, and market expansion opportunities. The partnership also aims to facilitate smoother entry into regional markets, enabling Omani startups to benefit from inspireU's network in Saudi Arabia and stc group's ecosystem, while offering Saudi startups access to Omantel's innovation ecosystem in Sultanate of Oman. Her Highness Sayyida Ghada Al Said, Senior Manager of Omantel Innovation Labs, said: "This partnership represents a strategic milestone in our mission to empower innovators and advance the region's entrepreneurial landscape. Through our collaboration with inspireU, we aim to unlock new opportunities for startups to scale beyond borders, leveraging our shared strengths to shape the future of business and technology in the region." Mr. Abdulrahman Al Zuhair, Director of inspireU at stc group, added: "We are pleased to partner with Omantel Innovation Labs to connect ecosystems and open new investment horizons across the GCC. Such collaboration enables access to emerging technologies and opens the path for entrepreneurs to scale regionally and compete globally. Together, we are building a stronger regional ecosystem aimed at supporting startup growth, expanding investments, and strengthening the GCC's position as a global hub for digital innovation."

Omantel Showcases Future Growth Drivers and Strategic Investments at Annual Investor Meeting

Omantel hosted its annual investor meeting last week under the theme "Beyond Telecommunications: Showcasing Omantel's Future Growth Engines", bringing together leading regional investment funds, institutional investors, and analysts alongside the company's executive management. The event underscored Omantel's transformation into a leading regional digital group and highlighted its strategic roadmap for growth. Ghassan bin Khamis Al Hashar, Chief Financial Officer of Omantel, presented a comprehensive overview of the Group's financial results. He noted that Omantel's revenues, including contributions from Zain Group, achieved an annual growth rate of 6.3% from 2022 to 2024. Despite intensifying competition in the local market, Omantel managed throw its local operations to maintain its profitability in 2024, recording annual profit growth of 4.9% and sustaining EBITDA margins of 35% (excluding international hubbing revenues). Al Hashar emphasized that disciplined capital allocation and operational efficiency remain central to Omantel's strategy. Key priorities for the coming years include accelerating deployment of 5G infrastructure, expanding sovereign cloud capabilities, and leveraging AI technologies. These initiatives aim to raise Omantel's ICT market share to 25% by 2030, reinforcing its position as an integrated digital group and a catalyst for Oman's digital economy. The meeting welcomed leading government and private investment funds from across the region, collectively managing assets valued at US$100 billion. Their participation reflects Omantel's strong investment appeal and its role as a trusted partner in driving digital transformation. An open panel discussion showcased Omantel's subsidiaries and their contributions to strengthening the Group's ecosystem:

Oman Data Park: The Sultanate's largest data center operator, offering sovereign cloud, cybersecurity, and AI-as-a-service.

Zain Omantel International (ZOI): A joint venture with Zain Group, achieving 172% revenue growth year-on-year, serving global clients including Meta, Google, and AWS, and operating a 120,000 km submarine cable system.

OMPAY: A fintech platform positioned as a hub for digital payments and transfers.

Tadoom: A digital innovation company enabling smart cities and IoT, connecting over 800,000 devices and achieving a 117% CAGR over the past three years.

Infoline: A leading ICT service provider enhancing systems integration, enterprise solutions, and customer experience.

Omantel's executive management highlighted the Group's journey toward becoming a diversified technology leader. Strategic investments in sovereign cloud infrastructure with AWS and Huawei aim to fulfill the growing demand while ensuring compliance with national security standards. In addition, pioneering initiatives such as the Artificial Intelligence Center and the Arabic NLP Studio (Arabic LLM Studio) position Omantel at the forefront of AI adoption in the region.

Omantel Partners with Norton to Enhance Cybersecurity for Customers in Oman

Omantel, the Sultanate's leading provider of integrated digital services, has partnered with Norton, a leader in Cyber Safety, to strengthen online security for individuals and families across Oman. Through this partnership, Omantel is offering Norton 360 within its Home Broadband plans, available on monthly, annual, and two-year subscriptions. Norton 360 helps to protect PCs, tablets, and smartphones from threats such as malware, phishing, ransomware, and scams. It also includes tools for families to manage children's digital activities, with options to set screen time limits, block inappropriate content, and monitor search history. Additional features such as secure password management and cloud backup help provide further safeguards against data loss and online vulnerabilities. "Cybersecurity has become one of the most critical enablers of trust in today's digital world. Our priority is to ensure that our customers can work, learn, and connect

online with confidence," said Ali Bait Fadhil, General Manager of Core Telco at Omantel. "By making advanced security solutions available to our broadband customers, we are helping to create a safer digital environment for households. The collaboration comes at a time when digital threats are becoming increasingly sophisticated, highlighting the growing need for comprehensive and accessible protection as the nation advances its digital transformation under Oman Vision 2040. "We are excited to partner with Omantel to help bring more protection to customers in Oman through simple and effective digital safety solutions," said Steve Wilson, Director of Sales for Norton. "This collaboration reflects our strong commitment to power digital freedom for customers around the globe including the Middle East, a region we see as full of opportunity and innovation in the digital space." By integrating trusted solutions from Norton into its portfolio, Omantel continues to expand the services available to its customers while reinforcing the importance of cybersecurity as a cornerstone of Oman's digital future.

Omantel and Decoil Partner to Launch "Enterprise Brain," an AI-powered Knowledge Platform for Enterprises

Omantel has partnered with Decoil, an Omani AI startup and graduate of Omantel Innovation Labs, the company's innovation arm dedicated to nurturing startups and accelerating technological breakthroughs, to co-develop "Enterprise Brain", an AI-powered knowledge platform designed to enhance enterprise intelligence. The collaboration is aligned with Omantel's "Portal to the Future" strategy, which places artificial intelligence at the heart of its growth plans and is anchored on four pillars: advancing leadership in AI, driving innovation in Oman and the region, building an integrated digital ecosystem, and enabling sustainability in line with Oman Vision 2040. The new platform is designed to act as an intelligent knowledge hub, enabling employees to instantly access and connect organizational data in response to their queries. By serving as a smart institutional reference, the platform will save time, improve efficiency, and ensure that insights are directly linked to verified sources. The platform is being developed to support organizations operating in highly regulated and data-sensitive environments. It embeds governance and data protection standards into its architecture to guarantee security and reliability, while transforming soiled and complex data into clear, actionable insights, all through a simple query. The first deployment will be within Omantel, followed by a broader commercial rollout to enterprises across different sectors. The collaboration leverages Omantel's robust infrastructure and commercial scale with Decoil's technical expertise in AI engineering. Together, the two companies will deliver a secure and flexible Software-as-a-Service (SaaS) platform supported by advanced computing power and high-speed

networks, enabling enterprises to process and manage vast amounts of data with ease. Decoil will also build and fine-tune the Large Language Models (LLMs) that power the platform, ensuring the highest levels of data security and seamless access to information. By applying the latest AI technologies specifically tailored for enterprise use, the solution will provide a trusted environment for managing organizational knowledge. This partnership underscores Decoil's growing role as a homegrown innovator in Oman's AI ecosystem, while reinforcing Omantel's commitment to artificial intelligence and innovation as a key driver of the Sultanate's digital economy. It also highlights the vital role of Omantel Innovation Labs in turning ambitious ideas into scalable solutions that empower enterprises and build national champions capable of delivering long-term economic and technological impact. Through its programs, Omantel Innovation Labs provides expert mentorship, strategic networking opportunities, and essential resources to strengthen Oman's startup ecosystem, while also supporting investments through its joint fund with Future Fund Oman. Omantel has succeeded, through the integration of its operations, processes, and extensive expertise in the field of communications and digital technology, in establishing its position as a leading telecommunications company within the Sultanate of Oman and beyond. The company's innovative approaches have contributed to providing state-of-the-art solutions to different consumer and business sectors. The company aims to deliver an unparalleled, exceptional experience to its customers and strives to always exceed their expectations. To achieve the objectives of Oman Vision 2040, Omantel invests in emerging technologies and provides cutting-edge ICT solutions, such as cloud solutions, AI, Smart solutions, cybersecurity, and much more, in addition to harnessing its technological capabilities to enhance innovation and leadership in new and advanced technologies.

Zain Group Data Office and Zaintech's Regional Leadership Iin Data and AI Modernization Recognized at Cloudera's Data Impact Awards

Zain Group's Data Office, in collaboration with ZainTECH, has been awarded the Hybrid & Infrastructure Modernization Award at Cloudera's EVOLVE25 Data Impact Awards in Dubai. This recognition celebrates Zain Group's regional leadership and commitment to building a modern, scalable, and intelligent data ecosystem across its operations. The Cloudera Data Impact Awards celebrate the remarkable achievements and groundbreaking stories of customers who are driving meaningful change through data. The award highlights Zain Group's successful transformation toward a modernized hybrid data infrastructure, powered by Cloudera. Through this transformation, Zain Group has achieved a unified, secure, and flexible environment that bridges on-premise and cloud systems — enabling faster innovation, optimized costs, and seamless data access across its seven operating companies.

Key benefits of the modernization include:

- Agility and scalability: Empowering teams to manage and analyze data efficiently across multiple environments.
- Improved data governance and security: Ensuring data privacy, consistency, and compliance across all business units.
- Enhanced performance and cost efficiency: Leveraging hybrid cloud flexibility to optimize infrastructure usage.
- Accelerated innovation: Enabling advanced analytics and AI-driven insights that support smarter business decisions.

Mohammed Al Murshed, Chief Technology Officer of Zain Group commented, "This award reflects Zain Group's ongoing journey toward digital and data excellence. Enterprise data has become one of the most valuable assets within organizations, and the ability to organize and store it, secure it, and gain actional insights from it, is a critical success factor. By modernizing our hybrid infrastructure with Cloudera, together with ZainTECH and Zain operating companies, we are building a stronger foundation for innovation, security, and growth."

Sergio Gago Huerta, Chief Technology Officer at Cloudera said, "In the era of AI-driven innovation, we are delighted to recognize Zain's meaningful change through data. The future belongs to those who can act on all their data securely, responsibly, and in real time. Zain has not only successfully transformed its environment but is leading the way with innovation."

Zain Data Office is a central function within Zain that focuses on managing and leveraging the company's data assets to drive innovation, enhance decision-making, and ensure compliance with data regulations. It aims to standardize data management, promote a data-driven culture, and enable advanced analytics and AI strategies to benefit the business and its customers.

Key functions and benefits of the Zain Data Office

- Improved Data Governance and Compliance - data is managed in line with regulatory requirements and internal policies, thus reducing risks associated with data privacy, security breaches, and legal penalties.
- Enhanced Data Quality: setting standards for data accuracy, consistency, and completeness to make more informed and strategic data-driven decisions to optimize network performance, understand customer behavior, and marketing strategies.
- Efficient Data Utilization: A centralized data office enables cross-functional teams to access the right data efficiently, eliminates data silos and promotes collaboration between marketing, customer service, and network operations departments.
- Innovation and Competitive Edge: Leveraging advanced analytics, AI, and machine learning, the data office can identify new business opportunities, such as offering personalized customer services or predictive maintenance for network equipment.
- Better Customer Experience: By analyzing customer data and feedback, helps tailor services to individual needs thus improving customer satisfaction and retention.
- Support for Business Agility: With centralized data governance and streamlined data pipelines, the data office enables faster access to real-time data supporting quick decision-making, responding to market trends and customer demands more efficiently and stay ahead of competitors.

Zain Group's Data Office continues to lead the company's vision of becoming a data-driven organization, using modern infrastructure and technology to unlock value, efficiency, and intelligence across the business.

Zain Group's MSCI Rating for ESG Upgraded to 'A'

Zain Group has attained a significant improvement in its Morgan Stanley Capital International (MSCI) rating in ESG (Environmental, Social, and Governance), which was upgraded from 'BBB' to 'A' as of September 2025. This milestone underscores Zain's unwavering commitment to strengthening corporate governance frameworks, upholding the highest standards of transparency, proactively complying with regulatory requirements, and adopting global best practices in disclosure and risk management. This commitment helps Zain mitigate risks and facilitates an effective Board oversight over the company's executive management by promoting strong internal controls to improve integrity of financials and establishing a culture of compliance. The Group recently intensified its efforts to build a flexible and sustainable operating model, reinforcing its leadership in guiding the region toward a future where technological advancement and corporate responsibility are closely aligned. Zain's focus on accountability, transparency, and ethical practices further cements its standing as a leading force in the ICT sector, known for generating sustainable value. Zain's latest ESG rating highlights its ongoing advancement in data privacy and security initiatives. The Group has launched several oversight mechanisms and initiatives to safeguard data and manage risks, demonstrated by recent ISO certifications across multiple business units. The Group continues to enhance data security to mitigate risks while handling sensitive data—particularly in markets with tightening privacy laws, such as Kuwait. Furthermore, the Group has enhanced its corporate governance structure by clarifying responsibilities and refining board oversight mechanisms. The MSCI upgrade also reflects Zain's commitment to ethical conduct, responsible corporate behavior, and the adoption of best-in-class labor management practices, such as executive training programs and employee engagement initiatives. Notably, Zain achieved a perfect 10/10 in the environmental category reflecting its progress on its region-wide 2050 Net Zero Emissions targets. Zain Vice Chairman & Group CEO, Bader Al-Kharafi stated: "Zain's transformative '4WARD-Progress with Purpose' strategy is driving the company's sustainability, corporate governance and ethical leadership agenda to new heights. Integrating ESG principles at the core of our business strategy is essential for achieving true industry leadership." He added; "This upgrade on the MSCI ESG Index reaffirms the success of the company's focus on innovation and responsibility, powered by a resilient, sustainable and data powered ecosystem built on transparency and adherence to the highest global standards. By reinforcing our oversight and control frameworks, we have fostered a supportive work environment that drives sustainable growth and long-term value for all stakeholders" "ESG is not just about risk management—it offers strategic vision that empowers us to meet future challenges with confidence and resilience. We are building a collaborative culture that champions innovation and expands strategic partnerships for greater synergy and shared success. Responsible governance is essential to address the challenges emerging from rapid technological advancement and artificial intelligence." Al-Kharafi emphasized Zain's commitment to leading regional transformation through the development of advanced digital infrastructure, the ethical and sustainable application of AI and technology, and the launch of breakthrough initiatives supporting responsible innovation, all while ensuring business continuity and community well-being. Zain's sustained progress on the MSCI ESG Index reinforces its status as a catalyst for sustainability and responsible governance. The recent upgrade reflects Zain's alignment with evolving ESG regulations across its operational markets and its dedication to world-class transparency in reporting. The Group's leadership in climate action, governance reforms, effective environmental policies, and major strides in data privacy remain evident, even amid geopolitical challenges. Zain's innovative responses and continuous improvement reinforce its position as a driver of long-term sustainable prosperity for the communities it serves. As the business landscape evolves, Zain continues to set the benchmark for governance and sustainability. Its latest climb on the global MSCI ESG Index, particularly for data privacy and protection, underscores its commitment to a data-driven corporate culture grounded in precision and informed decision-making. Recognizing that robust data governance is now a regulatory necessity, Zain established the "ZAIN DATA OFFICE" as a foundational pillar for high-quality information, enabling compliance with data protection and cloud computing laws. This office enhances Zain's resilience against data threats

and regulatory constraints, strengthening its adaptability to global information management requirements. Reinforcing its environmental objectives, Zain remains at the forefront of global efforts to combat climate change, consistently adopting nature-based, sustainable solutions that position it as a regional leader in environmental transformation. On the labor rights front, Zain's policies embed human rights principles across human resources and codes of conduct, with special emphasis on anti-discrimination and employee treatments. Zain's sustainability policies reflect a comprehensive vision for a more equitable and prosperous future, founded on strategic partnerships that drive economic growth and community well-being. The renowned MSCI ESG Ratings methodology evaluates companies on their management of material ESG risks and opportunities including climate change, human capital, and corporate governance, with a focus on policies, performance metrics, and controversies. Ratings are industry-relative and range from 'AAA' to 'CCC,' with scores determined by a company's exposure to ESG risks and the effectiveness of its management strategies.

AT&T Ranks #1 in Customer Satisfaction for Small Business Wireless Service

AT&T has once again set the standard for wireless excellence, earning the rank of #1 for Customer Satisfaction in Small Business Wireless Service in the J.D. Power 2025 U.S. Business Wireless Satisfaction Study. We didn't just edge out the competition when it comes to small businesses; we decisively outperformed every major provider in the country. Small businesses across America made it clear: when it comes to reliable connectivity, they trust AT&T.

Setting the Standard for Small Business Connectivity

AT&T's 5G network reaches more than 320 million people in more than 27,000 cities and towns nationwide. From Fortune 10 boardrooms to Main Street storefronts, businesses of every size rely on AT&T's industry-leading speed and performance to stay connected and be successful in today's fast-paced marketplace. "Small business customers trust AT&T to deliver the fast, reliable, secure connectivity they depend on—and we take that responsibility to heart," Melissa Arnoldi, executive vice president and general manager, AT&T Business. "We're honored to be recognized by our small business customers as #1 in customer satisfaction for wireless service. We know connectivity is essential to success in business, and we're committed to delivering the capability, flexibility and outstanding service that small business customers deserve."

Innovations Driving Small Business Success

AT&T delivers innovative products for business connectivity with a suite of solutions designed to simplify and enhance how businesses operate. At the heart of these innovations is our wireless network, which outperforms T-Mobile in speed, reliability and overall network performance.2

Our recent innovations include:

5G Standalone Network: Our nationwide 5G Standalone (SA) network delivers even faster speeds, lower latency, and enhanced reliability for small businesses. Built on a fully independent 5G core, this architecture enables advanced applications and seamless connectivity for next-generation business needs.

Integrated Gateway: Our integrated gateway for AT&T Business Fiber customers combines the power of our nationwide 5G network

with our robust fiber infrastructure. The Gateway provides peace of mind and reduces potential interruption of service by giving customers automatic failover to AT&T's fast wireless network in a single-box solution in the rare case of an internet or fiber outage.3

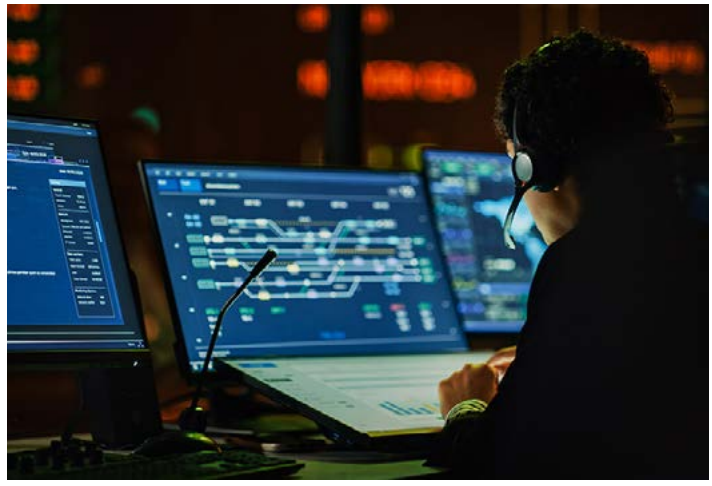
AT&T Turbo for Business: We make it simple for our business customers to access prioritized data treatment with AT&T Turbo for Business. This service gives applications on mobile business devices the edge they need by offering the highest data priority treatment commercially available on AT&T's wireless network, especially during peak usage times.

AT&T Business Fiber: Our fiber network provides high-speed internet for small businesses at their physical locations, offering reliable fiber coverage with speeds up to 5Gbps.4 Designed for performance and dependability, it empowers businesses to run bandwidth-intensive applications, support cloud-based operations, and stay connected with confidence.

"AT&T's top ranking in the J.D. Power study is more than an honor; it pushes us to keep investing, innovating and delivering wireless solutions that help America's small businesses grow," said John Blinkiewicz, vice president of mobility products, AT&T Business. "With our 5G and fiber networks, the future of business connectivity is here, and it is more reliable than ever."

AT&T Recognized as a Leader in Global IoT Connectivity Rankings Due to Breakthrough Innovations

AT&T celebrates year-over-year advancements in IoT connectivity, as evidenced by the latest Communications Service Provider (CSP) IoT Peer Benchmarking Report 2025 by Transforma Insights. The report places AT&T as a top-ranked cellular connectivity provider in the global IoT space. According to the findings, AT&T's rise is attributed to the introduction of several capabilities, including Global SIM Advanced, IoT Console Single Pane of Glass, and AT&T Connection Manager. These innovations strengthened AT&T's reputation for providing enhanced connectivity and management tools for businesses worldwide. "We are energized to see our efforts for our customers recognized in the latest Transforma Insights report," said Cameron Coursey, VP of Connected Solutions at AT&T. "Our commitment to innovation and customer-centric solutions has driven us to develop cutting-edge technologies that meet the evolving needs of our clients." Unveiled earlier this year, Global SIM Advanced (GSA) is an innovative multi-profile eSIM solution that comes with built-in automation rules to provide automatic switching capabilities between select local networks – without the need for physical SIM card replacements. This solution helps enhance the customer experience and ensures that devices remain consistently connected and productive, no matter their location. In late 2024, we introduced a cloud-based platform that unifies management and monitoring of IoT, satellite, and edge endpoints across over 250 eligible global carriers via 1,000+ APIs. In doing this, we are providing a single, secure view with near real-time usage, carrier-grade security, and granular user permissions. By normalizing SIM and provisioning workflows across disparate CMPs, enterprises reduce operational complexity and costs, optimize spend with configurable reporting, and scale global deployments through either AT&T-managed services or self-service. AT&T's commitment to innovation doesn't stop here. As we head into the new year, we'll continue to listen to what businesses need most in IoT and introduce new capabilities (like AT&T Connection Manager) to meet those needs head-on.

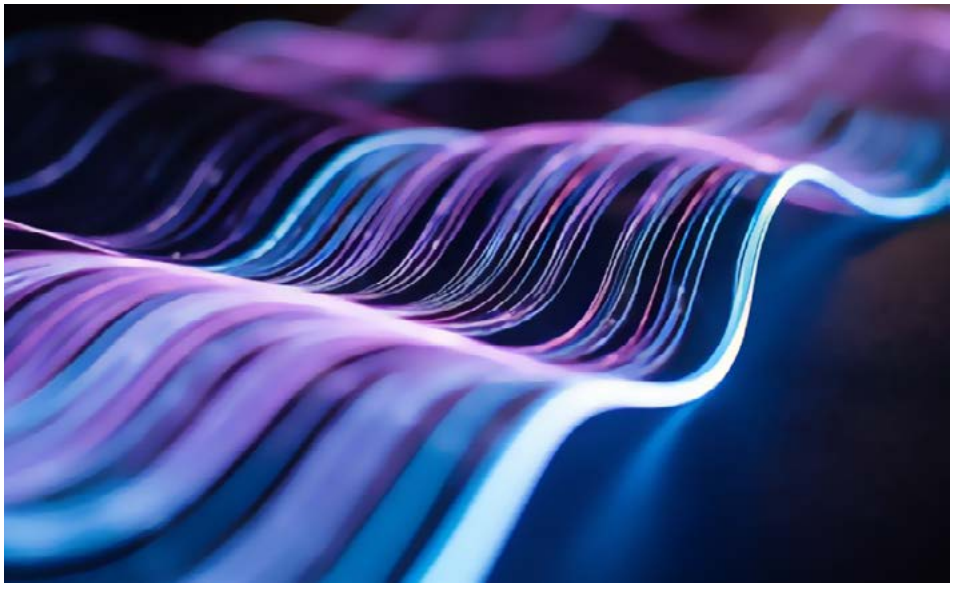


AT&T Power Boosts 5G Footprint, FWA Wit

AT&T rolled out the 3.45GHz spectrum it bought from EchoStar across nearly 23,000 cell sites, which boosted its 5G download speeds by up to 80 per cent across its contiguous US footprint. The operator claims the new spectrum is unlocking "substantial increases in speed and capacity for customers in more than 5,300 cities". AT&T stated its fixed wireless access service, Internet Air, saw a 55 per cent bump in download speed thanks to the new spectrum. During a Q3 earnings call in October, CEO John Stankey said AT&T got an early jump on using EchoStar's 3.45GHz spectrum through a short-term spectrum manager lease. The $23 billion EchoStar and AT&T deal is expected to close in mid-2026, pending regulatory approval. The operator is also counting on the spectrum to boost its convergence strategy its home internet and 5G wireless services. AT&T COO Jeff McElfresh stated the new spectrum "gives us the runway to expand availability of AT&T Internet Air for consumers and businesses and add even more download speed to our 5G service". AT&T stated its subscribers can expect more capacity for streaming, gaming and AI-powered apps. The upgrade also improves 5G service for first responders on FirstNet Authority.

AT&T Boosts 5G Capacity Nationwide with New Spectrum

AT&T isn't just turning on new spectrum. We've hit the 5G accelerator and deployed mid-band (3.45 GHz) spectrum from EchoStar to nearly 23,000 cell sites in a matter of a few weeks, which is record fast. This new spectrum makes America's best overall network3 even better by unlocking substantial increases in speed and capacity for customers in more than 5,300 cities across 48 states2. By accelerating and expanding the Company's opportunity to offer advanced connectivity across the country, AT&T expects this transaction to support strong and sustained growth in its high-value base of converged customers that subscribe to both its home internet and 5G wireless services. In addition, AT&T expects to achieve long-term operating efficiencies as the acquisition of these licenses will reduce the need to boost network capacity through the capital-intensive construction of additional cell sites. With this spectrum now integrated into what was already the most reliable3 and largest wireless network in North America4, customers are starting to see significant improvements in download speeds on upgraded spectrum bands. In fact, customers may see download speeds up to 80 percent faster for mobility and 55 percent for AT&T Internet Air.



AT&T Pushes SA 5G Nationwide to Millions

AT&T deployed standalone (SA) 5G across the US to millions of customers after initially targeting a launch in 2020 before a limited commercial roll out two years later. Rival T-Mobile US launched its SA 5G network in 2020 using its low-band 600MHz spectrum, but in a blog post (8 October) AT&T's Yigal Elbaz, SVP and network CTO, stated "it's often not about who's first or fastest, it's about the network you can count on" regarding connectivity. Verizon started its transition to SA 5G in 2020 in 2020 after conducting user trials and initial testing in 2021. Last year Verizon executives stated its network roadmap involved preparing new SA 5G products and services. In a post on LinkedIn last month, Dell'Oro Group research director Dave Bolan discovered Verizon is employing SA 5G in California using 3700MHz and 850MHz bands. With the nationwide launch, Elbaz stated select services on its network are using SA 5G and noted the operator has millions of customers on the network. He explained AT&T will expand availability to more customers "as device support and provisioning allow". In July, AT&T achieved nationwide coverage of its 5G reduced capability (RedCap) network by using its SA 5G network. "The new Apple Watch Series 11, Apple Watch Ultra 3, and Apple Watch SE 3 are all available on our nationwide 5G RedCap network and customers can look forward to a growing portfolio of devices," Elbaz said. A representative for AT&T told Mobile World Live "customers across consumer, AT&T Internet Air, IoT and business enterprise segments are already benefiting from the enhanced capabilities" of its SA 5G platform. The mobile operator is in the process of migrating all its services to the SA 5G network, according to the representative. AT&T has not said which vendors it is working with for its SA 5G network, but it did strike a $15 billion deal with Ericsson in 2023 to develop open RAN. The representative told MWL It is working with multiple vendors on SA 5G. During MCW25, the GSMA predicted SA 5G will drive 70 per cent of all enterprise revenue expansion until 2030, representing a $127 billion opportunity for the industry.

Cisco Sets Benchmark with Industry's Most Scalable, Efficient 51.2T Routing Systems for Distributed AI Workloads

Cisco unveiled the Cisco 8223, the industry's most optimized routing system for efficiently and securely connecting data centers and powering the next generation of artificial intelligence (AI) workloads. As AI adoption accelerates, data centers face soaring demand, rising power constraints, and evolving security threats. The Cisco 8223 rises to the challenge as the only 51.2 terabits per second (Tbps) Ethernet fixed router built for the intense traffic of AI workloads between data centers. Cisco also announced its latest Silicon One innovation – the P200 chip – which sits at the core of the 8223. Together, these innovations empower organizations to shatter bottlenecks and future-proof their infrastructure for the AI era. "AI compute is outgrowing the capacity of even the largest data center, driving the need for reliable, secure connection of data centers hundreds of miles apart," said Martin Lund, EVP, Cisco's Common Hardware Group. "With the Cisco 8223, powered by the new Cisco Silicon One P200, we're delivering the massive bandwidth, scale and security needed for distributed data center architectures." In many of the world's data centers, AI workloads are stretching power and space limitations. Hyperscalers can't scale-up (add more capacity into each individual system) or scale-out (connect multiple systems within a data center) any further. This dynamic put increasing demand on data center interconnects, as the industry must "scale-across" by distributing AI workloads across multiple data centers. Without addressing the connection points between data centers, organizations could face performance challenges, capacity bottlenecks and suboptimal processing that wastes time, power and money. The Cisco 8223 system gives organizations the flexibility and programmability necessary to build these networks, with deep buffering to provide the cross-site security and reliability necessary for crucial workloads.

Power Efficient. Scalable. Programmable. Secure.

Building a future-ready backbone AI network today is essential – one that can meet the power consumption challenges while remaining scalable, flexible and secure. The Cisco 8223 provides customers the capacity to handle surging workloads, the necessary flexibility with fully programmability, and the power efficiency to directly address power consumption challenges.

The 8223 is uniquely:

- Power Efficient: The 8223 is the most power efficient routing system for scale-across networking. It is a deep-buffer routing solution optimized for fixed deployments that offers switch-like power efficiency, directly addressing the high energy demands of AI workloads. As a 3RU system, it is the most space efficient system of its kind. As AI clusters continue to 'scale-across,' power and space efficiency will only grow in importance.
- Scalable without Compromise: The 8223 offers industry-leading bandwidth and the highest density of any fixed routing system in the industry. The only fixed routing system featuring 64 ports of 800G, the 8223 offers unmatched routing performance capable of processing over 20 billion packets per second and scaling up to 3 Exabits per second. It also features 800G coherent optics support, enabling data center interconnect and metro applications reaching up to 1000km. With the P200's deep buffering capabilities, the new routing systems can absorb massive traffic surges from AI training, maintaining performance and preventing network slowdowns.

- Intelligent and Adaptable: The 8223 can intelligently adapt to real-time network conditions. With the smart and programmable P200 silicon, it can support new, emerging network protocols and standards without requiring costly hardware upgrades. Networks can remain agile while preventing performance bottlenecks and accelerating the adoption of new features as AI traffic continues to evolve.
- Secure: The 8223 offers protection at all levels – across hardware, software and entire networks. With features like line-rate encryption using post-quantum resilient algorithms, integrated security safeguards and continuous monitoring tools, the 8223 can safeguard against emerging threats. Seamless integration into Cisco's observability platforms gives customers granular insights into network performance to help identify and resolve issues quickly, ensuring AI data traffic is secure and reliable.

Flexibility – An AI 'Must Have'

The demands of AI networking aren't simply growing, but are also constantly changing and evolving. Organizations demand infrastructure that is agile enough to change as business requirements do, and are seeking flexibility in deployment models so they can build networks for their exact needs. The Cisco 8223 will initially be available for open-source SONiC deployments, with IOS XR on the horizon. In addition to its availability in the fixed 8223 system, the P200 silicon itself will be deployable in modular platforms and disaggregated chassis, offering customers architectural consistency for any size network. The Cisco Nexus portfolio will also support systems running NX-OS based on the P200 in the near future. Cisco is delivering the agility and operational flexibility required for today's AI infrastructure.

Cisco Silicon One: The Industry's Most Scalable and Programmable Unified Networking Architecture

Cisco Silicon One is a complete portfolio of networking devices across AI, hyperscaler, data center, enterprise and service provider use cases. Introduced in 2019, Cisco Silicon One is playing critical roles in major networks around the world.

OECD-Cisco Research Finds Stark Geographical and Generational Divides in AI Uptake and Digital Well-Being

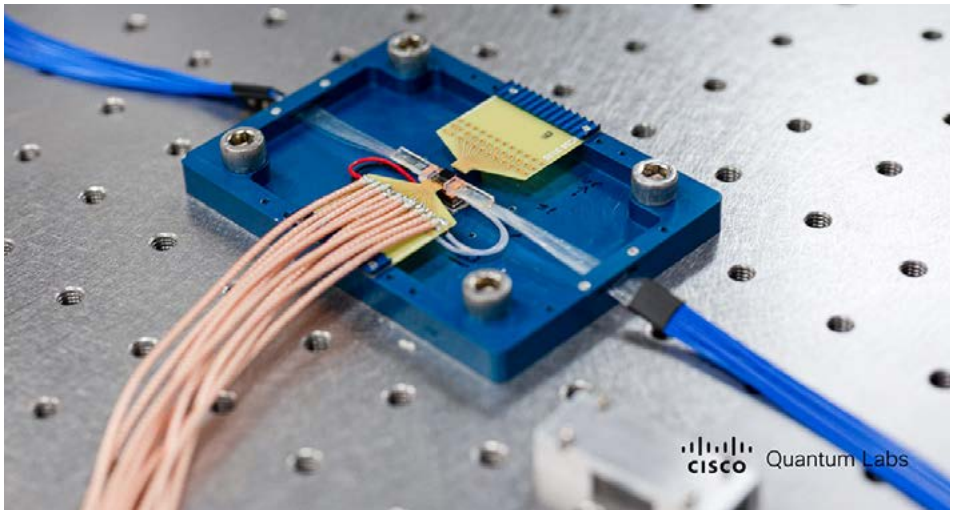
Generative AI is moving rapidly from novelty to habit. But adoption rates may not tell the full story. Cisco, the worldwide leader in networking and security, partnered with the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) on the Digital Well-being Hub to study the relationship between technology's risks and benefits, and how AI is impacting people's lives. New data from the Hub reveals that, beneath the headlines of youthful enthusiasm for AI, geographic and generational divides are emerging, shaping who benefits from AI, who bears the risks, and how digital life can affect well-being. This research provides Cisco's Digital Impact Office with essential insights that can support its aim to connect millions of people to the digital economy, help close the digital divide, and build a global learning culture through initiatives like Cisco Networking Academy and Country Digital Acceleration programs. According to the current research, young adults, globally, are voracious consumers of digital content, with under-35s showing the highest use of social media, online devices and active use of GenAI. But the real standouts are people in emerging economies, particularly India, Brazil, Mexico, and South Africa. They lead AI adoption globally with the highest usage rates, greatest trust levels, and most active engagement in AI training. In contrast, those surveyed in European countries show less trust and more uncertainty around the use of AI. This marks a departure from historical trends where emerging economies are typically slower to access and use new technologies.

However, these same populations, in India, Brazil, Mexico, and South Africa, report the highest recreational screen time, greatest reliance on digital-only socializing, and the most pronounced emotional highs and lows from tech use, when compared to those surveyed in other countries. The research also shows that, globally, more than five hours of daily recreational screen time is associated with decreased well-being and lower life satisfaction. While correlation is not causation, it's clear we need to focus on digital well-being so advances in technology don't come at the cost of health and happiness. "Empowering emerging economies with AI skills is not just about technology, it's about unlocking the potential of every individual to shape their future. With the rapid integration of AI into our daily lives and workplaces, we must ensure that these tools are designed responsibly, with transparency, fairness, and privacy at their core. AI's greatest potential can be realized if it enhances well-being, by streamlining tasks, improving collaboration, and creating opportunities for growth and learning. When technology, people, and purpose come together, we create the conditions for resilient, healthy, and thriving communities everywhere," said Guy Diedrich, Senior Vice President and Global Innovation Officer, Cisco. Generational splits are equally stark, tracking existing trends in digitalization. Younger adults worldwide report that most or all of their social interaction takes place online and they express higher confidence in AI's usefulness. More than 50% of under-35s surveyed actively use AI, more than 75% say it is useful, and almost half of 26 to 35-year-olds have completed some training.

In contrast, adults over 45 are less likely to view AI as useful, and more than half do not use it at all. Among over-55s surveyed, many say they "don't know" if they trust AI, suggesting their uncertainty may be driven by a lack of familiarity rather than outright rejection. This familiarity gap also mirrors differences in expectations for AI's impact on jobs, with under-35s and those in emerging economies anticipating the highest impact.

Cisco and IBM Announce Plans to Build a Network of Large-Scale, Fault-Tolerant Quantum Computers

Cisco and IBM and announced an intention to collaborate on the groundwork for networked distributed quantum computing, to be realized as soon as the early 2030s. By combining IBM's leadership in building useful quantum computers with Cisco's quantum networking innovations, the companies plan to explore how to scale large-scale, fault-tolerant quantum computers beyond IBM's ambitious roadmap. Additionally, they will work to solve fundamental challenges towards a quantum computing internet. Within five years, IBM and Cisco will aim to demonstrate the first proof-of-concept for a network that combines individual, large-scale, fault-tolerant quantum computers, enabling them to work together to run computations over tens to hundreds of thousands of qubits. This network would allow problems to be run with potentially trillions of quantum gates, the fundamental entangling operations required for transformative quantum applications such as massive optimization problems, or the design of complex materials and medicines. "At IBM, our roadmap includes plans to deliver large-scale, fault-tolerant quantum computers before the end of the decade," said Jay Gambetta, Director of IBM Research and IBM Fellow. "By working with Cisco to explore how to link multiple quantum computers like these together into a distributed network, we will pursue how to further scale quantum's computational power. And as we build the future of compute, our vision will push the frontiers of what quantum computers can do within a larger high-performance computing architecture." "Getting quantum computing to useful scale is not just about building bigger individual machines, it is also about connecting them together," said Vijoy Pandey, GM/SVP at Outshift by Cisco. "IBM is building quantum computers with aggressive roadmaps for scale-up, and we are bringing quantum networking that enables scale-out. Together, we are solving this as a complete system problem, including the hardware to connect quantum computers, the software to run computations across them, and the networking intelligence that makes them work." IBM and Cisco intend to explore the development of quantum hardware and software that could physically link many large-scale, fault-tolerant quantum computers together to form networked distributed quantum computing.



China Mobile Activates 2Africa Submarine Cable Eastern Segment Resources Ushering in High-Capacity Connectivity for Africa and Global Partners

China Mobile hosted a landmark event in Nairobi, Kenya, to mark the activation of the 2Africa submarine cable eastern segments resources – spanning from South Africa-Kenya-Djibouti, as well as from Marseille to Egypt – and to unveil its AI+ Cloud-network Convergence Industry Solutions. Under the theme "Connect, Innovate, Ignite: Empowering Africa's Digital Future Together," the event showcased next-generation infrastructure and intelligent connectivity platforms designed to accelerate digital transformation for African carriers and enterprises. H.E. Guo Haiyan, Ambassador of the People's Republic of China to the Republic of Kenya; Hon. William Kabogo Gitau, Cabinet Secretary for Information, Communications and the Digital Economy of Kenya; and Li Huidi, Executive Vice President of China Mobile attended and delivered addresses. Ambassador Guo Haiyan highlighted that digital cooperation is becoming a key driver of collaboration between China and Africa. The successful activation of the 2Africa submarine cable eastern segment and the launch of China Mobile's AI+ Cloud-network Convergence Industry Solutions vividly illustrate the results of China–Africa digital collaboration. China has always regarded Kenya as a vital partner in the journey toward digital transformation and will continue to share Chinese expertise and Chinese solutions to propel the continent's digital economy forward. Looking ahead, she expressed confidence that China and Kenya will further deepen and broaden digital cooperation to jointly build an open, inclusive, and digital governance ecosystem that empowers shared growth and lasting prosperity. Hon. William Kabogo Gitau emphasized that the 2Africa project

is a landmark achievement of China-Africa collaboration. The official activation of the eastern segment will significantly boost international communications capacity across East Africa and expand digital pathways for cooperation between China and Africa. This cable does more than transmit data—it connects Africa to the future of the world. Mr. Li Huidi, Executive Vice President of China Mobile, stated that digital technologies led by AI and 5G are becoming key drivers of economic transformation across Africa. As the East Africa's digital hub, Kenya has released the "Kenya Artificial Intelligence Strategy 2025-2030" to anchor computing infrastructure and data governance through top-level design. Embracing cross-border digital cooperation with openness, Kenya's approach sets a benchmark for Africa's digital transformation. Over the past decade, China Mobile has successfully transformed strategically from a mobile operator to a full-service integrated service provider. We have expanded across four market sectors: Consumer, Home, Business, and New Markets, collectively referred to as CHBN. China Mobile has deepened its commitment to pioneering breakthroughs in cutting-edge fields represented by 'BASIC6' (Big Data, AI, Security, Integration Platform, Computing Power Network, and 6G).

Eutelsat and MBC GROUP Extend Longstanding Partnership for Broadcast Services at 7/8° West Orbital Position

Eutelsat announced the renewal of its long-standing partnership with MBC GROUP, the largest media network in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA). Under this extended agreement, MBC GROUP will continue to rely on Eutelsat's 7/8° West video neighborhood, the region's leading orbital position, for the distribution of its diverse portfolio of premium entertainment, news, and cultural channels to millions of households across MENA. Reaching 95% of satellite homes across the region, the 7/8° West video neighborhood offers exceptional coverage and signal quality. For over a decade, Eutelsat and MBC GROUP have worked closely to ensure the reliable delivery of high-quality broadcast services. This renewed partnership reaffirms the enduring strength of their collaboration and underscores the strategic importance of the 7/8° West position, home to the largest concentration of free-to-air (FTA) and pay-TV channels in the region. Raymond Estphan Rahme, RVP MENA Sales Eutelsat's Video Business Unit said, "We are proud to continue our strong partnership with MBC GROUP. This renewal reflects the trust they place in Eutelsat's capabilities to deliver reliable satellite broadcasting services over 7/8° West, enabling MBC to reach audiences with premium content across the region." Joe Igoe, Chief Operating Officer at MBC GROUP added: "Our renewed partnership with Eutelsat reflects MBC GROUP's continued commitment to delivering world-class entertainment and news to audiences across the Middle East and North Africa. The 7/8° West position remains central to our broadcast strategy, ensuring the highest quality and reliability for millions of households who trust MBC every day."

Eutelsat Appoints New Chief Financial Officer

Eutelsat announces the appointment of Sébastien Rouge as its new Chief Financial Officer and member of the Group's Executive Committee under the leadership of Chief Executive Officer Jean-François Fallacher. This appointment will be effective 1st February 2026. Sébastien brings over three decades of international financial leadership experience across a range of industrial and technology-driven sectors where performance is built through a mix of execution focus and long-term vision. His appointment reflects Eutelsat's commitment to financial resilience, operational excellence and strategic growth. Sébastien joins Eutelsat from Imerys, where as CFO, he has played a pivotal role in strengthening the Group's financial performance and digital transformation. Prior to that he occupied key roles in other leading industrial groups, notably as CFO of Soitec, a global leader in semiconductor materials, following a successful career at the Alstom Group, where he held several senior finance roles including Senior Vice President Finance at Alstom Power, before moving to the GE Group, where served variously as CEO of the GE-Alstom Nuclear Systems joint-venture, and CFO of Steam Power Systems within GE Power. A graduate of EDHEC Business School, Sebastien is a French national. Sébastien Rouge succeeds Christophe Caudrelier, who will be stepping down as Chief Financial Officer after three years of dedicated service. Christophe will work closely with Sébastien to ensure a smooth and effective transition, reflecting his continued commitment to the Group during this important phase.

Eutelsat and du Renew Collaboration to Drive Broadcast Excellence Across MENA Region

Eutelsat and du, announced the renewal of their long-standing partnership to deliver high-quality broadcasting services across the Middle East and North Africa (MENA). du, a leading telecom and digital services provider operates one of the most advanced teleports in the Middle East, delivering a wide array of communication and media services that empower broadcasters, enterprises, and government entities. The renewed multi-year agreement reinforces du's position as a strategic partner of Eutelsat in the region, supporting a wide range of premium television channels that reach millions of viewers via the 7/8° West video neighborhood, the leading orbital position for broadcasting in MENA. Reaching 95% of satellite homes across the region, with the largest exclusive reach, 7/8° West is the preferred choice for audiences thanks to its unparalleled content line-up. Building on a solid foundation of collaboration, the partnership combines du's state-of-the-art teleport and broadcast infrastructure with Eutelsat's satellite capabilities, ensuring reliable signal delivery and operational excellence for broadcasters and media customers. This renewal underscores the shared commitment of Eutelsat and du to enable high-quality media distribution, driving innovation across the regional broadcast industry. Together, the two companies continue to shape the region's broadcast landscape with innovation, performance and reach. Raymond E. Rahme, RVP for MENA Sales, Eutelsat's Video Business Unit said, "Our continued partnership with du reflects the strength of our collaboration and the strategic importance of the 7/8° West position as MENA's premier broadcast hub. du's world-class teleport and operational expertise perfectly complement Eutelsat's satellite infrastructure, ensuring audiences across the region enjoy seamless access to premium content." "Our partnership with Eutelsat has been instrumental in delivering high-quality broadcast services across MENA. By extending this collaboration, we reaffirm our shared commitment to excellence, innovation, and supporting our customers with world-class satellite solutions. Combining du's teleport infrastructure with Eutelsat's satellite coverage allows us to deliver seamless, premium broadcasting to millions of viewers", mentioned Karim Benkirane, Chief Commercial Officer at du.

Eutelsat and MSTelcom Sign Distribution Agreement to Expand LEO Connectivity Services in Angola

Euronext announced a new distribution agreement with MSTelcom, a subsidiary of Sonangol Group and a leading provider of telecommunications services in Angola, to deliver Eutelsat's OneWeb Low Earth Orbit (LEO) connectivity services across key sectors, including oil & gas, maritime and for fixed land operations -- enabling secure and high-performance communications in remote and hard-to-reach locations. Under the agreement, MSTelcom will act as a distributor of Eutelsat's OneWeb services within Angola, bringing LEO connectivity solutions to enterprise, public sector and telecom customers. Eutelsat is the only licensed LEO services operator in Angola and has a well-established presence in the country delivering both broadcast and connectivity services. The agreement leverages Eutelsat's operational footprint, including a ground station and local Point-of-Presence (PoP) in Angola that enable Eutelsat's OneWeb's high-speed, low-latency services in the country and across Central Africa. Philippe Baudrier, VP Africa for Eutelsat, said: "This agreement expands the reach of our LEO services in Angola and strengthens our work supporting the country's connectivity needs. By joining forces with MSTelcom, we are enabling secure, resilient and high-performance connectivity for sectors that are critical to Angola's economic development." Felisberta de Jesus, CEO, MSTelcom, added: "Partnering with Eutelsat enables MSTelecom to provide next-generation connectivity solutions to our customers operating in demanding and remote environments. This agreement strengthens our mission to deliver reliable, high-quality communications that support Angola's industrial growth and digital development."

Eutelsat Launches a €828 Million Reserved Capital Increase, Representing the First Step in Its Comprehensive Financing Strategy

Euronext Board of Directors approved the launch of a €828 million equity raise by way of reserved capital increase at a price per share of €4.00, to be subscribed by the French State, Bharti Space Limited, His Majesty's Government, CMA CGM Participations, and Le Fonds Stratégique de Participations ("FSP") (the "Reserved Capital Increase"), in accordance with the Extraordinary Resolutions voted at the General Shareholders' Meeting held on 30 September 2025. The French State will subscribe for €551 million, Bharti Space Limited for €30 million, the UK Government for €90 million, CMA CGM Participations for €100 million, and FSP for €57 million. Following this Reserved Capital Increase, the French State would hold a stake of 29.65% of the capital and voting rights of the Company, while Bharti Space Limited, UK Government, CMA CGM Participations and FSP would respectively hold 17.88%,

10.89%, 7.46% and 4.99% of the share capital and voting rights of the Company. The settlement of the Reserved Capital Increase is expected in the next few days. Following the completion of the Reserved Capital Increase, Jean-Baptiste Massignon and Jérémie Gué, appointed by the General Shareholders' Meeting of 30 September 2025, will take up their positions within the Board of Directors as directors appointed by the French State. The Board of Directors will subsequently be composed of 12 members. As announced on 19 June 2025 and 10 July 2025, a further €672 million equity raise will be undertaken by way of a rights issue (the "Rights Issue"), for which the investors in the Reserved Capital Increase have committed to take up their full rights. In aggregate, Eutelsat has therefore received irrevocable commitment subscriptions representing in excess of 70% of the contemplated Rights Issue. As previously communicated, subject to market conditions and approval by the AMF of the related Prospectus, Eutelsat intends to execute the contemplated Rights Issue by 2025 year-end. These two capital increases, forming part of a comprehensive financing strategy alongside a dedicated debt refinancing plan, are aimed at enhancing the Company's financial flexibility and supporting investment in its existing Low Earth Orbit (LEO) capabilities and the future IRIS² constellation, while accelerating deleveraging towards its medium-term target of 3x Net debt to EBITDA. Following the Capital Increases and the disposal of the passive ground segment, expected in H2 FY 2025-26, Eutelsat anticipates a Net Debt / Adjusted EBITDA ratio of c.2.5x at year-end FY 2025-26. As result, the Company should be well placed to tap Debt Capital Markets and raise Export Credit Financing in order to fully cover the financing needs of its medium-term plan. Eutelsat confirms its objectives for FY 2025-26[5], targeting revenues in line with, and an adjusted EBITDA margin slightly below, those of FY 2024-25. LEO revenues are expected to grow by 50% year-on-year. Gross capital expenditure in FY 2025-26 is expected in a range of €1.0 to 1.1 billion. Eutelsat's longer-term objectives are also confirmed: Revenues of the four operating verticals between €1.5 and 1.7 billion by the end of FY 2028-29, with LEO revenues significantly outperforming the market. Operating leverage driving a mid-to-high single-digit percentage point improvement in the EBITDA margin, resulting in a margin of at least 60% by FY 2028-29. In the longer term (post FY 2028-29), the B2B connectivity market is expected to pursue its growth at a double-digit rate, mostly driven by LEO market expansion.

Eutelsat and the Ministry of Information of Oman Extend Long-Standing Partnership for National Broadcasting over EUTELSAT 21B

Eutelsat announced the renewal of its partnership with the Ministry of Information of Oman (MOI) for the continued provision of satellite capacity on the EUTELSAT 21B satellite at 21° East. The Ministry of Information will continue to rely on Eutelsat's E21B satellite for the transmission of its broadcast services, ensuring high-quality, reliable delivery of national television and media content across Oman. The renewal extends a collaboration that has spanned many years, reflecting the Ministry's confidence in Eutelsat's ability to provide robust and resilient satellite infrastructure to support the country's media operations. EUTELSAT 21B offers extensive coverage across the Middle East, Africa and Europe, and is a cornerstone satellite for government and professional video services in the region. Its powerful Ku-band capacity enables high-quality video signal contribution, ensuring unparalleled service continuity across the region. This continued cooperation underlines the importance of satellite technology in maintaining a strong national broadcasting ecosystem. Aymeric Genty, President of Eutelsat's Video Business Unit said, "By extending our collaboration with the Ministry of Information of Oman, Eutelsat reinforces its commitment to supporting government and public institutions in the Middle East with secure and high-performance broadcast solutions via our EUTELSAT 21B satellite."

Eutelsat Ordinary and Extraordinary General Meeting Approves All Resolutions Relating to Contemplated Capital Increase and Appointments to the Board of Directors

Eutelsat announces that its General Shareholders' Meeting held on 30th September 2025 approved all of the resolutions submitted for approval.

Ordinary Resolutions

The General Meeting ratified and confirmed the following appointments to the Board of Directors:

1st resolution: Ratification of the appointment of Mr. Michel Combes as Director of the Company.

2nd resolution: Ratification of the appointment of Ms. Lucia Sinapi-Thomas as Director of the Company.

3rd resolution: Ratification of the appointment of Mr. Eric Labaye as Director of the Company.

4th resolution: Appointment of Mr. Jean-Baptiste Massignon as Director of the Company, subject to the satisfaction of conditions precedent.

5th resolution: Appointment of Mr. Jérémie Gué as Director of the Company, subject to the satisfaction of conditions precedent.

Extraordinary Resolutions

The General Meeting approved the following resolutions:

6th and 7th resolutions: Delegation of authority to the Board of Directors to issue ordinary shares in the Company, without preferential subscription rights for existing shareholders, for the benefit of the French State for a total nominal amount of €137,685,395, and waiver of shareholders' preferential subscription rights in favor of the French State.

8th and 9th resolutions: Delegation of authority to the Board of Directors to issue ordinary shares in the Company, without preferential subscription rights for existing shareholders, for the benefit of Bharti Space Limited for a total nominal amount of €7,467,500, and waiver of shareholders' preferential subscription rights in favor of Bharti Space Limited.

10th and 11th resolutions: Delegation of authority to the Board of Directors to issue ordinary shares in the Company, without preferential subscription rights for existing shareholders, for the benefit of the Secretary of State for Science, Innovation and Technology (the "UK Government") for a total nominal amount of €22,537,105, and waiver of shareholders' preferential subscription rights in favor of the UK Government.

12th and 13th resolutions: Delegation of authority to the Board of Directors to issue ordinary shares in the Company, without preferential subscription rights for existing shareholders, for the benefit of CMA CGM Participations for a total nominal amount of €24,955,000, and waiver of shareholders' preferential subscription rights in favor of CMA CGM Participations.

14th and 15th resolutions: Delegation of authority to the Board of Directors to issue ordinary shares in the Company, without preferential subscription rights for existing shareholders, for the benefit of the Fonds Stratégique de Participations for a total nominal amount of €14,355,000, and waiver of shareholders' preferential subscription rights in favor of the Fonds Stratégique de Participations.

16th resolution: Delegation of authority to the Board of Directors to issue ordinary shares in the Company, maintaining shareholders' preferential subscription rights.

17th resolution: Restating of the overall cap on capital increases and the overall cap on debt security issuance provided for in paragraphs 4 and 5 of the 18th resolution of the general shareholders' meeting held on 23 November 2023.

18th resolution: Authorization for the Board of Directors to increase the number of shares to be issued in the event of a capital increase with or without preferential subscription rights, decided pursuant to the 16th resolution of this General Shareholders' Meeting.

19th resolution: Delegation of authority to the Board of Directors to increase the Company's share capital by issuing ordinary shares and/or securities giving immediate and/or future entitlement to the Company's share capital, with waiver of shareholders' preferential subscription rights, reserved for members of a Company or Group savings plan.

20th resolution: Allocation of the deficit "Retained Earnings" account to the reserves' account and share capital reduction resulting from losses, by reducing the nominal value of shares; delegation of powers to the Board of Directors to carry out the share capital reduction.

The 21st resolution (Share capital reduction not resulting from losses, by reducing the nominal value of shares; delegation of powers to the Board of Directors to carry out the share capital reduction) was not submitted to the vote of the shareholders, as expressly contemplated by the Board of Directors' report.

The full results of the votes on each resolution will be made available on the Company's website in accordance with applicable legal and regulatory requirements.

Eutelsat Renews Longstanding Partnership with beIN MEDIA GROUP for DTH Broadcasting Over 7/8° West Orbital Position

Eutelsat announced the renewal of its strategic partnership with beIN MEDIA GROUP ('beIN'), the leading global sports, entertainment and media group, for the continued distribution of its direct-to-home (DTH) services across the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region. Under the new five-year agreement, beIN secures satellite capacity on the EUTELSAT 7 West A and EUTELSAT 8 West B satellites, reinforcing its ability to deliver premium sports and sports news content to millions of households across MENA. 7/8° West reaches 95% of TV homes across MENA and offers the largest exclusive reach. This renewal underscores the orbital position as the leading video neighborhood in the MENA region, chosen by over 66 million TV homes and hosting the region's largest line-up of premium international and regional broadcasters. Aymeric Genty, President of Eutelsat's Video Business Unit said, "We are proud to extend our partnership with beIN MEDIA GROUP, one of the most influential broadcasters in the region. Together, we will continue to deliver world-class sports content to millions of viewers with the highest levels of reliability and quality, highlighting the unrivalled value of the 7/8° West orbital position as the premier broadcast hub in MENA." Israel Esteban, Chief Technology Officer, beIN MEDIA GROUP said, "DTH broadcasting remains the dominant distribution platform across the region, making a strong partnership with Eutelsat essential. This renewal builds on beIN and Eutelsat's successful 7-year collaboration, ensuring that for the next five years, millions of viewers across 24 MENA countries will continue to enjoy the world's most prestigious sports events and beIN SPORTS' unrivalled coverage, delivered with exceptional quality."

Huawei Commercially Verifies World's First Sub-1 GHz Massive MIMO

Huawei has verified its sub-1 GHz (700 MHz, 800 MHz, and 900 MHz) Massive MIMO, the first of its kind, for commercial use. The results highlight a ground-breaking leap in the spectral efficiency of sub-1 GHz bands, and this product's superior performance over conventional low-band 2T2R equipment: five-fold higher downlink capacity, 8 dB better uplink coverage, and four-fold higher uplink speeds. These achievements represent a major step forward in bringing sub-1 GHz Massive MIMO from research to commercial deployment. Huawei's sub-1 GHz Massive MIMO is the first product in the industry to combine extremely large antenna arrays with wideband technology in the prized low-band spectrum. This breakthrough intelligently aggregates fragmented spectrum resources and pushes the limit of low-band spectral efficiency, achieving a five-fold improvement. It also delivers wider and deeper coverage, including a doubled coverage radius for a consistent 20 Mbps uplink experience, which is ideal for mobile AI applications. Furthermore, by supporting the coexistence of GSM, UMTS, LTE, NR, and NB-IoT, this product will facilitate the seamless evolution of all bands toward 5G. To complement these capabilities, it incorporates state-of-the-art materials, architectural designs, and algorithms to address the common challenges of excessive size, width, and weight in sub-1 GHz Massive MIMO equipment. This breakthrough will enable widespread adoption of sub-1 GHz Massive MIMO and drive all bands to Massive MIMO. Fang Xiang, Vice President of Huawei Wireless Network Product Line, said: "Sub-1 GHz Massive MIMO is no longer a concept, but a reality. This commercial verification demonstrates its significant value in enhancing spectral and energy efficiency, network coverage, and uplink speeds while reducing latency. Future widespread deployment of this technology will enable operators to fully unleash the potential of the prized low-band spectrum, create new market spaces for mobile AI applications, add hundreds of billions of new IoT connections, and ultimately enhance user experience everywhere."

Huawei Collaborates with BBI in Building an Intelligent All-Optical Backbone Network to Advance South Africa's National Broadband Strategy

South Africa's national broadband infrastructure company Broadband Infraco (BBI) has partnered with Huawei to build a national intelligent all-optical backbone network. The network directly supports the goals of South Africa's national broadband strategy, SA Connect, and will bring affordable, stable, and high-quality broadband to all people in South Africa. As a state-owned enterprise mandated by the Department of Communications and Digital Technologies (DCDT) to expand South Africa's broadband infrastructure, BBI is implementing the upgrade as part of its Backbone Network Expansion Strategy. The collaboration aims to extend ICT infrastructure nationwide and make connectivity more affordable, closing gaps between urban and rural areas as well as between South Africa and industrialized nations. BBI has utilized Huawei's Optical Cross-Connect (OXC) technology to deliver high-speed, flexible transmission with 800G wavelengths across its network—a leap that will support the vast expansion of broadband access networks envisioned under SA Connect. It also enables massive volumes of data to be transferred between cities or data centers in real time, powering applications in healthcare, education, e-commerce, and e-government, as well as fueling South Africa's digital economy. To date, through its intelligent all-optical backbone and partnerships with local service providers, BBI has connected over 13,000 public Wi-Fi hotspots and more than 2 million homes in rural areas nationwide and regions with underdeveloped network services. The network will also support South Africa's new optical fiber route, which connects Johannesburg to the Kopfontein border, thereby strengthening high-speed cross-border connectivity across the SADC region. The full backbone will span all nine provinces of South Africa and extend to the borders with Botswana, Lesotho, Mozambique, Namibia, Swaziland, and Zimbabwe, providing broad regional access. Gift Zowa, CEO of Broadband Infraco, summarized the mission by saying, "We are bridging the digital divide on two fronts, closing the digital inequality gap at home and narrowing the gap between South Africa and the world's most industrialized nations. We are addressing one of SA Connect's primary goals, the DCDT's flagship broadband connectivity project, to make connectivity inclusive and bring stable, high-capacity broadband to all South African communities and government facilities by 2030." Huawei will continue to collaborate with Broadband Infraco to expand South Africa's national broadband infrastructure, building a connected, intelligent, and prosperous society, where every South African can benefit from a digital future.

Huawei Released Intelligent OTN Solution to Power the Intelligent Era

During the NetworkX 2025 Next-Generation Optical Networking (NGON) Forum, Huawei introduced its groundbreaking Intelligent OTN solution, positioning it as the cornerstone for future-proof optical transport infrastructure. Gavin Gu, President of Optical Transport Network Domain of Huawei, detailed how this innovation addresses the escalating demands of AI-driven digital transformation in his keynote “Intelligent OTN, Intelligent Foundation.” The rapid construction of global AI data centers is injecting unprecedented momentum into the optical transport industry. The technology iteration cycle has accelerated from the past “10 years per generation” to the current “2-3 years per generation.” This shift

drives a steeper decline in the cost-per-bit for network construction. Furthermore, the new collaborative model of real-time "Device-Pipe-Edge-Cloud" interaction in the intelligent era is shifting networks from "one-way" to "interactive," and from "best effort" to "deterministic." Mission-critical AI workloads demand unprecedented network performance. Data Center Interconnection (DCI) requires "six nines" (99.9999%) reliability and terabit-level capacity, while Data Center Access (DCA) needs millisecond-level latency with flexible bandwidth allocation for diverse applications from industrial AI to immersive experiences. To better support DCI and DCA scenarios, Huawei launched the Intelligent OTN solution, focusing on two core directions – "OTN for AI" and "AI for OTN" – with multiple key capabilities. In the "OTN for AI" direction, addressing efficient DCI connectivity needs, the backbone network should upgrade with three key technical capabilities: The wavelength advancing towards 800G and even 3.2T in the future, significantly reducing the cost-per-bit for network construction; network architecture upgrades from C-band ROADM to C+L-band OXC, doubling switching capacity; and achieving zero packet loss transmission between computing nodes via the DC-OTN solution. For the user-side DCA scenario, four key capability upgrades enable the construction of an ultra-low latency metro network: Realizing "1ms to the data center" via mini-OXC devices; 100G to the edge, providing sufficient bandwidth for applications; the fgOTN solution supports fine-grained, hitless bandwidth adjustment starting from 10Mbps; and the enhanced WSON solution reduces service restoration time to within 50 milliseconds, significantly improving network reliability.

Huawei Unveils Vision for Submarine-Terrestrial Synergy, Optical-Intelligent Orchestration

Huawei introduced its vision for Submarine-Terrestrial Synergy, Optical-Intelligent Orchestration. Making its debut at the premiere submarine communications gathering, Submarine Networks World 2025 in Singapore, the company showcased an innovative solution and flagship products designed to enable integration and efficient synergy between submarine and terrestrial networks. Huawei's strategy aims to transcend the traditional siloed approach to submarine and terrestrial networks construction, where resources are isolated and interoperability is limited. By enabling cross-domain visualized management of network resources, cross-domain coordinated scheduling and protection of services, and intelligent O&M, Huawei's approach efficiently delivers communications services with ultra-high bandwidth, high reliability, and agility. Huawei showcased the industry's first DC-oriented 100T submarine-terrestrial integrated platform, the OptiX OSN 9800 K series. Engineered to meet the growing demand for massive cross-domain data transmission, the platform offers:

Integrated architecture: One unified platform for submarine and terrestrial networks.

Ultra-large capacity: Service processing capabilities of 4T per slot, up to 100T+ per chassis, and 96T per fiber

Ultra-high energy efficiency: High integration reduces per-bit power consumption to 0.1 W/Gbit, 65% lower than the industry average.

Ultra-strong intelligence: Supporting intelligent O&M through digital twins, replacing reactive responses with proactive operations and boosting efficiency by 40%.

In addition, Huawei presented its latest 1.6T board designed for submarine SLTE, featuring adjustable rates from 300G to 1.6T and transmission distances up to 11,000 km, further improving the capacity and performance of submarine network.

Gavin Gu, President of Huawei's Optical Transmission Domain, said Huawei plans to build an integrated submarine-terrestrial network architecture featuring ultra-broadband, high reliability, agile and intelligence, so as to enable seamless transmission while significantly enhancing network O&M efficiency and service quality through intelligence. As global digitalization and intelligent transformation accelerate, the world continues to see rising demands for submarine network, as a key part of the global communications network. With 30 years of experience in optical transmission domain and strong innovation capabilities, Huawei is poised to inject fresh momentum into the submarine networks industry.

Deep Integration of 5G-A and AI Driving FWA Business Growth

During GITEX GLOBAL 2025, the SAMENA Council and Huawei co-hosted the Global FWA Evolution Roundtable and the 5th ELITE FWA Club Gathering. Previously, SAMENA emphasized that "FWA is no longer limited to providing basic broadband. Rather, it is a driver of intelligent, high-performance networks that offer faster speeds, greater reliability, and broader coverage and intelligence, enabling operators to meet the increasing demands of consumers, businesses, and governments." This roundtable, themed "Innovating the Future of FWA Through 5G-A and AI," served as an in-depth practical exploration of these directions, and brought together representatives from more than 20 global operators and regulatory agencies to discuss practices and opportunities. At the event, Lu Weidong, Vice President of Huawei's Wireless 5G & LTE TDD Product Line, delivered a keynote speech titled "FWA 3.0: A New Era of All-Domain Home Broadband with Intelligence." During this speech, he unveiled the core architecture and value of the FWA 3.0 solution, analyzed the evolution of home connections, and highlighted the challenges and opportunities for FWA services. Huawei's FWA 3.0 solution emphasizes device-pipe synergy and introduces "FWA Wise" (intelligent experience) and "FWA Wide" (broad coverage)—designs that align seamlessly with SAMENA's core directions in its FWA innovation framework, such as "unleashing FWA potential through 5G-A and AI" and "digital inclusion," effectively addressing operators' pain points regarding coverage boundaries and user retention.

1. FWA Wise: AI is deeply integrated throughout the "terminal-network-service" process to enhance the experience value. Specifically, the terminal side deploys an AI O&M engine for automatic fault diagnosis and remote rectification, reducing O&M costs. On the network side, dynamic QoS scheduling assigns dedicated channels to HD video and cloud gaming. The service side then interworks with the smart home ecosystem to deliver integrated connection and application services, transforming home broadband from a simple pipe into an intelligent service carrier.
2. FWA Wide: The innovative "super CPE + 5G SA networking" combination achieves contiguous ultra-long-distance coverage, enabling it to serve a greater number of remote households than traditional methods. Additionally, multi-frequency-coordinated elastic networks dynamically expand capacity in densely populated areas, addressing peak-hour congestion issues and guaranteeing stable, high-speed connections for every household.

Three Business Model Innovations: From Traffic Monetization to Intelligent Customization

During the roundtable, attendees discussed the ways in which FWA 3.0 can expand business opportunities, and identified monetization paths for operators. Above all, the focus was on unlocking potential in existing markets and exploring new ones. Beyond technological upgrades, the roundtable closely aligned with SAMENA's insight "FWA represents more than just a technology; it's a key enabler of digital transformation, opening new avenues for innovation and growth." Huawei's FWA 3.0 introduces three business model innovations, providing actionable monetization paths to help operators overcome growth challenges:

1. New frequency bands and tariff plans for a new monetization model Elastic networks, leveraging advanced spectrum allocation and multi-frequency coordination, offer VIP users an experience twice as good as that of common users. Additionally, QoS-based and other assurance mechanisms are employed to tailor VIP user experience.
2. Service innovation unlocking new opportunities Huawei's brand-new end-to-end FWA solution, launched at MWC Barcelona 2025, has been successfully deployed in several regions. This solution uses AI to help operators accelerate FWA user growth and enhance end-to-end user services.
3. Ecosystem and solution innovation usher in the future of intelligent business Regulators, operators, and ecosystem partners have formed an alliance to break the closed loop from technology to scenarios and ultimately to business. Additionally, FWA is deeply integrated with AI and URLLC, supporting AI-powered solutions that help operators accelerate user growth and enhance service quality.

Driven by Two Engines, FWA 3.0 Boosts the Smart Home Ecosystem

Lu Weidong concluded the meeting by further clarifying the industry positioning of FWA: "5G-A and AI are the two engines driving FWA's business success. 5G-A ensures wide and fast connections, while AI ensures tailored experiences and business effectiveness. Through these technologies, FWA can help operators rapidly achieve a closed loop, from user growth and experience improvement, all the way to increased revenue. Additionally, FWA contributes to the smart home broadband domain in two key ways: First, it promotes the large-scale deployment of AI applications in home scenarios, making smart homes a reality. Second, it supports new scenarios, like remote office and home healthcare, with high-reliability connections, thus fully unlocking the potential value of networks." With the release and implementation of the FWA 3.0 solution, Huawei will continue to collaborate with SAMENA and global industry partners to practice the industry consensus of "5G-A and AI as dual driving engines" through technological implementation and jointly fulfill the industry vision of "digital inclusion and ecosystem prosperity" — enabling more households to enjoy "smarter, more convenient, and more valuable" connectivity services, helping operators find new growth curves, driving the FWA industry in the Middle East, Central Asia and even globally toward a new stage of high-quality development, and injecting sustained momentum into the "last mile" of the global digital economy.

Microsoft to Invest US$15 Billion in UAE AI Industry

Microsoft has announced a $15 billion investment in the United Arab Emirates to strengthen the nation's artificial intelligence and cloud infrastructure, underscoring its role as a rising global AI hub. The investment—spanning 2023 to 2029—will fund digital infrastructure, R&D, and workforce development programs focused on AI skills and innovation. Between 2023 and 2025, Microsoft allocated $1.5 billion to UAE AI and cloud firm G42, over $4.6 billion for capital expenditure on new data centers, and $1.2 billion in local operational costs. From 2026 to 2029, it plans to inject an additional $7.9 billion, including $5.5 billion for continued infrastructure expansion. Microsoft has also secured export licenses to supply advanced Nvidia A100, H100, and H200 GPUs to power AI models by OpenAI, Anthropic, and other developers through Azure services. These GPUs will fuel next-generation AI workloads across both local and international clients. The move aligns with the UAE's economic diversification and AI leadership goals, supported by U.S. partnerships such as the 5GW UAE–US AI Campus launched in Abu Dhabi in 2025. Microsoft's previous initiatives include the Global Engineering Development Center and the AI for Good Lab in Abu Dhabi, both dedicated to advancing regional talent and research. "People need digital proficiency to fully participate in an AI-driven economy," Microsoft said, emphasizing that skills development remains a cornerstone of its investment to ensure AI benefits are inclusive and sustainable.

Microsoft Forges $9.7B AI Cloud Capacity Deal with IREN

US tech giant Microsoft continued its quest to secure more compute capacity for AI services by striking a $9.7 billion deal with Australia-based data center company IREN. Under the agreement, IREN will provide Microsoft with access to Nvidia's GB300 GPUs over a five-year term. The deal includes a 20 per cent pre-payment by Microsoft. The GPUs will be installed in phases throughout 2026 at IREN's 750MW Childress, Texas campus in conjunction with the delivery of new liquid-cooled data centers, which will collectively support 200MW of critical IT load. Separately, IREN has entered into an agreement with Dell Technologies to purchase the GPUs and additional equipment for $5.8 billion.

Its deal provides Microsoft with additional compute capacity for AI without needing to build new data centers or source additional power. It also gives the tech giant access to Nvidia's advanced chips without purchasing them itself. Last month UK-based AI start-up Nscale expanded a deal with Microsoft to supply the technology giant with 200,000 Nvidia GPUs to scale up infrastructure across Europe and the US.

Nexign Boosts CSP Revenue with TCO-Efficient Solutions for 5G SA and Satellite Connectivity Monetization

Nexign, a leading provider of BSS and digitalization solutions, is driving new monetization opportunities for communications service providers (CSPs) by unveiling cost-efficient, AI-powered products. They help CSPs accelerate business growth in emerging areas such as Low Earth Orbit (LEO) satellite connectivity, 5G Non-Terrestrial Networks (5G NTN), and 5G Standalone (SA) services. With satellite-to-cellphone technology gaining momentum worldwide, 42 countries are already investing in partnerships that promise to open new revenue streams for CSPs. New use cases include extended coverage, IoT connectivity in remote areas, enhanced resilience for critical communications, and connectivity for the aviation and maritime industries. To address this demand, Nexign BSS now enables satellite operators to launch and monetize LEO satellite services based on 5G NTN technology. The solution automates and optimizes business processes, such as customer service, product configuration, and monetization. It can also manage the full lifecycle for satellite terminals: ordering, sales, warranty service, and remote diagnostics. Additionally, Nexign BSS supports geo-dependent rating and charging, country- and region-specific service access policies, and service-level agreements tailored to satellite industry requirements, such as latency, jitter, and availability. The platform's architecture provides satellite operators with the flexibility to deliver services across B2C, B2B, and B2G segments, monetize B2B2C scenarios, including wholesale agreements, for example, for airlines and mobile network operators (MNOs). The rollout of 5G SA networks is accelerating. Today, 173 operators in 70 countries are investing in public deployments, while 77 have already launched or trialed 5G SA services, according to GSA. In the Middle East, 5G SA development is advancing in a strategic manner, led by Gulf countries, such as the UAE and Saudi Arabia. However, despite this growth, CSPs continue to face the challenge of balancing large-scale capital expenditures with network complexity arising from managing hybrid 2G/3G/4G/5G networks. To mitigate these challenges and accelerate ROI from 5G, Nexign has introduced Nexign Network Monetization & Efficiency Suite that provides a convergent TCO-efficient approach to monetization and ensures seamless customer service across 3G, 4G, and 5G networks. The suite incorporates converged charging, policy management, and signaling solutions. These solutions help CSPs transit to 3GPP-compliant, converged network architecture and ensure smooth subscriber migration through 4G/5G core interoperability. Positioned for Tier 1 and Tier-2 operators, the suite has already proven its efficiency—in one of our recent projects, Nexign Converged Policy Management (PCRF/PCF) demonstrated up to 40% performance improvement comparing to the legacy solution, allowing a Tier-1 operator to optimize its annual investments in network infrastructure. Artificial intelligence (AI) continues to play a pivotal role in telecom innovation, with 77% of the industry's executives acknowledging its impact on agility and responsiveness to market disruptions. Nexign is expanding its integration of AI technologies within its BSS to support such functions as automated billing, ML-based segmentation for personalized offerings, and GenAI-driven optimization of product and service configuration. Additionally, Nexign Anomaly Detector leverages AIOps and ML-techniques to identify anomalies in complex business processes, monitor business efficiency, safeguard revenues, and reinforce service continuity for subscribers. "Nexign remains committed to advancing modernization of telecom operations and enabling CSPs to capture opportunities in new growth areas," states Maxim Nartov, Chief Business Officer, Nexign. "With the introduction of our AI-powered, converged product portfolio, we provide operators with the technological and operational foundation to optimize costs, strengthen resilience, and accelerate innovation across various network types and generations."

Nokia Deploys Future-Ready Network Architecture to Enhance Zayo's Leading IP Network Infrastructure

Nokia has announced that it is working with Zayo, a leading global communications infrastructure provider, to deploy a next-generation IP network architecture to enhance Zayo's network connectivity. With this deployment, Zayo's customers will experience faster and more reliable internet services and will gain access to a broader set of services — including cloud access and data center connectivity over secure high-speed links — which drive productivity, improve collaboration, and open new economic opportunities. The first phase of deployment is underway in New York and New Jersey, with expansion planned to dozens of additional markets and thousands of lit buildings in the near future. Zayo's fiber footprint spans over 19 million fiber miles and 147,000 route miles, connecting 400 markets and more than 1,500 on-net data centers globally. The new network architecture allows Zayo to deploy connectivity in new markets and bring more lit buildings online in record time, enabling the company to expand its reach and quickly respond to changing market conditions. The ability to rapidly deliver high-capacity infrastructure closer to its end user also reduces exposure to single points of failure, minimizes congestion, and ensures stable, resilient performance across Zayo's IP backbone. This transformation to a more modular and scalable solution with Nokia's next-generation IP router solution positions Zayo to meet growing

bandwidth demand — including delivering 400G and 800G-capable services at scale — to support the next wave of cloud and edge computing and enable faster access to digital services for its customers. “By partnering with Nokia, we’re setting a new standard for what’s possible in fiber-based connectivity. The ability to rapidly light up new buildings and markets on our IP network allows us to more quickly respond to customer demand faster, which is increasingly important in today’s fast-evolving market. Nokia’s solution delivers the reliability, performance, and agility we need to meet the growing needs of our customers—from cloud providers and data centers to schools and enterprises." Aaron Werley, Senior Vice President, Engineering, Zayo.

This next-generation architecture replaces Zayo’s existing Provider Edge infrastructure with Nokia’s high-performance IP router solution. Built on Nokia’s advanced FP5-based 7750 Service Router and the Nokia 7250 Interconnect Router (IXR), the new solution enables rapid deployment, increased reliability, and simplified operations across Zayo’s extensive global network. The new Nokia architecture enhances scalability, allowing Zayo to serve more customers while improving reliability and performance across its infrastructure. “This collaboration with Zayo reflects a shared commitment to advancing connectivity and creating new opportunities for digital transformation across industries. It’s also a great example of how Nokia’s technology leadership can accelerate network transformation for our customers. With our FP5-based platforms and deep expertise in IP networks, we’re enabling Zayo to deploy services faster, simplify operations, and lead the market with flexible, future-ready infrastructure. Together, we’re delivering the kind of innovation that sets a new bar for the entire industry." Jeff Valley, Vice President, IP Networks for CSPs, Nokia.

Nokia to License Technology from HPE to Advance Its AI-Powered SMO and Network Automation Assets

Nokia announced that it has licensed technology assets in an agreement with HPE that will boost its capabilities in AI-powered radio access network (RAN) automation. The move will further strengthen Nokia’s industry-leading MantaRay SMO (Service Management and Orchestration) platform and expand its solutions in AI-driven RAN automation and autonomous networking. Under the global agreement, Nokia will gain access to HPE’s RAN Intelligent Controller (RIC), integrating it with MantaRay AI-Powered SMO and Network Automation assets. In addition, the associated development team has largely transferred to Nokia Mobile Networks, effective October 1, 2025. This licensing deal with HPE will further strengthen our proven MantaRay SMO portfolio by adding these assets and expertise. Our customers worldwide will benefit from the enhanced capabilities of Nokia’s AI-driven automation, orchestration and open ecosystems, enabling them to manage multi-vendor networks more efficiently and prepare for the transition from 5G to 6G. Tommi Uitto, President of Mobile Networks at Nokia said. MantaRay SMO is Nokia’s comprehensive solution for advanced AI-driven, zero-touch automation and is already capable of achieving TM Forum’s autonomous networks level 4 today. It is also fully Open RAN compliant and supports open R1 interface for rApps.

Nokia Foundation Grants Professor Minna Palmroth a Recognition Award for Achievements in Space Sciences

Nokia Foundation has granted its 2025 recognition award to Professor Minna Palmroth from University of Helsinki for her pioneering work in the field of space sciences. Her work has been instrumental in creating the foundation that has established Finland as a leading country in the field. Her own work focusses on modelling Earth's magnetospheric phenomena and interaction with the solar wind. While space weather is visible to all as the northern lights, it is also vital for satellite communications. Professor Minna Palmroth has had a highly successful career that has started from studying space weather phenomena and has led all the way to directing the Finnish Center of Excellence in Research of Sustainable Space during 2018-2025 and from 2026 leading the new Finnish Centre of Excellence in Space Resilience. She has also been recently nominated to an Academy Professorship. With this award we want to recognize her pioneering work and achievements on her career journey. Mikko Uusitalo, Chair of the Board of Nokia Foundation said, In celebration of its 30th anniversary, Nokia Foundation, together with the OKKA Foundation for Teaching, Education and Personal Development, has presented its first teaching recognition award. The award was granted to Dr. Arto Hellas, a University Lecturer in Information and Communication Technology (ICT) from Aalto University. He has made significant contributions to reforming ICT education and to developing new courses and digital learning platforms. Dr. Arto Hellas has made a significant impact in an area we all recognize as vital for securing Finland's future competitiveness. High-quality and inspiring teaching produces the experts of tomorrow for both academia and industry. Today, we wish to honor one of the builders of Finland's future and highlight his persistent and innovative work in advancing ICT education. Nokia Foundation has awarded over 2000 grants during its 30-year existence with the total value of the grants being more than 11,5 million euros. In 2025, the Foundation will grant scholarships and awards totaling approximately 480,000 euros.

Nokia Unveils World's First 50G PON Solution for Post-Quantum Enterprise Connectivity

Nokia announced the launch of the world's first 50G PON solution designed to provide ultra-fast, post-quantum broadband connectivity for operators serving enterprises. The solution delivers massive capacity, enhanced reliability and advanced security features that will protect enterprises in post-quantum era. Available on Nokia's Lightspan MF platform, it allows operators who are deploying 10G or 25G PON to seamlessly evolve to 50G PON without major disruptions. With 25/50G PON operators can use their existing residential FTTH networks to serve enterprises and other non-residential users, eliminating the need for costly separate fiber builds. The solution is available on Nokia's existing state-of-the-art fiber line card, based on the Quillion chipset. The card is designed to deliver GPON, XGS, 25G, 50G PON and future optical modules, like 50G symmetrical and additional combinations of multi-PON and triple-PON options. The Lightspan line card uses the smallest form factor optics for all PON technologies to maximize port density and allow full backward compatibility with existing optics for smooth, cost-efficient network upgrades.

Nokia and CNT Launch Ecuador's First 5G Network, Bringing Ultra-Fast Connectivity to More Ecuadorians

Nokia and Corporación Nacional de Telecomunicaciones E.P. (CNT E.P.), Ecuador's national telecommunications operator, have officially launched the country's first commercial 5G network, marking a major step in its digital transformation. Powered by Nokia's 5G technology, the network delivers speeds of up to 1.5 Gbps—10 times faster than 4G—and ultra-low latency, enabling seamless streaming, rapid downloads and reliable connectivity for more Ecuadorians. The rollout will pave the way for new digital services and innovation in strategic areas such as virtual education, telemedicine, smart cities, connected mobility and the Internet of Things (IoT). Building on CNT's current 4G network, the deployment includes 188 5G sites in Guayaquil, the largest city in Ecuador, and other regions as Samborondón, Daule, Durán, Manta, Portoviejo, Salinas, and Santa Elena, operating in the N78, 3.5 GHz band. This initiative supports the Ecuadorian government's digital transformation policy and was developed in coordination with the Ministry of Telecommunications and the Information Society to expand access to high-speed coverage nationwide by mid-2026, enabling a more inclusive and sustainable digital society. This is a landmark moment in Ecuador's technology history. Our new 5G mobile network will offer faster, more stable and secure connectivity across the country without raising our commercial prices. Beyond telecommunications, we'll build on Nokia's advanced solutions to benefit strategic sectors such as health, education, manufacturing, agriculture and transportation, through data- and AI-driven solutions that improve quality of service for more Ecuadorians. Ronald Spina, General Manager, CNT E.P said, Our long-standing partnership with CNT E.P., providing solutions across mobile radio access, IP and optical and fixed networks, is a source of pride for Nokia. We are confident this latest collaboration on the 5G launch based on our comprehensive Radio Access Networks (RAN) solutions will significantly modernize CNT's broadband and support its commitment to build a more innovative, competitive and connected nation. Bruno Leite, Head of Mobile Networks, Latin America, Nokia said, Nokia will supply equipment from its industry-leading AirScale RAN portfolio, designed to deliver superior performance and energy efficiency. The comprehensive suite includes a pre-integrated, portable, outdoor 'all-in-one' cabinet solution engineered to significantly minimize energy consumption, alongside cutting-edge Massive MIMO radios, baseband, and remote radio head (RRH) solutions. Nokia's AirScale portfolio is powered by its energy-efficient ReefShark System-on-Chip technology for maximum performance, efficiency and reliability. CNT will also benefit from Nokia's AI-powered intelligent network management system, MantaRay NM, offering a consolidated network view. Nokia will also deploy its best-in-class 7250 IXR, 7750 SR IP Routing and its 1830 Versatile WDM Transport solutions to power CNT's cutting-edge 5G network. These solutions will ensure seamless, high-speed data transmission across dynamic wireless environments, minimizing latency and packet loss to deliver reliable, consistent connectivity. Additionally, Nokia's innovative Network Services Platform (NSP) will be implemented to streamline transport network management, optimization and network slicing. This advanced automation platform will support CNT in managing critical infrastructure for applications such as emergency communications and smart city systems, enabling unparalleled efficiency in meeting the demands of next-generation connectivity.

Nokia and fibertime™ Accelerate Roll-Out of Fiber Broadband Access to Underserved Townships Across South Africa

Nokia has announced that fibertime is expanding its fiber broadband access footprint to include an additional 400,000 homes located across South Africa's underserved communities. The broadband roll-out is part of fibertime's larger goal of connecting 2 million homes by 2028. Fibertime will deploy a combination of Nokia's IP and fiber access technologies to build semi-mobile networks in underserved areas, providing end-users with unlimited high-speed internet from anywhere in their home, business or community they live in. Under the agreement, fibertime will deploy Nokia's Lightspan access nodes and Wi-Fi 6 enabled fiber access points, using Nokia's ONT Easy Start to automate and simplify the fiber modem activation process and streamline deployments. Fibertime will also use Nokia's 7750 Wireless Access Gateway, to create a single SSID on their network that allows customers to walk around the township and stay connected. With Nokia's support, we're able to significantly ramp up the roll-out of our low-cost, high-speed, fiber internet service to underserved township communities across South Africa. We're now connecting 1,200 households a day to flexible, high-speed access - up to 950Mbps in some cases – without the need for contracts or debit orders. Once a township is connected, customers simply buy vouchers at a local spaza, retail outlet or via their banking app, enter the voucher number in their fibertime™ app, and immediately have access to unlimited and unthrottled fiber-to-the-home internet at a cost of R5 per day.

Salam Powers Vision 2030's Digital Future at Connected World KSA 2025

Etihad Salam Telecom Company (Salam, a leading provider of integrated telecommunications and digital infrastructure services in the Kingdom, announced its participation as a Futurenet Partner at Connected World KSA 2025, taking place in Riyadh on 18–19 November. Under the theme "Bridging Worlds. Connecting Possibilities," Salam will spotlight its role as a national digital enabler, driving Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030 agenda through large-scale infrastructure investments and strategic partnerships that strengthen the Kingdom's position as a regional connectivity and digital leader. As one of Saudi Arabia's key telecom operators, Salam continues to expand its national and international footprint through its 45,000 km fiber network, multiple international gateways, and cross-border terrestrial corridors. The company is investing in next-generation data centers and subsea systems partnerships, adding new capacities to support hyperscalers, enterprises, and government entities. Together, these projects reinforce the Kingdom's ambition to become a global hub linking Asia, Europe, and Africa through secure, resilient, and sustainable digital infrastructure. "At Salam, we see connectivity as a national responsibility," said Amjad Arab, Chief Carrier & Wholesale Officer at Salam. "By expanding digital infrastructure and fostering international collaboration, we are helping realize Vision 2030's ambition of a more connected, innovative, and inclusive Saudi Arabia." During the two-day event, Salam executives will participate in multiple panel sessions and keynote discussions focusing on wholesale capacity, interconnection strategies, and the future of carrier ecosystems. The company's presence reinforces its ongoing commitment to building a resilient, innovative, and sovereign digital backbone that strengthens Saudi Arabia's position as a regional and global connectivity hub.

SES and AMN Upgrade Rural Telecoms Sites Across Côte d'Ivoire

SES and Africa Mobile Networks (AMN) announced that they have successfully upgraded over 200 telecoms sites across Côte d'Ivoire to deliver 2G and 3G mobile data services to over 500,000 people in rural and previously underserved areas. The upgrade, completed between May and June 2025, saw SES expand satellite capacity for AMN, enabling faster, more reliable connectivity for mobile operators and their customers. SES said it will further scale its capacity to support AMN's future expansion efforts as data usage rises. AMN currently operates over 300 sites, delivering telecoms services, via SES satellites, to more than 700,000 people, compared to 60 sites when AMN began operations in Côte d'Ivoire in 2022. AMN said the next phase of expansion is already underway, which will increase its footprint to 360 sites in Côte d'Ivoire by the end of this year. That will include the company's first 4G sites, which are expected to go live this month. AMN says its software-defined RAN platform, the AMN Radio Node (ARN), supports 2G, 3G, 4G, and future 5G on a single unit, enabling multiple carriers to operate efficiently and upgrade remotely without extra cost or power, delivering connectivity at a fraction of traditional deployment costs. AMN CEO Michael Darcy said that its sites have made a positive impact on communities' where they're installed, adding that 81% of customers use its service for mobile money transactions, while 42% use mobile services for education and 33% use them for healthcare access. "These upgrades not only bring internet access to remote regions but also empower local businesses, farmers, and families through digital inclusion," Darcy said in a statement. "Connectivity is a catalyst for economic growth – by extending reliable voice and data services to rural areas, we are helping communities unlock new opportunities for learning, trade and innovation."

stc Bahrain Partners with Aramex to Provide Smart Logistics Solutions Across the Kingdom

stc Bahrain, a digital enabler, announced its partnership with Aramex, a leading global provider of comprehensive logistics and transportation solutions, to power Bahrain's first nation-wide smart locker network. This strategic collaboration highlights stc Bahrain's commitment to empowering Aramex with smart and digital solutions, thus elevating delivery and logistics services in the Kingdom through digital tech-driven initiatives. Through these smart lockers, parcels can be collected at any time from strategically located secure and connected units across strategic locations in Bahrain. The advanced connectivity provided by stc Bahrain empowers Aramex with a 360-degree digital ecosystem, where users access real-time tracking, instant notifications, and complete shipment visibility through integrated mobile applications. Aramex has also been expanding its footprint in Bahrain, with multiple branch expansions completed across the Kingdom, all powered by stc Bahrain's connectivity solutions. This initiative highlights the critical role of pioneering technology in modern logistics. By powering Aramex's smart lockers through reliable connectivity, stc Bahrain enables an always-on digital parcel collection system that eliminates traditional delivery hindrances for businesses and consumers. Hesham Mustafa, Chief Business Officer at stc Bahrain, commented on the partnership: "Our longstanding successful collaboration with Aramex showcases stc Bahrain's dedicated support for our partners' operational excellence through innovative technology. As the first nationwide smart lockers have been rolled out, we are proud to provide Aramex with the smart tools needed to transform package delivery in the kingdom and advance the logistics industry." Yanal Anz, General Manager of Aramex Bahrain, added: "Our partnership with stc Bahrain highlights how the right technology partnership can elevate service standards for the entire industry. With stc Bahrain's advanced connectivity solutions and robust network backbone supporting our logistics operations, Aramex has achieved new levels of operational excellence and delivering superior customer experiences." This initiative is set to benefit the broader business community, particularly sectors involved in logistics and delivery services, by showcasing how robust connectivity can drive operational efficiencies. stc Bahrain continues to drive digital transformation across industries, leveraging its advanced network and innovative solutions to empower businesses and contribute to Bahrain's digital economy.

ZTE Honored as ESG Annual Communication Influence Pioneer by Phoenix Satellite TV

ZTE Corporation, a global leading provider of information and communication technology solutions, was awarded the "ESG Annual Communication Influence Pioneer" by Phoenix Satellite TV at the 2025 Zero Carbon Mission International Climate Summit & Green Development Annual Tribute Ceremony, for its outstanding practices and global communication influence in the field of Environmental, Social, and Corporate Governance (ESG). This honor not only fully affirms ZTE's effective sustainable development strategy and communication effectiveness, but also underscores its leadership in promoting global consensus on sustainable development through communication. 2025 Green Development Annual Tribute Award Selection is jointly initiated by Phoenix Satellite TV, Rocky Mountain Institute (RMI), and China Champions for Climate Action, among others. The "ESG Annual Communication Influence Pioneer" award recognizes enterprises that demonstrate excellence in ESG leadership, achieving business success while generating profound social impact and driving progress on global sustainable development issues. Lin Rong, Vice President of ZTE, stated that, over the years, ZTE has deeply rooted ESG concepts in its corporate DNA from technology research and development to business implementation, and is accelerating its upgrade to an ultimate AI company. ZTE actively discloses its core concepts, important achievements, and future plans in ESG to the public in all aspects, which has gained widespread attention, positive encouragement, and sustained recognition from society. In the terms of environmental protection, ZTE regards green and low-carbon as the core of its ESG strategy, moving toward an eco-friendly ecosystem through four key dimensions: Green Operation, Green Supply Chain, Green Digital Infrastructure, and Green Empowerment. ZTE is currently the only enterprise in China to consecutively achieve CDP's highest A rating for leading climate action, with 1.5-degree Celsius warming threshold and long-term net-zero target approved by the SBTi. In the terms of social contribution, ZTE commits to bridge global digital divide and utilizes digital technology to promote inclusive development. The "Enhance Rural Area" project has enabled digital access for more than 580,000 people in rural region in Liberia, winning the WSIS Champion Award, which is the only Chinese enterprise to receive this prestigious honor in the field of ICT cultural diversity. In Anyang, Henan, the use of drones for blood delivery has overcome the critical "last kilometer" in the chain of life, achieving a breakthrough in life-saving speed through technology; In Kekexili (Hoh Xil), Qinghai, the first 5G base station has been deployed to safeguard biodiversity through technology. In the terms of corporate governance, ZTE has strengthened external compliance, internal control, business continuity, and technology ethics management, and established a Technology Ethics Committee to ensure the safe, reliable, and inclusive development of AI. In 2024, it was awarded the Ram Charan Management Practice Award - Outstanding Award. In terms of ESG communication practice, ZTE adopts a "High-Profile, In-Depth, Broad-Reach, Audience-Friendly" strategy, actively sharing its sustainable development stories on prominent international platforms such as the Summit of the Future, AI for Good Global Summit, and Partner2Connect gathering. By leveraging global media and social media channels, ZTE demonstrates its commitment to transparency, inclusiveness, and shared progress, highlighting its dedication to building a fair, inclusive, and sustainable digital society worldwide. In recent years, ZTE has won the "World Internet Conference Distinguished Contribution Award" in 2024; the EcoVadis Gold Medal in 2025, ranking among the top 4% of companies globally, the top 2% of companies within the Manufacture of Communication Equipment industry; and has been listed in the S&P Global "Sustainability Yearbook (China Edition)" for two consecutive years. Guided by the corporate vision of "Enabling Connectivity and Trust Everywhere", ZTE will committed to its principles of long-term thinking and Technology for Good, and collaborate with global customers, partners, and stakeholders to foster a responsible ecosystem in the ESG era, bridging divides and co-creating a sustainable future.

ZTE and China Unicom Jilin Enable Digital Inclusion Through 5G Uplink Enhancement at World's Largest Ginseng Market

ZTE Corporation, a global leading provider of information and communication technology solutions, in partnership with China Unicom Jilin, has successfully deployed a comprehensive 5G uplink enhancement solution at the Wanliang Ginseng Market in Baishan City, Jilin Province. This integrated technical innovation addresses critical digital inclusion challenges by transforming network coverage into meaningful economic participation for rural merchants engaged in live-streaming e-commerce. The Wanliang Ginseng Market represents the world's largest ginseng trading hub, accounting for 80% of China's and 70% of global ginseng transactions. This rural marketplace serves as a critical economic engine, supporting thousands of farmers and merchants who rely on digital commerce platforms to reach nationwide markets. However, despite comprehensive 5G network coverage, merchants encountered a fundamental connectivity barrier: traditional 5G networks optimized for downlink traffic proved insufficient for the substantial uplink capacity demands of simultaneous high-definition live-streaming. During peak trading hours, the convergence of hundreds of concurrent live-streamers transmitting high-definition video simultaneously created network congestion that manifested as frequent interruptions, transaction failures, and lost sales opportunities. Traditional 5G frame structures allocate resources in a three-to-one ratio favoring content consumption, creating a fundamental mismatch with live-streaming commerce requirements. Peak-hour network utilization exceeded seventy percent, with individual cells supporting seventy to ninety concurrent users who exhausted available uplink resources. ZTE's solution addresses this challenge through systematic integration of four complementary technologies deployed in a phased enhancement approach. The initial phase implemented 1D3U frame structure technology, rebalancing uplink-to-downlink resource allocation from the standard one-to-three ratio to a three-to-one configuration. This software-level optimization increased single-cell uplink traffic by over 100%, establishing the foundation for subsequent enhancements. The second phase deployed QCell digital distribution system with beamforming antennas, replacing traditional macro station coverage with a distributed architecture that doubled cell count while multiplying total system capacity. Beamforming antennas provide spatial signal isolation critical for the large open-market hall structure, while inter-frequency planning eliminates co-channel interference challenges. This hardware transformation increased total uplink traffic by 93%, supporting up to 143 concurrent live-streamers per cell. Advanced optimizations integrated uplink MU-MIMO spatial multiplexing technology and packet aggregation algorithms specifically designed for live-streaming traffic characteristics. Uplink MU-MIMO technology addresses the single-stream limitation prevalent among live-streaming user terminals, achieving spectral efficiency improvements of 15% under 60% PRB utilization conditions, with gains reaching up to 55% at higher loads. Packet aggregation optimization leverages the unique traffic patterns of live-streaming applications—characterized by continuous low-traffic small packets, multiple concurrent users, and time-insensitive delivery requirements—reducing PRB utilization by up to 30% under equivalent load conditions. The cumulative impact of this integrated solution delivers a 583% uplink capacity increase, representing a transformative enhancement that enables merchants to conduct business rather than struggle with connectivity. Performance metrics demonstrate substantial improvements: user uplink speeds tripled from approximately 20 Mbps to 60 Mbps, while peak PRB utilization decreased from over 90% to below 60%. The solution now supports 143 concurrent live-streamers per cell—more than five times previous capacity—enabling each market stall to average 1.6 active streaming terminals. Business outcomes reflect the successful transformation of coverage into commerce. Annual e-commerce transactions exceed 200 million RMB, facilitated by over 500 enterprises conducting business through digital channels and more than 3,000 professional live-streaming merchants actively engaged in digital commerce. This economic participation directly benefits approximately 50,000 farmers who supply the market, creating a sustainable ecosystem that transforms connectivity from passive infrastructure into active economic empowerment. The solution demonstrates exceptional operational excellence, maintaining continuous service with zero network-related complaints—a remarkable achievement given the high user density and intensive traffic patterns characteristic of live-streaming commerce environments. This sustained performance establishes a proven operational track record that validates both technical reliability and user satisfaction.

ZTE, Pudong Bus, and Shanghai Telecom build 5G-A intelligent Network for Smart City Maintenance

ZTE Corporation (0763.HK / 000063.SZ), a global leading provider of information and communication technology solutions, together with Shanghai Pudong New Area Public Transportation Co., Ltd. and Shanghai Teleom, has innovatively completed the application verification of a new type of urban cloud inspection based on buses. This application adopts the "5G + AI cloud-edge-terminal" three-level intelligent computing system and network agent solution, deepening the integration of 5G with AI, Big Data and Internet of Things (IoT) technologies. It marks a significant step forward in advancing smart city inspection toward greater intelligence and efficiency. For years, the traditional manual inspection mode relied upon for the maintenance of urban roads and traffic facilities is entrenched in three major bottlenecks: cost, efficiency and response. The annual maintenance investment in first-tier cities exceeds 10 million yuan per 10 square kilometers, with labor accounting for 40%; Road inspections require two person-days per kilometers daily and are prone to errors and omissions due to uneven skill levels, making management challenging; The average time from discovery to disposal of hidden dangers is 72 hours, making it difficult to promptly eliminate safety risks. These inefficiencies not only impact travel safety but also constrain the modernization of urban governance. As such, AI-driven, low-cost, high-efficiency inspection models have become a crucial need for city management innovation. As a major transportation operator in Pudong, Pudong Bus runs more than 300 bus routes and over 3,600 buses, covering almost the entire Pudong New Area. The huge transportation network provides a natural scenario for the cloud inspection application. In this application verification, Pudong Routes 100 and 798 were selected as model routes. Route 100 connects Lujiazui and Qiantan, serving business and tourist passenger flow. Route 798 covers residential areas in central Pudong and the core area of Lujiazui, meeting commuting needs. By upgrading 5G network capabilities along these routes, an urban cloud inspection "smart brain" has been established simultaneously. Capacity upgrades have been carried out in system architecture and urban infrastructure, focusing on two cores:

Upgrading capabilities of three-level intelligent computing system architecture

Based on the "cloud-edge-base station" three-level collaboration as the core architectural foundation, a ubiquitous intelligent agent service system has been constructed. Intelligent network elements are deployed on the 5G network terminal and edge sides. Relying on the deep collaboration capabilities of cloud, edge and terminal, the network is promoted to achieve intelligent dynamic matching of supply and demand, a user-centric experience guarantee mechanism is built, and high-reliability deterministic services are provided. Finally, it provides stable and efficient network service support for improving the management efficiency of smart bus cloud inspection and road safety protection.

Urban dual-platform supporting inspection intelligence

An AI management platform has been built to handle functions such as abnormal event reception, data result management and vehicle location management. It uniformly monitors and dispatches the AI inspection system to ensure real-time AI-powered inspection during bus operation. A 3D digital twin visualization platform has been created to build a digital twin base covering road sections, traffic intersections and road assets such as poles, signs, traffic lights, street lights and row trees, forming a "living" model that can reflect real-time dynamic changes of roads, providing intuitive support for inspection monitoring and decision-making. Through verification, the deployment of the three-level intelligent computing scheme in the pilot verification area can simultaneously meet the backhaul of two channels of high-definition video, providing a solid network channel guarantee for the stable cloud migration of massive video data on the vehicle terminal in the future, and ensuring the fluency, real-time performance and security of video transmission. In the verification section, the video recorded by the bus can effectively detect the damage of urban roads. The inspection cost can be reduced by 40%, and the detection accuracy can reach more than 90%, which effectively improves the overall operation efficiency and data processing capacity of the urban comprehensive inspection platform. This nationwide pioneering urban cloud inspection application verification is an important achievement of the in-depth cooperation between Pudong Bus, Shanghai Telecom and ZTE. It addresses key maintenance challenges while also providing a replicable model for digitizing urban transport and improving governance, ultimately enhancing travel safety and convenience for citizens. In the future, the AI inspection application will continue to inject strong momentum into the intelligent upgrading of urban traffic management and public services, reshaping a new paradigm for urban inspection.

ZTE and MMU Expand Collaboration to Advance Malaysia's AI, Cybersecurity, and Digital Talent Development

ZTE Corporation a global leading provider of integrated information and communication technology solutions, announced the expansion of its collaboration with Multimedia University ("MMU") through the signing of an official addendum, exchanged during the closing ceremony of the PRESTIJ program, "Shaping the Future-fit Public Services with Cybersecurity in the AI Landscape". ZTE and MMU have worked closely together for many years to advance Malaysia's digital talent pipeline. The collaboration began with the development of 5G end-to-end laboratories in Cyberjaya and Melaka, providing students and researchers with a real-life environment to explore next-generation technologies. ZTE also introduced scholarships to support promising students, ensuring that capable talent receives opportunities to thrive. More recently, MMU was appointed as an authorized training and examination center for ZTE Certification, covering areas such as 5G, AI, cybersecurity, wireless technologies, and core networks. This ongoing partnership has helped establish MMU as an important technology training hub for Malaysia. ZTE also continues to support MMU's strategic initiatives, including the establishment of the NexGen Communication Engineering Hub, launched in 2023. Built around four pillars, namely, the professional skills development, creativity, research excellence, and industry collaboration, the hub reflects the forward-looking approach needed to prepare Malaysia's next generation of digital professionals. Beyond the academic ecosystem, the collaboration has extended into public sector talent development. In 2024, ZTE partnered with MMU to deliver "ACE: Navigating the Digital Frontier for Smart Government", an upskilling program designed to equip a group of government officers with hands-on digital and technology skills. ZTE has once again been appointed to support the second cohort in 2025. After nearly six months of comprehensive training delivered across seven major cities in China, the program reached its final milestone in Beijing last week. On December 3, a formal closing ceremony was convened at MMU Cyberjaya, officially marking the completion of the China–Malaysia training initiative. The event recognized the accomplishments of participating officers and reaffirmed the deepening collaboration between both nations in developing a digitally empowered, future-ready public service workforce. Gu Junying, Senior Vice President of ZTE, said: "We are honored to support Malaysia's public service and academic institutions as they build essential digital capabilities. Even as participants complete their programs today, the journey of learning continues. Technology evolves quickly, and continuous development is vital to building a future-ready workforce." The newly signed addendum deepens this cooperation by equipping MMU with ZTE's cutting-edge AiCube AI education and compute platform, along with smart classroom solutions. AiCube combines a high-performance AI computing foundation with an interactive learning environment, enabling immersive, personalized, and efficient learning experiences. Importantly, these facilities will form a shared ecosystem accessible to both MMU students and JPA program participants, serving as a testbed for AI and cybersecurity learning, applied research, and project development. Professor Dato' Dr. Mazliham Mohd Su'ud, President of MMU, said: "MMU welcomes this enhanced collaboration with ZTE. The deployment of the AiCube platform strengthens our ability to train industry-ready graduates and public service leaders, and supports Malaysia's broader digital transformation agenda. This collaboration reinforces MMU's role as a leading institution for technology-driven education, research, and talent development." ZTE reaffirmed its commitment to supporting Malaysia's digital and innovation ecosystem through sustained investment in talent development, advanced learning technologies, and strong partnerships with academia and government. With this expanded collaboration, ZTE and MMU will continue working together to advance the nation's capabilities in AI, cybersecurity, and next-generation connectivity, contributing to a more future-readier Malaysia.

ZTE Reports Revenue Exceeding RMB 100 Billion in the First Nine Months of 2025, Computing Revenue Up 180% YoY

ZTE Corporation, announced a revenue of RMB 100.52 billion in the first nine months of 2025, an increase of 11.6% year-on-year. According to ZTE's results announcement today, during the period, the net profit attributable to holders of ordinary shares of the listed company reached RMB 5.32 billion, and net profit after extraordinary items attributable to holders of ordinary shares of the listed company reached RMB 3.88 billion. In the first three quarters, ZTE's Carrier Networks business experienced overall pressure as domestic telecom infrastructure investment softened, while international markets continued to show healthy expansion. The government-enterprise segment sustained strong momentum, with revenue up 130% year-on-year, while the consumer business maintained stable growth. As a core contributor to digital economy infrastructure, ZTE remains committed to its "Connectivity + Computing" strategy, accelerating the deployments and upgrading of AI infrastructure to build a robust digital and intelligent foundation that empowers industries and communities. The company continues to advance core foundational technologies across four key domains—Networks, Computing, Home, and Personal Devices, building comprehensive full-stack technological capabilities to meet diversified needs. Throughout the first nine months, revenue from computing-related businesses grew by 180% year-on-year, accounting for 25% of total revenue. Within this segment, revenue from servers and storage increased by 250% year-on-year, while data center solutions revenue rose by 120% year-on-year. Revenue from home and personal devices segments continued to grow, together representing 25% of total revenue. Amid the continued slowdown in domestic 5G investment, ZTE remains focused on advancing the deep convergence of AI and ICT foundational technologies, enhancing network competitiveness, expanding computing infrastructure to meet rising AI-driven demand, and accelerating the upgrade of AI-enabled edge devices, to build new, sustainable engines of growth.

While the evolving revenue mix has placed near-term pressure on gross margins, this reflects the company's strategic transition toward a more diversified and future-oriented portfolio. Throughout this process, ZTE continues to strengthen its commitment to innovation, dedicating RMB 17.81 billion, around 18% of revenue, to R&D during the period, reinforcing its long-term resilience and value creation. In the Networks domain, ZTE positions AI as the core engine driving faster, smarter, and more converged connectivity. Through innovations such as the AIR solution suite and AI-enabled 10G all-optical networks, the company continues to enhance the intelligence and integration of its networks foundation, enabling AI to reach every application scenario with greater speed, agility, and trust. Meanwhile, ZTE is advancing frontier technologies including integrated space-air-ground networks, integrated communications and sensing, and passive IoT. The company has achieved commercial breakthroughs in 5G-Adanced (5G-A) and continues to lead the evolution toward 6G. As of now, ZTE ranks second globally in 5G base station and 5G core network shipments, holds the world's second-largest market share in fixed-network products, and maintains leadership ratings across 5G RAN, 5G core networks, fiber access, and optical transport. Guided by long-term innovation, ZTE is working with global partners to build a faster, smarter, and more trusted digital network future. In the Computing domain, ZTE's intelligent computing services are powering core operations for leading internet, financial, and energy enterprises in China, while achieving scaled commercial deployment internationally through strengthened local partnerships.

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ARTICLE

AI Monetization: The Great Value Transfer to Emerging Markets

How SAMENA telecom operators can capture their share of the $98 billion AI+FinTech opportunity through ecosystem partnerships

As digitalization accelerates worldwide, artificial intelligence and financial technology are converging to create the most profound economic rebalancing of the 21st century: a transfer of opportunity from first-world economies to emerging markets. For SAMENA telecom operators, this represents both imperative and opportunity. With global telecom services spending growing at less than 2% annually, Tier 1 operators must evolve from connectivity providers to digital ecosystem orchestrators. The AI in telecommunications market reached $3.34 billion in 2024 and is projected to surge to $58.74 billion by 2032 (43.3% CAGR). More significantly, the AI+FinTech convergence market will grow from $30 billion in 2025 to $98 billion by 2032. AI improves accuracy, security, and personalization while FinTech generates the data AI needs to learn and scale—creating a self-reinforcing loop that operators controlling hundreds of millions of customer relationships are uniquely positioned to monetize.

> *AI and FinTech are redistributing financial infrastructure and wealth creation capabilities from developed to emerging economies, enabling markets to leapfrog traditional development stages. SAMENA telecom operators stand at this transformation's epicenter.*

Stephen Thomas
Chairman & CEO
TPT Global Tech

The Four Pillars of AI+FinTech Monetization

1. **Super App Ecosystems: Building the Self-Reinforcing Loop**

   The most transformative opportunity lies in creating all-in-one ecosystems where AI and FinTech work as a self-reinforcing loop. AI improves the accuracy, security, and personalization of financial services, while FinTech generates the transactional data AI needs to scale. Together, they create network effects that become exponentially more valuable over time—digital wallets and mobile money embedded seamlessly within social, mobile, and entertainment platforms.

The creator economy amplifies this opportunity. The Middle East and Africa creator economy generated $22.06 billion in 2024 and is projected to reach $109.14 billion by 2033 (18.9% CAGR). In Africa alone, the creator market will grow from $5.10 billion to $29.84 billion by 2032 (28.7% CAGR). Through super app partnerships, operators capture revenue from in-app purchases, premium subscriptions, advertising, transaction fees, and the financial services layer that enables all commerce within the platform.

The mathematics are compelling: a single operator with 50 million subscribers integrating a super app ecosystem generating $2 per user per month creates $1.2 billion in annual revenue—entirely outside traditional connectivity. Factor in financial services revenue (transaction fees, lending margins, insurance commissions), and this doubles. Scale across SAMENA's subscriber base, and the opportunity approaches hundreds of billions annually.

2. AI-Powered Marketplaces: Partner Rather Than Build

The strategic question is not whether to offer AI+FinTech services, but how. Building marketplaces from scratch diverts focus from core connectivity while competing with digital-native companies. The winning strategy: partnership with established platforms.

Consider remittances—$85 billion annually in Africa. AI-powered marketplaces have reduced costs from 10% to under 3%, with digital remittances growing from 13% (2019) to 46% (2024) of total flows. Multiple partnership models prove successful: M-Pesa processes $314 billion in transactions annually across 51 million customers. Orange's Max it targets 45 million users by 2025, combining mobile accounts, Orange Money, e-commerce, and digital content with Tencent Cloud's mini-app platform. VüMe provides turnkey entertainment and financial services that integrate with operator billing without requiring engineering diversion.
The MEA fintech market will grow from $45.5 billion (2024) to $176.08 billion (2030) at 25.3% CAGR. With 250 million unbanked adults accessing financial services solely through mobile money, operators must focus on core advantages—customer relationships, billing infrastructure, network assets—while partners provide platforms, content, and payment integration. Revenue sharing is automatic; time-to-market measures in months, not years.

3. Hyper-Personalization: Creating Micro-Segments of One

AI+FinTech convergence enables unprecedented personalization. Machine learning analyzes not just what customers buy, but why, when, and under what circumstances—creating 'micro-segments of one' where each user receives optimized real-time experiences across entertainment, commerce, and financial services. AI determines which content to recommend, whether to offer a micro-loan for purchase, what payment plan to suggest, and what to cross-sell.

Leading operators implementing AI-driven personalization within integrated ecosystems report ARPU increases of 15-25%, churn reductions exceeding 30%, and customer lifetime values that double within 18 months. This isn't incremental improvement—it's business model transformation enabled by the AI+FinTech reinforcing loop.

4. Financial Inclusion at Scale: Banking the Unbanked Through AI

AI-powered financial inclusion represents massive humanitarian impact and commercial opportunity. By analyzing mobile money transactions, airtime patterns, and data usage, operators create alternative credit scores for 1.4 billion unbanked people worldwide. In 2024, AI credit scoring underwrote over 5 million micro-loans in Africa alone.

With 400 million unbanked adults in Africa and mobile money accounts reaching 475 million (39% of sub-Saharan Africa) by 2025, operators earn interest and transaction fees while providing essential access. Africa's mobile money market will grow from $804.10 million (2024) to $3.66 billion (2033)—a 355% increase driven by AI-enabled credit and insurance. Digital wallets reduce financial access costs by 90% versus traditional banking. Buy Now, Pay Later services in the GCC grew 70% in 2024. Fintech lending to African SMEs surged from 13% to 88% of overall funding (2020-2023).

Super apps seamlessly integrate these financial services—micro-loans for content purchases, installment plans for subscriptions, creator-to-fan transactions, embedded insurance—all monetizable by operators. Data becomes currency; currency becomes new data, perpetuating the self-reinforcing loop.

The Value Transfer Imperative

What we're witnessing is economic rebalancing. AI and FinTech are redistributing financial infrastructure and wealth creation capabilities from developed to emerging economies, enabling markets to leapfrog traditional development stages. SAMENA telecom operators stand at this transformation's epicenter.

The industry's future belongs to operators who orchestrate AI+FinTech ecosystems, not those with the fastest networks. With telecom spending growing at 1.7% annually, winners and losers will diverge dramatically. Super app partnerships—whether evolved mobile money platforms like M-Pesa, telecom-native ecosystems like Orange's Max it, or entertainment-focused platforms like VüMe—convert connectivity providers into indispensable digital lifestyle platforms capturing value across entertainment, commerce, social interaction, and financial services.

Four megatrends converge: explosive creator economy growth, massive unbanked populations gaining smartphone access, AI reaching production maturity, and FinTech achieving scale. The $98 billion AI+FinTech opportunity combined with the $176 billion MEA fintech market represents the largest value transfer from developed to emerging economies in modern history. SAMENA operators who move decisively in 2025 establish market positions that will define telecommunications' next decade. The network is no longer the product—it's the platform for wealth creation itself.

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REGIONAL NEWS

Algeria and UNDP Sign Declaration to Accelerate National Digital Transformation

The High Commission for Digitalization in Algeria and the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) have signed a declaration of intent to fast-track the implementation of Algeria's national digital transformation strategy, reinforcing their shared commitment to advancing innovation, governance, and public service modernization. The agreement was signed during a meeting in Algiers between Meriem Benmouloud, High Commissioner for Digitalization (with ministerial rank), and Natasha van Rijn, UNDP Resident Representative in Algeria. The declaration aims to accelerate the rollout of the "Digital Algeria 2030" vision, with a focus on short-term goals for 2025–2026. According to the High Commission's statement, the first phase of implementation includes over 500 identified projects, with 75% targeting improved public services. Each initiative will be monitored through performance indicators to ensure measurable progress and accountability. The "Digital Algeria 2030" strategy serves as the country's foundational framework for structuring and guiding its digital transformation journey. It is built around five strategic pillars: Basic digital infrastructure, Human resources and training, Research and development, Digital governance, Digital economy and digital society. Through cooperation with ministerial departments and public institutions, the High Commission aims to establish an integrated national roadmap that supports efficient e-governance, strengthens digital inclusion, and promotes sustainable development through technology. The collaboration with UNDP underscores Algeria's ambition to become a regional leader in digital innovation, leveraging global expertise to modernize public services, expand connectivity, and build human capacity for the digital age.

TRA Bahrain and Mobile Operators Unveil Joint Guidelines to Combat Fraudulent SMS

The Telecommunications Regulatory Authority (TRA) Bahrain, in collaboration with the Kingdom's mobile network operators (MNOs), has launched comprehensive "Guidelines for Reducing Fraudulent SMS", a national initiative designed to curb the rising threat of scam messages and enhance mobile user safety. The guidelines were developed following the formation of a joint working group between the TRA and Bahrain's MNOs to address online security challenges affecting telecom users. Fraudulent SMS — often used in phishing and financial scams — has been identified as a significant and fast-growing risk to consumers in the Kingdom. The new framework sets out clear technical and procedural measures for operators to detect, block, and mitigate scam messages. It also emphasizes user awareness, reporting mechanisms, and compliance with Bahrain's data protection and regulatory standards. Shaikh Abdulla Bin Humood Al Khalifa, Director of Consumer and Communications at TRA, said: "This collaborative effort with mobile operators reflects our shared commitment to protecting consumers in Bahrain. By working together, we ensure that telecom services can be used with greater confidence and security." Philip Marnick, General Director of TRA, added: "These guidelines show what can be achieved when regulators and industry partners unite. Our goal is to protect people in Bahrain from scams and strengthen trust in the nation's telecom networks." The TRA reaffirmed that the initiative underscores Bahrain's leadership in digital trust and consumer protection, ensuring that the country's telecom infrastructure remains secure, transparent, and resilient against evolving cyber threats.

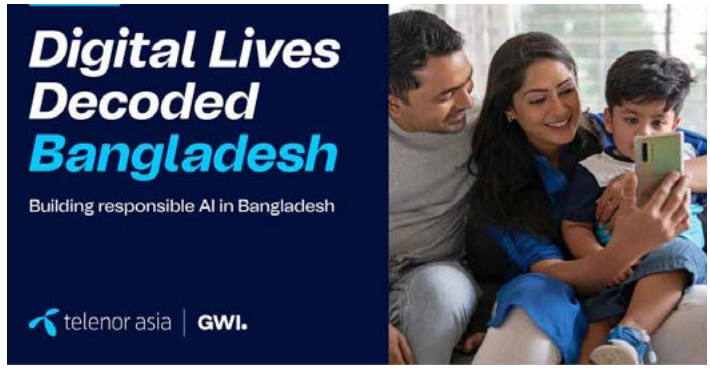
Bahrain and UAE Reinforce Strategic Cooperation in Transport and Communications

Bahrain's Minister of Transportation and Telecommunications, Dr. Shaikh Abdullah Bin Ahmed Al Khalifa, met with UAE Ambassador Fahad Mohammed Salem Bin Kardous Al Ameri to discuss expanding bilateral cooperation across transport, telecommunications and digital transformation. The Minister reaffirmed Bahrain's commitment to deepening strategic ties with the UAE, noting that enhanced collaboration supports shared development and prosperity for both nations. The UAE Ambassador expressed appreciation for Bahrain's sustained efforts to strengthen bilateral relations and conveyed his best wishes for the Kingdom's continued progress.

Qatar Launches Sovereign AI Firm Qai to Strengthen National Technology Strategy

Qatar has launched a new national artificial intelligence company, Qai, as part of its broader push to build domestic AI capabilities and expand its footprint in the global technology sector. The company will operate as a subsidiary of the Qatar Investment Authority, the country's $524 billion sovereign wealth fund, according to Bloomberg. Qai will focus on investing in AI infrastructure both inside Qatar and internationally, while also providing high-performance computing and a connected suite of AI tools. The move places Qatar alongside regional peers such as the UAE and Saudi Arabia, which have already committed billions of dollars to national AI champions like G42 and Humain as part of their economic diversification strategies. While Qatar has previously taken a more cautious approach to AI, its sovereign wealth fund has steadily increased exposure to the sector. This includes recent participation in major global investments, such as a funding round for AI startup Anthropic earlier in 2025. Abdulla Al-Misnad, an official in the prime minister's office and a board director at Doha Venture Capital, will chair Qai. He said the company's priority will be developing "trusted" AI systems that enable individuals and businesses to confidently deploy AI technologies. Qai will not build its own large language models, unlike its UAE and Saudi counterparts. Instead, it will evaluate and commercialize existing models while working with emerging technologies such as autonomous AI agents. Qai's strategy is designed to prepare Qatar for capabilities expected to mature over the next one to three years. The company will also need to secure export licenses to access advanced semiconductors from suppliers such as Nvidia and AMD, similar to recent approvals granted to Gulf peers. With the launch of Qai, Qatar formally joins the growing list of Gulf nations using sovereign capital to anchor national AI strategies built around infrastructure development, commercialization, and long-term technological leadership.

96% of Bangladeshi Internet Users Now Regularly Use AI



A new study by Telenor Asia reveals that 96 percent of Bangladeshi internet users now regularly use artificial intelligence, up from 88 percent in 2024, highlighting the rapid integration of AI into everyday digital life. The findings were published in the fourth edition of the report titled Digital Lives Decoded 2025: Building Trust in Bangladesh's AI Future, based on a survey of 1,000 internet users across the country. The report shows that mobile technology continues to transform daily life in Bangladesh, supporting online learning for 62 percent of users, remote work for 54 percent, and financial management for 50 percent. Over the past year, the fastest growth in mobile usage has been seen in remote work, which increased by more than 39 percent, and budgeting and expense tracking, which rose by over 36 percent. Nearly six in ten users now rely on AI every day, with many using it for content creation for school, work, and personal use. Others increasingly turn to AI for personalized advice related to health, finance, and planning new experiences. The report also notes that AI adoption has become especially strong in workplaces, daily routines, and online shopping, signaling its deeper role in Bangladesh's digital economy. Jon Omund Revhaug, Head of Telenor Asia, emphasized that telecom operators have a critical responsibility as AI adoption grows. He said that as mobile phones enable smarter and more connected communities, operators must ensure secure digital infrastructure that supports trustworthy AI. Telenor Asia, he added, remains committed to supporting Bangladesh's digital journey by making mobile technology safe, inclusive, and accessible.

Algeria Officially Launches 5G Services with Six-Year Nationwide Rollout Plan

Algeria has officially launched its 5G services, marking a major milestone in the country's telecommunications modernization and the start of a phased national rollout that will span six years. The government confirmed that telecom operators can now begin installing 5G sites and preparing commercial offers for both consumers and businesses, as part of a structured national deployment strategy. The rollout will begin with eight pilot provinces before gradually expanding across the country to ensure balanced and sustainable coverage. The launch follows the formal awarding of 5G licenses in July 2025 to Algeria's three main operators Mobilis, Djezzy, and Ooredoo. The licensing framework, published in the Official Gazette on November 24, outlines the technical, financial, and coverage obligations tied to the rollout. The total value of the licenses stands at 63.9 billion dinars, equivalent to approximately $492 million. Authorities described the introduction of 5G as a critical enabler for the next phase of Algeria's digital economy, supporting advanced technologies such as artificial intelligence, cloud computing, the Internet of Things, and smart mobility solutions. Key sectors including healthcare, industry, education, and transportation are expected to benefit. Earlier network tests conducted by Mobilis in February 2025 recorded speeds of up to 1.2 gigabits per second. Despite the launch, challenges remain. High infrastructure deployment costs could influence the pace and geographic balance of coverage. International studies estimate that base 5G deployment costs range between $3 billion and $8 billion, with an additional 20 to 35 percent required for nationwide expansion. This raise concerns that early adoption may concentrate in high-revenue urban areas. Device affordability also remains a barrier, with entry-level 5G smartphones starting at around $150, a price point that remains out of reach for many consumers without financing options.

Saudi Vision 2030 Accelerates Cybersecurity Innovation as Global Firms Deepen Local Partnerships at Black Hat MEA

At Black Hat MEA in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia's rapid digital transformation under Saudi Vision 2030 took center stage, highlighting one of the world's fastest-advancing cybersecurity ecosystems. As the Kingdom builds mega-projects at unprecedented scale, international security companies are racing to support national ambitions — but success hinges on trust, local engagement, and long-term partnership models. According to Pete Harteveld, CEO of Exabeam, the company's approach to community engagement sets it apart. Exabeam prioritizes education for partners, graduates, and the broader cybersecurity workforce, focusing not just on product capabilities but on strengthening Saudi Arabia's overall defensive skills. As the Kingdom adopts new technologies at high speed, traditional adoption cycles are being surpassed. Harteveld emphasized the need for companies to act as "good stewards" of cybersecurity talent — ensuring local professionals can advance alongside national digital transformation efforts. Exabeam's strategy centers on augmenting existing SIEM infrastructures with AI-driven threat detection rather than replacing them. This flexibility has fueled strong regional momentum: the company posted 21% growth in Saudi Arabia between 2024 and 2025, with projections for continued double-digit expansion in 2026. With over 90% of its global business driven through partners, Exabeam's heavy investment in local sales, engineering, support, and product teams remains key to its performance. The company also launched a Customer Innovation Center in Riyadh, a dedicated hub designed to showcase AI-powered cybersecurity for IT, OT, and IoT environments. The center serves as a regional venue for

training, collaboration, and hands-on engagement with customers, partners, and students. Looking across the Middle East, Harteveld noted that SOC teams are increasingly comfortable adopting AI as hybrid environments mature. With improved cloud readiness and AI integration, security operations are expected to achieve higher levels of speed, efficiency, and automation. As Saudi Arabia continues to modernize its digital infrastructure, the Kingdom is emerging as a global model for cybersecurity maturity. The message from industry leaders at Black Hat MEA is clear: technology excellence must be paired with local partnerships, community investment, and talent development to secure the Kingdom's digital future.

Pakistan Sets 100 Mbps Minimum Broadband Target Under New National Ferberization Policy

Pakistan is moving toward a major digital infrastructure overhaul as the Ministry of IT and Telecommunication sets a nationwide minimum fixed broadband speed of 100 Mbps. The initiative forms part of the World Bank–supported Digital Economy Enhancement Project and aims to establish the country's first National Ferberization Policy and Plan. Central to the policy is the expansion of fixed broadband through 8–10 million new fiber-based house passes. The Ministry also plans to strengthen mobile network performance by ensuring that 80 percent of telecom towers are connected to fiber, supporting stronger 4G networks and preparing the groundwork for future 5G rollout. These targets are designed to position Pakistan among the top 50 countries in Ookla's global speed rankings. A consulting firm will be engaged to conduct a nationwide fiber gap assessment. This will include mapping existing networks, analyzing service quality and coverage, and identifying issues related to latency, penetration, and operator incentives. The firm will benchmark Pakistan's progress using global indicators such as the Fiber Development Index. Based on this assessment, the consultant will develop a complete National Ferberization Strategy and Operational Plan. This will outline investment requirements, financing models, governance structures, and bankable feasibility studies for public-private partnership participation. Priority deployment zones and measures to boost network resilience against natural disasters and cyber threats will also be included. Legal and regulatory reforms are expected to form a key part of the policy. Recommendations may cover spectrum rules, backhaul incentives, and steps to lower capital costs for operators to accelerate broadband expansion. Once finalized, the National Ferberization Policy will serve as a cornerstone document for Pakistan's digital future, supporting faster, more reliable, and more affordable internet access for users nationwide.

Kuwait is Working to Develop Its Digital Infrastructure

Minister of State for Communication Affairs Omar Al-Omar affirmed that Kuwait is working to enhance its digital infrastructure through ongoing projects aimed at strengthening technological systems, improving operational efficiency, and expanding the adoption of digital solutions across government entities. Speaking at the three-day technology exhibition "Nexus 2025," Al-Omar said the country's digital strategy is part of continuous national efforts to raise the quality of public services, improve user experience, create a supportive environment for advanced technologies, and advance the path of digital integration. The exhibition highlights the latest innovations from entrepreneurs as well as emerging future technologies. Al-Omar pointed to the strong support of the political leadership for digital integration and the government's commitment to developing the digital environment, adopting policies that enhance efficiency across various sectors, establishing clear foundations for data management, and expanding public–private partnerships. He noted that the strategy includes empowering national talent with advanced skills in programming, data science, cloud computing, and cybersecurity—"the first line of defense for the digital system"—through initiatives designed to build specialized capabilities that improve service quality and operational performance. Al-Omar added that the event reflects Kuwait's commitment to strengthening its digital infrastructure, supporting innovation, and creating an environment capable of meeting the demands of the digital economy in line with Kuwait Vision 2035, which aims to build a diversified, knowledge-based economy. The Nexus 2025 exhibition, he said, serves as an important platform for showcasing emerging technologies, exchanging expertise, and exploring opportunities for cooperation and investment—thus supporting Kuwait's innovation ecosystem and enhancing the country's regional and global digital standing. He explained that the exhibition brings together government entities with technological initiatives, national and international companies, SMEs, and youth-led projects, continuing its role as a platform that fosters creativity and opens new avenues for collaboration. Al-Omar also expressed his gratitude to participants, sponsors, and organizers for their contributions, asking God Almighty to grant the event success and support Kuwait's journey toward a prosperous digital future. Basma Al-Jassem, Acting Director of the National Fund for Small and Medium Enterprise Development, said that despite Kuwait's considerable potential, the contribution of SMEs remains below national expectations. Efforts are therefore underway to create a supportive environment, establish a clear growth path, and strengthen the sector through sustained and consistent measures. Al-Jassem noted that global studies show SMEs typically contribute 40–50 percent of GDP in many economies and provide roughly 70 percent of employment opportunities. She said the National Fund is working to foster a business environment that enables projects to grow sustainably, supports existing ventures, streamlines procedures, and integrates its operations digitally with government entities to ensure clarity for entrepreneurs. She added that the Fund has recently focused on developing tools and policies that help entrepreneurs overcome

challenges and address struggling projects in a way that balances safeguarding public funds with enabling committed entrepreneurs to continue. She emphasized that SMEs are not merely commercial activities but spaces for developing skills, building expertise, and transforming ideas into economic value. The technology sector, she said, represents a major opportunity for Kuwaiti youth and an even greater opportunity for Kuwait's economy to diversify and enhance competitiveness. Al-Jassem thanked the organizers of Nexus 2025 and the participating entrepreneurs, whose presence, she said, confirms Kuwait's capacity for development and innovation. For his part, Amer Hayat, Head of the Policy and Regulation Sector at the Communications and Information Technology Regulatory Authority (CITRA), speaking on behalf of CITRA Chairman Khaled Al-Zamel, said that enabling a sophisticated, secure, and equitable digital infrastructure that places people at the center of technological transformation has been a clear objective since the Authority's establishment. Hayat added that CITRA has evolved beyond its traditional regulatory role and has become a key driver of sector development. It has worked to enhance telecommunications readiness, expand 5G services, protect consumer rights, support government digital transformation, increase market competitiveness, strengthen cybersecurity, and monitor network performance in the field. He highlighted a major recent initiative—the national project to measure the quality and coverage of telecommunications networks in Kuwait. The project covers more than 15,000 kilometers, including cities, suburbs, islands, vital sites, and highways, to create a neutral digital map of network performance and coverage quality. He stressed that the project relies not on impressions but on international standards issued by the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) and the European Telecommunications Standards Institute (ETSI), ensuring reliable results that reflect reality. According to the findings, telecommunications companies in Kuwait provide excellent coverage— including 5G—exceeding 95 percent nationwide. This achievement, he said, places Kuwait among the best regionally and globally and enhances user confidence in the quality of digital services.

China Launches Satellite IoT Trial

Various local media reported China embarked on a major trial of satellite IoT, enabling suitable businesses to provide services to steer development of the sector and help bridge gaps in terrestrial coverage. The reports indicate the two-year trial was announced by the Ministry of Industry and Information Technology (MIIT) during the fifth China 5G + Industrial Internet conference, a three-day event which closed on 23 November. Companies which meet government criteria can apply to offer commercial services within current legal and regulatory frameworks. Vital Global stated China hopes to advance its aerospace economy by boosting the variety of satellite communications equipment, along with ascertaining the business case for the remote IoT option. An expert told the outlet there may be benefits for agricultural and emergency services, and predicted the trial would attract more investment in all aspects of the satellite sector. Tech in Asia added maritime, aquaculture, logistics and energy to the list of sectors the trial could benefit. The outlet noted the satellite IoT trial is commencing three months after the MIIT released details of likely rules and regulations covering the sector to encourage growth by simplifying requirements to enter the market. Global Times noted the government is also keen

to ensure security and hopes to spur an economy based on low-altitude communications. Yicai Global reported most satellite IoT runs on low Earth orbit birds, with key domestic names including China Unicom among the companies operating constellations in the range.

AST SpaceMobile Readies BlueBird 6 for Space Broadband Launch

AST SpaceMobile, the company building the first and only space-based cellular broadband network accessible directly by everyday smartphones, designed for both commercial and government applications, announced BlueBird 6, a U.S. licensed satellite, is scheduled to launch on December 15th from the Satish Dhawan Space Center in India. BlueBird 6 is the first of AST SpaceMobile's next-generation satellites. When launched, it will feature the largest commercial phased array in low Earth orbit at nearly 2,400 square feet. This represents 3.5 times increase in size over BlueBirds 1-5 and supports 10 times the data capacity. AST SpaceMobile is accelerating production with 40 satellites equivalent of microns on track to be completed by early 2026. The company expects five orbital launches by the end of Q1 2026, with launches occurring every one to two months on average to reach 45–60 satellites launched by the end of 2026 and support continuous coverage across the United States and select markets. This ramp-up is supported by nearly 500,000 square feet of manufacturing and operations facilities worldwide, including roughly 400,000 square feet in the United States, and a global workforce of nearly 1,800 people, the overwhelming majority of whom are based in the U.S. The exact timing of orbital launches is subject to change based on a number of factors, including launch readiness of the launch provider, weather conditions, and other factors, many of which are beyond our control. Members of the public will be able to watch a live broadcast on the launch day on AST SpaceMobile's YouTube channel. Abel Avellan, Founder, Chairman and CEO of AST SpaceMobile said, our next-generation satellites will soon enable ubiquitous cellular broadband coverage direct to everyday smartphones from space. As an American company, we are proud to demonstrate U.S. leadership in space innovation while pioneering the next era of global connectivity.

Amazon Leo previews satellite service

Amazon Leo formally Project Kulper began previewing a satellite internet service to select enterprise customers ahead of a broader rollout in 2026 and announced final production design of a new antenna. The preview program allows enterprise customers to test Amazon Leo services and hardware to provide it with additional feedback and enable it to tailor its offerings. Early participants include airline JetBlue, rural connectivity provider Vanu and clean energy company Hunt Energy Network. Amazon states its new Leo Ultra is the fastest commercial phased array antenna available, offering download rates of up to 1Gb/s and up to 400Mb/s upload. The antenna is powered by a custom silicon chip designed by Amazon Leo, using the company's proprietary RF design and signal processing algorithms. Amazon Leo offers two main private networking services. With Direct to AWS, cloud customers can connect to their workloads using a transit or direct connect gateway through a point-and-click interface on the Leo web console. The company states the approach reduces latency and simplifies management. Enterprises and telecoms service providers can also establish private network interconnects at major colocation facilities to connect remote locations directly to their data centers or core networks, reducing deployment time

from months to days. Amazon Leo currently has 150 birds in orbit, with a goal of launching half of its planned total of 3,236 satellites by July 2026, as required by the US Federal Communications Commission. In addition to Space X's Starlink, Amazon Leo faces competition EchoStar, AST SpaceMobile, Lynk Global/Omnispace and SES.

Viasat's New Satellite Increases Capacity Where Needed in Real-Time

Viasat has launched its next-gen satellite to increase capacity and successfully demonstrated a new real-time data relay service for NASA. The demands on satellite connectivity have splintered into two distinct, pressing needs: raw bandwidth scale to manage data-heavy applications, and proven network resilience for real-time, mission-essential functions. Viasat's latest developments aim to address these needs. The first development is the successful launch of the ViaSat-3 Flight 2 (F2) satellite. Once operational in its geostationary orbit, this single satellite is anticipated to double the overall bandwidth capacity of Viasat's entire existing fleet. Rather than just more bandwidth, the satellite provides smarter and more flexible capacity. The satellite's dynamic beam forming capabilities enable it to concentrate its Ka-band capacity to areas where demand is highest. This flexibility is the key strategic element for enterprises. It allows Viasat to, in theory, allocate bandwidth to a busy airport hub during peak travel times and then redirect that same capacity to follow maritime shipping lanes or serve a remote energy platform hours later. This adaptability is purpose-built for mobility, logistics, and defence customers whose bandwidth demands are not static. Mark Dankberg, Chairman and CEO of Viasat, said: "Beyond an incredible capacity increase, ViaSat-3 F2's dynamic beam forming capabilities will greatly benefit our customers by efficiently deploying bandwidth to the highest demand places, allowing us to scale performance and the number and density of users. "These capabilities will continue to fuel our successful, multi-orbit service offerings, including service platforms such as Viasat Amara, NexusWave, and a resilient, hybrid SATCOM architecture for government." Following its launch from Cape Canaveral, Viasat's new satellite is now moving to its final orbital position. After extensive testing, it is expected to enter service in early 2026. Following its launch from Cape Canaveral, Viasat's new satellite is now moving to its final orbital position. After extensive testing, it is expected to enter service in early 2026. The operational problem this solves is the risk of communication "blackouts" that occur when a launch vehicle flies beyond the line-of-sight of ground stations. Viasat's solution used its global L-band satellite network to provide a persistent and real-time data connection to successfully transmit flight data back to the launch operations center.

Thuraya Launches in South Africa with Thuraya-4 Satellite Rollout

Thuraya, the subsidiary of Space42 (ADX: SPACE42), the UAE-based AI-powered SpaceTech company with global reach, announced the commercial rollout of its next-generation mobile communications satellite, Thuraya-4, in South Africa. The expansion marks Thuraya's complete portfolio operational presence in the country and a major milestone in bringing reliable satellite connectivity to one of Africa's fastest-growing digital markets. The rollout expands national coverage and strengthens critical communications across essential sectors. Thuraya-4 supports the nation's digital inclusion goals outlined in South Africa's Vision 2030, improves operational efficiency for industry and government verticals, and complements the country's growing investment in space and telecommunications infrastructure. Sulaiman Al Ali, Chief Commercial Officer at Space42 said: "Thuraya has delivered mobile satellite services across Europe, Africa, Asia, and Australia for over 20 years, supporting customers where coverage and continuity are essential. South Africa's focus on digital inclusion and infrastructure resilience makes it an important addition to that journey. As a UAE-based company, we see strong alignment in how both countries view connectivity as a driver of economic resilience. Through Thuraya-4, we are proud to support that shared ambition." Thuraya-4 strengthens South Africa's most connectivity-dependent industries, including energy, mining, maritime, civil government, and humanitarian operations. Aligned with South Africa's digital inclusion priorities, it extends communications networks to remote and high-risk areas, and enhances productivity, operational efficiency, safety, and continuity in sectors vital to the country's economy. Thuraya enters the market in close collaboration with South African regulators and industry partners, ensuring alignment with local connectivity goals and shared digital growth ambitions. Thuraya-4 introduces mobility and reliability beyond the limits of conventional satcom systems. While most networks are built for fixed, high-bandwidth access, Thuraya-4 is designed for mission-critical communications where reach, security, and resilience are essential. Its advanced L-band payload and software-defined architecture allocates bandwidth

and power dynamically, configures coverage intelligently, and supports seamless interoperability with terrestrial networks even in adverse weather or isolated regions. This combination of mobility and endurance ensures uninterrupted service for sectors that rely on continuous communication. Thuraya's expansion into South Africa reflects Space42's broader strategy to extend digital access and strengthen geospatial infrastructure across Africa. In Zimbabwe, Space42 has connected over 1,000 schools and 500 clinics and plans to reach 2,500 more schools serving 1.9 million students. In Rwanda, its subsidiary Mira Aerospace conducted the world's first 5G video call from a fixed-wing High-Altitude Platform Station, demonstrating how airborne systems can extend broadband coverage where satellites and terrestrial networks cannot. In South Africa Space42 offers coverage via Yahclick, enabling reliable broadband access. Through the Map Africa Initiative, Space42, Microsoft, and Esri are building the continent's most comprehensive base map using satellite imagery and AI analytics. The program supports infrastructure planning, resource management, and climate-resilient development in partnership with regional and national institutions.

Ofcom Temporarily Grants Starlink More Spectrum in the UK

Ofcom has announced it has granted permission for SpaceX's Starlink satellite constellation to use the E band (71–76GHz and 81–86GHz) spectrum to increase the backhaul capacity. The spectrum will be used to transmit data to and from three of the company's ground stations in Morn Hill (Hampshire), Wherstead (Suffolk), and Woodwalton (Cambridgeshire). Starlink wrote to Ofcom in December 2024 to request the spectrum, saying it was facing "capacity constraints in the UK due to increased demand". It argued that accessing the spectrum would provide improved latency and service quality, allowing it to compete in the market more effectively, as well as providing increased redundancy for existing fiber broadband networks. Starlink also said that it would potentially reduce costs for customers, by allowing it to serve customers more effectively without needing to build more expensive gateways. Starlink had 87,000 UK customers, comprising both residential and enterprise users, at the end of 2024. The E band spectrum is currently used in the UK for fixed services (i.e., wireless links typically used for backhaul), but this is up for debate. The licenses currently expire at the end of 2028, with Ofcom indicating that temporary licenses could be made permanent after this date, depending on the results of the relevant consultation. For now, however, Ofcom is keen to stress that the future of this spectrum is far from certain. "Granting these temporary authorizations does not prejudge the outcome of our future consultation process on proposals for longer-term access to E band for satellite gateways and does not provide any assurance that Starlink will be able to access this spectrum at these sites, or on these terms, beyond the end date of the temporary licenses," Ofcom said in a statement.

BT Group, Starlink Partner to Deliver High-Speed Satellite Broadband Across the UK

BT Group and Starlink announced a landmark agreement which will bring Starlink's reliable, high-speed, low-latency satellite connectivity to BT and EE consumer broadband customers, complementing BT Group's industry-leading fibre and mobile networks to ensure no community is left behind in the digital age. The collaboration – a first in the UK and one of the first globally – will see BT Group offer ultrafast, low-latency satellite connectivity to customers in rural and remote areas where traditional fixed-line infrastructure is economically unviable or geographically challenging to build. With Starlink quick to deploy and capable of delivering download speeds of up to 280 Mbps, the agreement marks a significant milestone in making high-speed internet connectivity widely accessible within the hardest to reach parts of the UK – with the service expected to be available to customers in the latter half of 2026. Fast and reliable home internet is increasingly critical to everyday life, supporting everything from online gaming and streaming TV shows, to enabling efficient home working and ensuring access to education and other vital services. The integration of Starlink's satellite technology into its networks offering complements BT Group's ongoing fiber build, with its Openreach division recently surpassing the 20m premises milestone as part of its nationwide full fiber upgrade program– on track to reach 25m premises by the end of next year and with an ambition to reach 30m by 2030. Working alongside Starlink aligns with BT Group's wider space connectivity strategy, as well as its long-standing history in satellite communications. Its Madley Communications Centre is approaching its 50th year of operation, supporting broadcast, backhaul and resiliency needs, while low Earth orbit satellite, including that provided by Starlink's constellation, is an important and growing component of EE's mobile backhaul network – particularly in rural locations.

EchoStar strikes $2.6B spectrum deal with SpaceX

EchoStar agreed a deal to sell its unpaired AWS-3 licenses for approximately $2.6 billion in return for SpaceX stock and named co-founder Charlie Ergen as its new CEO following the formation of a new business called EchoStar Capital. The transaction builds on the $17 billion agreement the companies entered into in September which sold AWS-4 and H-block spectrum licenses to Elon Musk-owned SpaceX. The deal will close after receiving customary regulatory approvals. Hamid Akhavan served as president and CEO of the company but is now chief of EchoStar Capital with former chair Ergen resuming the roles of president and CEO of EchoStar. EchoStar Capital will be responsible for investing new capital from the recent spectrum transactions "in order to fuel future growth opportunities for EchoStar Corporation". Ergen now assumes the operating responsibility for the pay-TV and wireless business units. "EchoStar will soon be in the unique position of having substantial available capital, vastly changing its scope of opportunities," Akhavan stated. "Through EchoStar Capital we will fuel EchoStar's growth into new and complementary arenas, beyond its successful pay-TV, wireless and enterprise business units." Akhavan noted the latest transaction with SpaceX, in addition to previously announced spectrum transition and commercial agreements, "will strengthen EchoStar's ability to develop new business opportunities and growth in value for our shareholders". "The combination of AWS-3 uplink, AWS-4 and H-block spectrum from EchoStar with the rocket launch and satellite manufacturing capabilities from SpaceX accelerates the realization of powerful and economical direct-to-cell service offerings for consumers and enterprises worldwide, including our Boost Mobile customers," he stated. Tim Farrar, an analyst at TMF Associates, told Mobile World Live the deal gives SpaceX more terrestrial options with Band 70 and it also might make it easier for Verizon to buy EchoStar's paired AWS-3. He said the rumor SpaceX will buy Apple-backed Globalstar for $10 billion seems less likely now Bloomberg reported 30 October Globalstar was exploring a potential sale and held early discussions with SpaceX.

Jordan Unveils Forward-Looking Digital Transformation Strategy for 2026–2028

Jordan's Minister of Digital Economy and Entrepreneurship, Eng. Sami Samirat, announced that the newly approved 2026–2028 national digital transformation strategy is built on a clear, future-oriented vision aimed at making the Kingdom digitally empowered, secure and competitive. The strategy focuses on leveraging advanced technologies to accelerate economic growth, improve public services and enhance overall quality of life. Samirat told Petra that the strategy is grounded in core principles such as citizen-centric design, proactive and seamless services, data-driven governance, digital inclusion, flexibility, "digital by design," and the "enter once" approach. These principles aim to ensure that government processes become more efficient, integrated and responsive to public needs. The strategy outlines several major objectives, including building a comprehensive digital economy, delivering smart and unified government services, strengthening digital infrastructure, enabling agile legal and regulatory frameworks, ensuring strong national data governance and accelerating digital inclusion. It also reinforces the importance of partnerships across government and the private sector. National enablers supporting the strategy include digital payments, cybersecurity, 5G and fiber-optic networks, digital identity systems, government platforms and advanced capabilities in data and emerging technologies. These components align with Jordan's economic modernization vision and public sector reform program. A detailed implementation plan includes 57 projects covering digital identity and e-signature, the Sanad app, data governance, digital health and education, cybersecurity frameworks, open data expansion, 5G deployment, and the development of a green digital economy.

Samirat emphasized that the strategy marks a national step forward in strengthening digital readiness, improving government performance, advancing competitiveness and fostering a secure, innovative digital ecosystem. It serves as the executive roadmap for supporting economic modernization and reflects the directives of His Majesty King Abdullah II on enhancing digital governance. The Cabinet approved the strategy and its executive plan last Sunday. Developed using international best practices, data-driven methodologies and wide public consultation, the plan builds on the achievements of the 2020 digital transformation strategy as it concludes its cycle.

Pakistan Launches First Sovereign AI Cloud to Keep National Data Inside the Country

Pakistan has launched its first locally hosted artificial intelligence cloud, a major milestone that enables sensitive national data to stay within the country while giving businesses, researchers, and government institutions access to high-performance AI computing for the first time. Developed through a partnership between Telenor Pakistan and Data Vault Pakistan, the sovereign AI cloud is hosted entirely onshore inside Data Vault's high-density AI data center, ensuring full compliance with national regulations and security frameworks. Until now, Pakistan relied on foreign cloud servers for AI workloads, raising concerns over financial data privacy, telecom metadata protection, and national security. "This is how Pakistan moves from consuming AI to producing it," said Data Vault Pakistan CEO Mehwish Salman Ali, calling the launch a national capability that allows organizations to train, deploy, and scale AI models without sending any data abroad. The platform is designed for high-intensity workloads such as training large language models, video analytics, fraud detection, generative AI, and real-time processing—tasks that require powerful GPUs. Through GPU-as-a-Service, companies can now rent NVIDIA-grade compute on demand, avoiding costly hardware imports and shortages. Key national sectors stand to benefit immediately: finance (fraud monitoring, AML), health care (diagnostics and medical imaging), telecom (metadata analytics), logistics (predictive automation), manufacturing (industrial AI), and government services (secure digital governance). The system keeps all categories of sensitive data—financial, medical, telecom, and public records—inside Pakistan's borders, aligning with SBP, PTA, health regulations, and emerging AI safety guidelines. Officials say the initiative strengthens data sovereignty, boosts cybersecurity, improves auditability, and provides the foundation for local AI innovation, including Urdu and regional-language models. With sovereign GPU capacity now available, Pakistani startups and researchers can build next-generation AI systems domestically instead of depending on offshore platforms. The Telenor–Data Vault cloud places Pakistan among a growing group of nations building sovereign AI clouds to power their digital economies, marking a shift from AI consumption to AI creation.

Pakistan Boosts Global Digital Connectivity with Launch of SEA-ME-WE 6 Submarine Cable

Pakistan has significantly expanded its international bandwidth with the deployment of the SEA-ME-WE 6 submarine cable system — a 19,200-km high-capacity fiber network stretching from Singapore to France. The new system delivers more than 100 Tbps of total capacity and provides one of the lowest-latency Asia–Middle East–Europe routes, strengthening resilience and diversity across some of the world's busiest data corridors. The consortium behind the project includes Transworld Associates (Pakistan), Bangladesh Submarine Cable Company, Bharti Airtel, Dhiraagu, Djibouti Telecom, Mobily, Orange, Singtel, Sri Lanka Telecom, Telecom Egypt, Telekom Malaysia and Telin. SEA-ME-WE 6 offers more fiber pairs and double the capacity of earlier SEA-ME-WE systems, with geo-diversified trans-Egypt landings to improve fault tolerance. Pakistan has been allocated 13.2 Tbps on the system, with 4 Tbps activated immediately—a major upgrade that will support cloud platforms, data centers, fintech, e-commerce, streaming, and the wider digital economy. The new route enhances redundancy, reduces network ownership costs for operators, and strengthens Pakistan's position within the global internet backbone.

Saudi Arabia Ranks Third Globally in Digital Government, Says DGA Governor

The Digital Government Authority (DGA) Governor, Eng. Ahmed Alsuwaiyan, has announced that the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia now ranks third globally and first regionally in international digital government indicators, positioning it as a leading model in using technology to serve humanity. Speaking at the Fourth Digital Government Forum 2025, held under the theme "Our Future is Now," Alsuwaiyan attributed this achievement to the unwavering support of Saudi leadership and the strategic implementation of Vision 2030 programs that continue to drive the Kingdom's digital transformation. "While tools and technologies evolve, our goals remain the same — to raise productivity, enhance efficiency, and deliver a superior beneficiary experience," Alsuwaiyan said. He commended government entities for their rapid progress, moving beyond basic digital transformation toward the integration of artificial intelligence (AI) in public services, significantly improving decision-making, service delivery, and citizen satisfaction.

Key Highlights from the Forum

Digital Content Efficiency Index 2025 achieved a score of 76.24%, reflecting improved quality and accessibility across government digital platforms.

Winners of the Digital Government Award 2025 were announced, honoring entities that demonstrated excellence in innovation, service design, and citizen engagement.

The Innovation Challenge (GovJam) 2025 finalists were recognized for their creative digital solutions to enhance public sector efficiency. The first day of the forum featured specialized sessions, leadership dialogues, and workshops focusing on AI adoption, digital innovation, and emerging technologies in governance. The Digital Saudi Exhibition, running alongside the event, hosts over 40 public and private organizations showcasing cutting-edge digital initiatives that embody the Kingdom's vision of a smart, inclusive, and innovation-driven future.

Saudi Arabia to Showcase US$14.9 Billion Tech Investment at Web Summit 2025

Invest Saudi will highlight the Kingdom's $14.9 billion technology investment portfolio at Web Summit 2025 in Lisbon, positioning Saudi Arabia as a global hub for artificial intelligence, e-commerce, and logistics innovation under Vision 2030. With a digital economy projected to reach $76 billion by 2030, Saudi Arabia is leveraging its vast connectivity infrastructure — including 1,300 megawatts of data-center capacity and 20 subsea cables — to anchor its regional digital leadership. Joining the Invest Saudi delegation are key entities such as the Special Integrated Logistics Zone Company, a 3 million m² development near King Khalid International Airport that offers 100% foreign ownership and tax relief incentives, expected to create 60,000 jobs. The Quality of Life Program will present JOIN, a new initiative promoting Saudi Arabia's lifestyle economy, while the National Cybersecurity Authority will showcase its Cybersecurity Accelerator Program, which has supported over 45

start-ups globally. Saudi Arabia's Premium Residency program, launched in 2019, continues to attract entrepreneurs and investors, offering residency and business rights that complement the nation's broader tech and innovation ecosystem. Collectively, these initiatives reinforce the Kingdom's growing status as a digital investment destination and gateway between East and West.

stc, Mobily, and OneWeb NEOM Among Winners at inaugural Connected World KSA Awards

Connected World KSA is proud to reveal the winners of its first-ever Connected World KSA Awards, presented during the event at Riyadh Front Exhibition & Conference Center. The awards recognize organizations and initiatives driving innovation, connectivity, and digital transformation across the Kingdom.

The 2025 winners are:

Digital Infrastructure Innovation: OneWeb NEOM

Borderless Connectivity: STC & Ciena

Smart Society: Mobily

Next-Gen Talent & Inclusion: Zain KSA

AI for Operations: Nokia

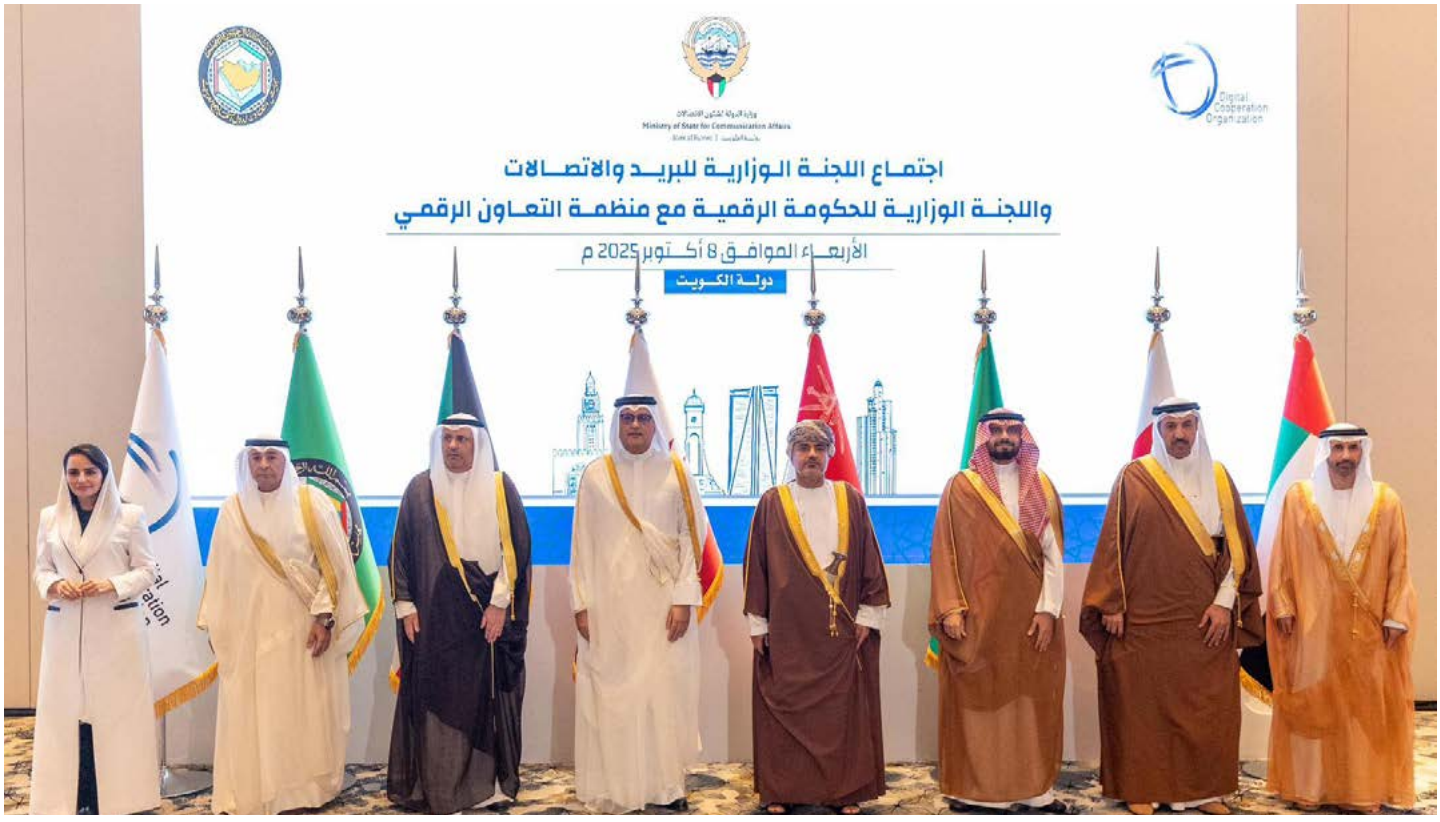
"These awards highlight the organizations and projects shaping the future of connectivity and digital innovation in Saudi Arabia," said Edwards Haines, Project Director of Connected World KSA. "We are proud to recognize the achievements of this year's winners, who exemplify the vision, ingenuity, and commitment required to drive digital transformation in the region." The inaugural Connected World KSA Awards reflect the Kingdom's growing role as a hub for technology innovation and its commitment to building a smarter, more connected society. Winners were selected by a panel of industry experts and leaders, acknowledging outstanding contributions to infrastructure, connectivity, AI, and talent development.

CST Wins Several Awards at Digital Government Forum 2025

The Communications, Space and Technology Commission (CST) secured several awards and recognitions at the fourth Digital Government Forum in Riyadh. CST's achievements include ranking 10th overall in the Digital Transformation Index 2025 with a score of 93.3%; placing first among the Technology, Transport, and Media Group; and receiving the Maturity Certificate for the Free and Open-Source Software Adoption at level 3. The CST received a certificate of excellence in the best e-participation initiative category for developing the Regulations Platform, which facilitated the lifecycle of regulations and the public consultation process using generative artificial intelligence (GenAI). The organization's achievement of the 10th rank in the Digital Transformation Measurement continues its streak of excellence, positioning it among the top six government entities for three consecutive years. It achieved fifth place in the 2022 measurement with a score of 90.8%, third place in 2023 with 93.25%, and sixth place in 2024 with 93.84%. Furthermore, the organization secured first place for the third consecutive time in the Emerging Technologies Adoption Readiness Index for the years 2023, 2024, and 2025. Its organizational distinction is demonstrated by the development and implementation of over 60 digital projects and the creation of a human-resources development plan that includes numerous skill-building initiatives and training programs. The authority earned the Maturity Certificate for the Free and Open-Source Software Adoption following its work on implementing a project to adopt the software. The effort is part of the authority's commitment to achieving the goals of Saudi Vision 2030 and enhancing governmental digital transformation. The project aims to support local innovation and technical independence through developing open-source solutions, thus enhancing government spending efficiency, promoting integration among entities, and achieving digital sovereignty. It also focuses on building national capabilities and enabling technical talent to develop innovative and sustainable digital solutions. Winning the Best e-Participation Initiative Award reflects the CST's efforts in digital transformation, particularly through the governance of the platform overseeing the lifecycle of regulatory documents. The lifecycle consists of three key stages: issuance of the regulatory document, public consultation and preparation of a feedback report, and final approval and publication. The platform has reduced the time needed to analyze public feedback by 90% through employing AI to process evaluations and comments and automatically generate results reports. It has also achieved a 95% user satisfaction rate. The CST received recognition in risk and business continuity management in the Digital Transformation Measurement 2025 due to its excellence in enhancing its ability to identify risks that could hinders the continuity of its digital services and safeguard the flow of operations.

GCC Places Great Importance on Relationship with Digital Cooperation Organization

Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) Secretary-General Jasem Albudaiwi stated that the GCC General Secretariat places great importance on its relationship with the Digital Cooperation Organization (DCO). "This comes as part of the efforts to solidify cooperation and partnership with active organizations in the fields of telecommunications and digital transformation. These efforts were crowned by the signing of a memorandum of understanding (MoU) between the GCC General Secretariat and the DCO in 2021, which established a fruitful institutional framework for exchanging expertise and enhancing joint cooperation in developing the digital economy and enabling our societies to benefit from its promising opportunities," the secretary-general stated. The statement was made during his speech in the State of Kuwait at the meeting of the Ministerial Committee for Post and Telecommunications and the Ministerial Committee for Digital Government. The meeting featured the participation of the DCO. The meeting was chaired by Kuwaiti Minister of State for Communications Affairs and president of the current session Omar Saud Al Omar and attended by the members of the Ministerial Committee for Post and Telecommunications and the Ministerial Committee for Digital Government, as well as the DCO. Albudaiwi stated that the constructive cooperation yielded significant achievements and tangible results. Among the most prominent is the preparation and exchange of regulatory frameworks and guidelines related to the telecommunications and information-technology (IT) sector, in addition to the provision of technical and legal consultations and studies, which have contributed to developing a legislative and regulatory environment that stimulates innovation and digital transformation. "The GCC General Secretariat hosted the 4th Diplomatic Connect event of the DCO in December 2024, with the participation of a number of ministers and ambassadors from the GCC and DCO member states and attended by more than 120 leading figures in the global digital economy. This meeting served as a high-level platform for exchanging visions and expertise on the future of international digital cooperation," Albudaiwi said. "Additionally, nine roundtable sessions for the Digital Space Accelerators (DSA) were held during 2023 and 2024, with the participation of approximately 10 experts and policymakers from GCC countries, aimed at studying challenges and proposing solutions to enable a prosperous, inclusive, and sustainable digital economy," the secretary-general highlighted. He also pointed out that, in implementation of the decision by the Ministerial Committee for Post and Telecommunications and the Ministerial Committee for Digital Government in October 2024, the GCC General Secretariat hosted the joint dialogue session between the GCC and the DCO in August 2025 to discuss the outcomes of the roundtable sessions, with the participation of more than 80 participants from GCC countries and relevant regional organizations. The secretary-general also said that in August of this year, the General Secretariat of the GCC and the General Secretariat of the DCO implemented the executive program for cooperation between the two sides. The program aims to enhance expertise and build knowledge to develop tools, mechanisms, and reports that contribute to raising the efficiency of work that strengthens the digital economy of the member states.



Oman Completes 25 Digital Projects Under National Transformation Program 'Tahawul'

Oman's Ministry of Transport, Communications and Information Technology (MTCIT) has announced the successful completion of 25 digital projects and initiatives under the National Program for Digital Transformation (Tahawul), marking a 100% completion rate. An additional 11 projects are in progress, with 80% of work already completed. This achievement represents a major milestone in advancing Oman Vision 2040, which aims to digitize government services, enhance transparency, and improve user experience across all sectors. Among the completed initiatives are several flagship projects, including the Unified Government Services Portal and its mobile app, providing citizens and residents with a single digital gateway to access government services. Other key projects include the National Open Data Portal, Thiqa (National Digital Trust Services), a Central Smart Chat Platform, and the Simplification and Engineering of Government Services Procedures Project designed to streamline public service delivery. MTCIT has also completed the National Records Centre, linking enterprise databases to improve data quality, and a strategic public-private partnership framework to drive institutional digital transformation. Additional initiatives include developing a national change management strategy, a digital service design framework, and tools to support e-participation and citizen engagement. According to Abdulaziz bin Abdulrahman Al Kharousi, Director General of Digital Transformation and Sector Empowerment at MTCIT, these efforts have significantly strengthened Oman's position in global e-government and digital competitiveness rankings. Between January and May 2025, more than 11.4 million digital transactions were recorded across 48 government entities, with 381 shared services simplified and 16 integrated user journeys designed. The Governorate Ambassadors Digital Transformation Initiative, which promotes digital literacy and community empowerment, has also been completed, alongside regional innovation projects such as smart lighting, AI-powered monitoring of slaughterhouses, drone-assisted construction oversight, and inspection smart glasses. Kharousi noted that the Tahawul program continues to drive innovation, sustainability, and efficiency across government operations, consolidating Oman's role as a regional leader in digital transformation.

Saudi and Bahraini Ministers Discuss AI and Digital Economy Cooperation in Kuwait

Saudi Minister of Communications and Information Technology Abdullah bin Amer Al-Swaha met with Bahrain's Minister of Transportation and Telecommunications Dr. Sheikh Abdullah Al-Khalifa to discuss enhancing collaboration in artificial intelligence, digital innovation, and entrepreneurship, according to the Saudi Press Agency (SPA). The meeting, held on the sidelines of the GCC Ministerial Committee for Post and Telecommunications in Kuwait, focused on strengthening technical integration and expanding bilateral cooperation to support the region's growing digital economy. Both ministers emphasized the importance of accelerating digital transformation through AI-driven solutions, entrepreneurial ecosystems, and knowledge exchange, aligning with the Gulf region's broader vision to create a unified and smart digital future. Their discussions underscored the deepening partnership between Saudi Arabia and Bahrain in shaping the GCC's technological advancement, as both nations continue to play pivotal roles in regional innovation, infrastructure modernization, and sustainable digital growth.

Algeria Reaffirms Global Leadership in Multilateral Action with Signing of UN Cybercrime Convention

Algeria has reaffirmed its commitment to international cooperation and multilateralism by officially signing the United Nations Convention against Cybercrime, a landmark agreement aimed at strengthening global collaboration to combat digital threats and transnational cybercrimes. Speaking at the signing ceremony held in Hanoi, Vietnam, on October 25–26, Lounes Magramane, Secretary-General of the Algerian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, said the convention represents a crucial legal framework for collective action against the growing risks of cybercrime. He emphasized that it enables countries to modernize investigative mechanisms, enhance the exchange of electronic evidence, and develop coordinated international responses to digital threats. Magramane also highlighted President Abdelmadjid Tebboune's national agenda for digital transformation, describing it as a key pillar of Algeria's development strategy. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs noted that this vision has positioned Algeria as a regional leader in promoting secure and innovative digital ecosystems. The organizers commended Algeria's leading role in drafting the convention, particularly recognizing the contribution of Ambassador Faouzia Mebarki, who chaired the UN committee responsible for negotiating and finalizing the text over a four-year period. "The adoption of this convention adds to the record of successes achieved by Algerian diplomacy in recent years under the leadership of President Abdelmadjid Tebboune," the ministry stated.

Algeria Expands Satellite Infrastructure with New Regional Hub in Constantine

Algeria has taken another major step toward strengthening its digital and telecommunications infrastructure with the inauguration of a new Regional Directorate for Space Communications in Constantine. The facility, opened by Minister of Post and Telecommunications Syed Ali Zarouqi, will serve as a central hub for satellite operations across the eastern provinces, enhancing service delivery, operational efficiency, and regional connectivity. The new center is part of Algeria's broader digital transformation strategy, aimed at decentralizing telecommunications services and improving accessibility for local operators and users. It also aligns with the government's ambition to expand Algérie Télécom Satellite (ATS) — a subsidiary of the Algérie Télécom Group — which provides satellite-based communications, VSAT networking services, mobile satellite telephony, and geolocation solutions for public and private sectors. By upgrading the Constantine Regional Directorate, Algeria aims to improve coordination and performance across ATS teams, ensuring greater reliability, broader coverage, and faster response times for clients in the eastern region. The directorate's jurisdiction spans more than 18 provinces, including Bejaia, Jijel, Annaba, Setif, Batna, Biskra, and M'Sila, effectively serving as the operational backbone for Algeria's expanding satellite network. Minister Zarouqi emphasized that these infrastructure investments are essential for enhancing national digital sovereignty and positioning Algeria as a regional leader in satellite communications and smart governance. He noted that the government's continued focus on modernizing telecommunications infrastructure is designed to reduce dependency on foreign technologies and stimulate innovation within the local tech ecosystem. The opening of the Constantine hub underscores Algeria's commitment to fostering technological self-reliance and digital inclusion, particularly in underserved regions. It represents a critical step toward establishing a more robust, integrated, and future-ready national communications framework.

Bahrain Launches Bulk KYC Service to Strengthen Digital Trust in Financial Sector

The Information & eGovernment Authority (IGA), in collaboration with Beyon Connect, announced the launch of the Bulk Know Your Customer (KYC) Service, a new milestone in Bahrain's journey toward a trusted, secure and fully digital financial ecosystem. This strategic capability allows regulated financial institutions to submit large volumes of customer records for verification directly against Bahrain's Central Population Registry (CRS). By enabling the identification and correction of outdated, incomplete or unverifiable KYC data at scale, the service supports the sector's compliance with the Central Bank of Bahrain (CBB) requirements while reducing the risk of identity fraud. For citizens and residents whose KYC information held by financial institutions is outdated, the Bulk KYC Service removes the need for them to manually update their records. This seamless process not only simplifies compliance for banks but also makes digital transformation a frictionless experience for customers. "This initiative reflects our continued commitment to enabling Bahrain's financial sector with practical, trusted and future-ready digital services. It gives institutions the confidence to address legacy data challenges and to meet the expectations of regulators, partners and customers — all within a secure, government-backed framework." Mohammed Ali Al Qaed, Chief Executive, IGA said, The IGA stated that the Bulk KYC Service is part of its broader digital identity authentication and trust ecosystem being delivered under eKey 2.0 and eKey for Business (eKey-B). Together, these initiatives position Bahrain as a global leader in digital trust, secure identity and financial sector innovation. "This is about more than technology — it's about strengthening the integrity of Bahrain's financial system. The Bulk KYC Service equips institutions with a powerful tool to eliminate outdated records, enhance trust and align with national regulatory and security expectations." Said Shaikh Mohamed bin Khalifa Al Khalifa, CEO, Beyon Digital Growth. The Bulk KYC Service is secured by a zero-trust framework built on eKey 2.0, ensuring the highest levels of protection for both institutions and citizens. Each access request is authenticated, verified, and continuously monitored. Data is protected with national-grade encryption, both at rest and in transit, and login requires mandatory biometric authentication via eKey 2.0. Institutions maintain sole control of their decryption keys and data usage, while comprehensive logging and audit trails provide full transparency and accountability. Like all eKey 2.0 and eKey for Business (eKey-B) services, the Bulk KYC Service has been designed in line with Bahrain's Personal Data Protection Law (PDPL) and other applicable regulations, ensuring strict compliance and accountability. The Bulk KYC Service is available to all licensed financial institutions in Bahrain with an active eKey for Business (eKey-B) agreement. Participating institutions will be able to upload customer records via a secure self-service portal, validate those records against official Government of Bahrain databases, and retrieve verified customer data with full encryption and audit trails. The Bulk KYC Service will be available for a limited period, during which licensed institutions can securely submit their customer data for validation. Beyon Connect, acting as the national onboarding partner for eKey for Business, will provide full documentation, technical guidance, and onboarding support to institutions adopting the Bulk KYC Service. Financial institutions are encouraged to engage with Beyon Connect immediately to ensure readiness ahead of the service's planned go-live in mid-October 2025.

Jordan Completes 14 Digital Economy, ICT and Cybersecurity Projects

A government achievements report for Jordan's ministries and public institutions in the digital economy, ICT, cyber security and postal sectors showed that 14 projects were completed during last October 2025. According to last month's ministerial achievements report issued Sunday, by the Ministry of Government Communication, the Ministry of Digital Economy launched the Jahez program to support Jordanian entrepreneurs and early-stage startups by providing training, mentorship and access to potential funding opportunities. The ministry also launched the Jordan-UK Tech Connect Forum 2025 in London, in cooperation with the Jordanian Embassy and with support from the Jordan Source program. It also secured first place on the National Integrity Index, reflecting its "commitment to transparency and institutional integrity," and conducted a survey of visitors to government service centers in the third quarter to assess performance and service quality. Regarding Telecommunications Regulatory Commission (TRC), the report stressed the launch of the Postal Entrepreneurship initiative targeting Jordanian university students, in partnership with postal-sector stakeholders and the INJAZ Foundation. The TRC also issued the 2025 Mobile Number Portability Service Instructions as part of government policy requirements to develop sectors and support nationwide digital transformation. Additionally, the TRC participated in the International Cyber Week in Singapore under the theme, and in the fifth meeting of the Arab Preparatory Team for the World Telecommunication Development Conference (WTDC-25) in the UAE. The TRC also held an awareness workshop on FM radio broadcasting stations with participation from broadcasting companies and other stakeholders. The report noted the National Cyber Security Centre launched the fourth edition of its awareness campaign, themed: "Digital Hint," held the final session of its "Cyber Dialogues" series, released the Q2 2025 Cyber security Status Report, and continued implementing the National Cyber Security Framework for public institutions. According to the report, the Jordan Post Company (JPC)'s key achievements included expanded cooperation with DHL in training, qualification and e-commerce, through the International Academy for E-Commerce and Logistics, in addition to offering domestic and international money transfer services through its nationwide branch network.

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- Anti-attack for user
- Internet Access for children

AI For New Service

- Lower latency for new service
- Higher speed for new service

Product color, shape, interface and functions are for reference only. The actual product may vary.

ARTICLE

From Connectivity to Capability: How 5G FWA is Powering National Digital Transformation

A Deep Dive into the Middle East & Central Asia Region

Abhinav Purohit
Chief Expert, Business & Strategy Consulting
Huawei Middle East & Central Asia

HUAWEI

In today's digital economy, broadband access is no longer just a utility – it's a strategic enabler of national productivity, social inclusion and economic diversification. For nations across the Middle East and Central Asia (ME&CA) region, the transition from connectivity-as-a-service to connectivity-as-a-platform is underway. Central to this transition is 5G Fixed Wireless Access (FWA) – a relatively under-publicized but powerful lever that many governments and operators are using to accelerate digital transformation.

> *The Middle East and Central Asia (ME&CA) region is entering a defining decade of digital transformation – and 5G, especially 5G Fixed Wireless Access (FWA), is emerging as one of the region's most powerful catalysts.*

Unlike traditional fiber roll-outs, which are capital-intensive, time-consuming and often constrained by physical infrastructure bottlenecks, 5G FWA offers a more agile path: high-speed broadband delivered over 5G radio networks, often with installation times measured in days rather than weeks / months, and with far fewer trenches and disruptions in suburban, semi-urban or even rural zones. That agility is a game-changer in markets where government digital agendas, smart city programs and SME digitalization strategies demand fast results.

Key Advantages of Fired Wireless Access (FWA)

Source: Aircom

In the ME&CA region, where many governments are pursuing rapid economic diversification (in part to reduce reliance on oil & gas), raise inclusion, advance e-government, education and health systems, and build new digital industries, 5G FWA has emerged as a catalyst. With FWA, household broadband speeds go up, new digital services become viable, and underserved regions gain access to connectivity that previously would have required expensive fiber infrastructure.

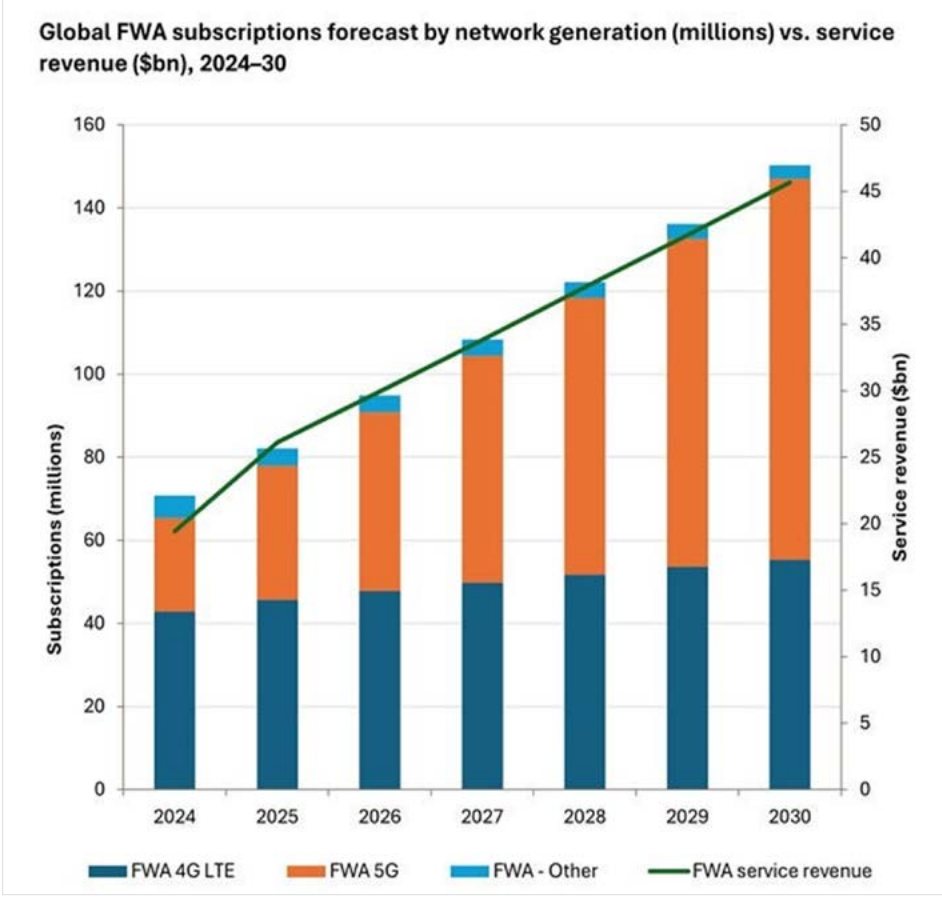
Moreover, as the next generation of 5G-Advanced (5G-A) moves into view, the infrastructure built for 5G FWA becomes the foundation not only for fixed-home broadband but also for enterprise connectivity, private networks, IoT and cloud-native services that underpin Industry 4.0.

In summary: 5G FWA is not just about 'more homes connected' – it is about enabling a transformation of how citizens engage digitally, how enterprises operate, and how national economies evolve. This article explores that transformation in some of the region's leading and emerging markets: the UAE and Saudi Arabia (deep dives), plus Kuwait, Qatar, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan and Mongolia. It highlights how telcos and ICT players are working alongside government programs, the measurable outcomes achieved so far, and the lessons for nations as they accelerate their digital journeys.

Importance of 5G FWA for National Digital Agendas

There are three key aspects by which 5G FWA drives national digital transformation.

5G FWA Globally Subscriptions Forecast to More than Double by 2030



Source: Telecoms.Com

1. Accelerating Broadband Access and Inclusion

In many markets, the last-mile broadband access remains the bottleneck for inclusion of suburban, new town, rural or industrial zones. 5G FWA sidesteps much of the trenching, cabling and civil works that traditional broadband needs – by using 5G mobile & radio networks connecting directly and wirelessly to CPE (customer premise equipment). This means broadband services can go live in a very short span of time, opening up new service opportunities, such as online education, tele-health, digital enterprise services and home-working possibilities much sooner – than possible in traditional fixed line broadband connections. Industry forecasts show that FWA connections are set to exceed 460 million by 2030 and 5G FWA will have a CAGR of 54% between 2022 and 2030.

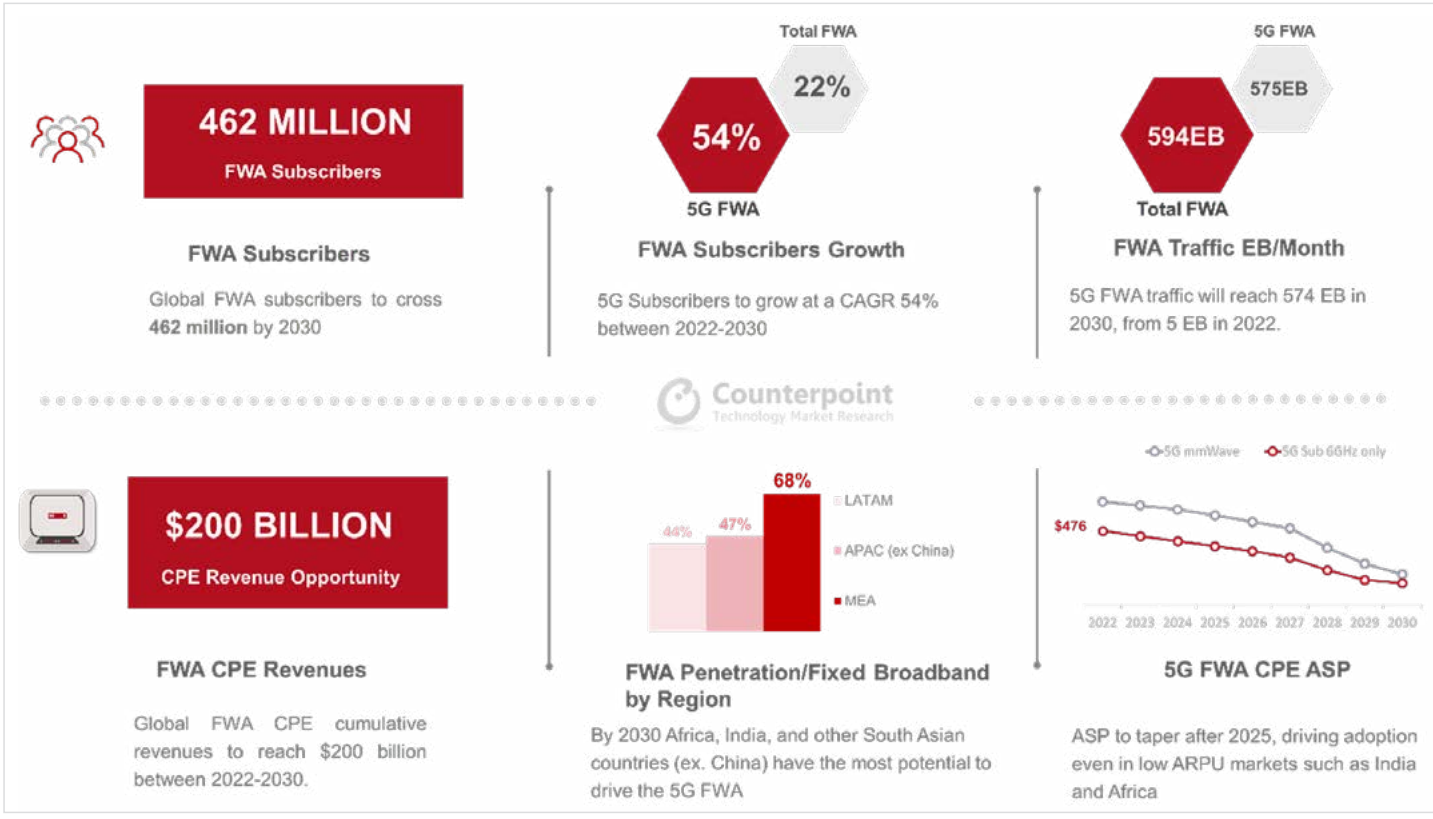
Enterprise FWA

Source: Telco.Com

2. Providing a Platform for New Digital Services

Once high-speed access is delivered, the next step is monetizing digital services – bundling education platforms,

5G FWA Global Update: Connecting Next Half Billion Households



Source: Counter Point Research

cloud gaming, telemedicine, SME cloud bundles or smart-home services etc. Because 5G FWA offers reliability and high throughput (and increasingly low latency), operators can shift from 'just internet access' to 'digital experience' offers – leading to higher ARPU and higher value for end-users.

For example, research shows FWA can raise ARPU by 3-5 times for home broadband when paired with value-added services.

3. **Enabling Enterprise and industry Digitalization at Scale**
   Beyond homes, 5G FWA is a gateway to enterprise connectivity, IoT, private networks and edge-cloud services. In less fiber-dense regions, enterprises can deploy private or hybrid 5G FWA instead of waiting for fiber. This supports automation, remote monitoring, smart logistics and digital health infrastructure. In short: 5G FWA becomes infrastructure for digital industry, not just consumer connectivity. Together, this builds a virtuous cycle: faster, more affordable broadband that leads to richer digital services, a higher uptake and digital participation and this an economic and social transformation and GDP Boost.

FWA Enables 'Digital Services'

Source: Telecom TV

ME&CA FWA Landscape: Gathering Momentum, Capitalizing Opportunity

The ME&CA region is moving fast. Recent industry reports project that in the Middle East & Africa region, 5G subscriptions will rise significantly in the coming years, and FWA will play an increasingly large role. For example, one study estimates FWA subscriptions in the MEA region will grow from 19 million in 2024 to 27 million by 2029, with 5G FWA adoption rising from 11% to 38%. The same study indicates that in GCC countries, as many as 93 % of FWA connections will run on 5G by 2029.

The Middle East FWA market size is estimated at USD 6.16 billion in 2025, and is expected to reach USD 11.66 billion by 2030, at a CAGR of 13.62% during the forecast period (2025-2030).

FWA Could Boost UK Economy to the Tune of GBP 4 billion by 2030

Wireless Contribution	Impact	Policy Implication
Advancement of service to rural areas	Advance gigabit services to 1.8 million homes by an average of 3 years. Benefit > **GBP 3 billion.**	Accelerated planning, noting potential to remove and redeploy infrastructure as fibre emerges.
Extending benefit to remote areas	Reduce costs to hard-to-reach premises and provide consumers with choice and savings over competitors such as satellite. Total savings **GBP 29 million** a year	Ensure technology neutrality in Project Gigabit – so that FWA is competing fairly.
Working with fibre to deliver gigabit service	Saving public purse **GBP 1 billion** in future phases of Project Gigabit.	Prioritise value for money in Project Gigabit, by using wireless deployments to build markets and de-risk investment.
Promoting competition	Giving consumers a choice will lead to better tariffs and better services, benefiting consumers by **GBP 337 million** a year.	Consider fostering a competitive environment that allows for such potential cost savings, ultimately benefiting the end-users.

Source: The Role Of Wireless Networks In Enhancing Digital Connectivity In The UK (Sep 2024)

These numbers show the scale of the opportunity. For governments, that means broadband inclusion and enterprise digitalization programs can be delivered faster, with lower cost per home or enterprise connected, leveraging 5G FWA as the medium.

However, the region is not uniform. The GCC states typically have high GDP per capita, compact populations and strong digital programs, making them early adopters. Central Asian markets are more varied, often with larger geographies, dispersed populations, and different investment dynamics – but here too, 5G FWA offers the possibility of leap-frogging older fixed broadband models.

du UAE Ookla Award: Demonstrating Winning Strategies in 5G FWA Globally

du Ranks Among Global 5G FWA Leaders

Posted on October 8, 2025 3 min Read

du, the leading telecom and digital services provider, has been recognized by Ookla, the global leader in network intelligence and connectivity insights, as one of three operators worldwide demonstrating winning strategies in 5G fixed wireless access (FWA).

Source: Telecom Review

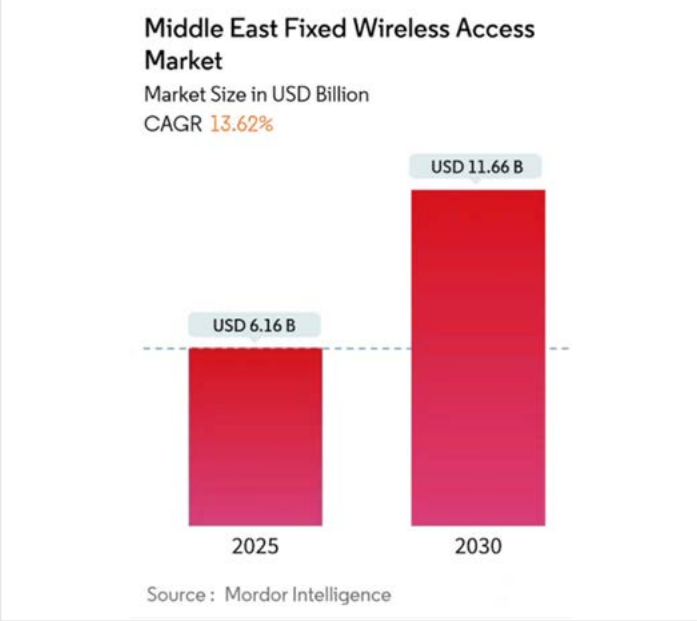
1. United Arab Emirates (UAE)

The UAE is often described as one of the world's fastest growing 5G countries, and its national digital transformation agenda is ambitious. The combination of strong government policy, operator investment and ICT ecosystem makes it a lab for how 5G and 5G FWA can support broader digital ambitions.

In the UAE, both operators (Etisalat UAE by e& and du) have made 5G and FWA a key component of their home-broadband strategy. For example, du reported that its FWA segment recorded an 18% year-on-year increase in 2024 and that 70 % of its mobile & FWA traffic now runs over its 5G infrastructure. That demonstrates how consumer broadband via FWA is starting to move meaningfully onto 5G networks.

du's FWA strategy extends beyond current achievements, with the operator targeting an increase in broadband market share to 40% by 2027. This ambitious goal is supported by continued network investments, the introduction of

Middle East FWA Market Size (2025-30)



Source: Mordor Intelligence

specialized consumer and enterprise products and next-generation technologies like 5G-A. The operator's hybrid approach, combining fiber and FWA solutions, mirrors successful strategies employed by global leaders and demonstrates du's understanding of diverse customer needs and market dynamics.

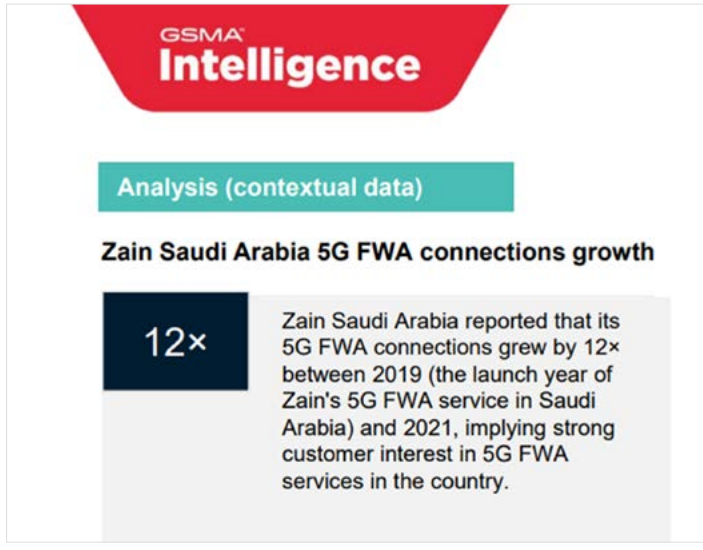
The UAE case shows how a compact, digitally-minded country can use 5G FWA to raise the baseline of broadband access, support government digital-services delivery (education, health, library, remote working), create converged consumer offers and accelerate digital inclusion. From an operator perspective, the FWA business becomes a growth engine in an otherwise saturating mobile market.

2. Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA)

Saudi Arabia, under its "Vision 2030" mandate, is seeking major economic diversification, enhanced digital services for citizens, increased SME productivity and industrial digitalization. In such a context, 5G FWA is not just a nice-to-have – it is a key infrastructure, underpinning enablement.

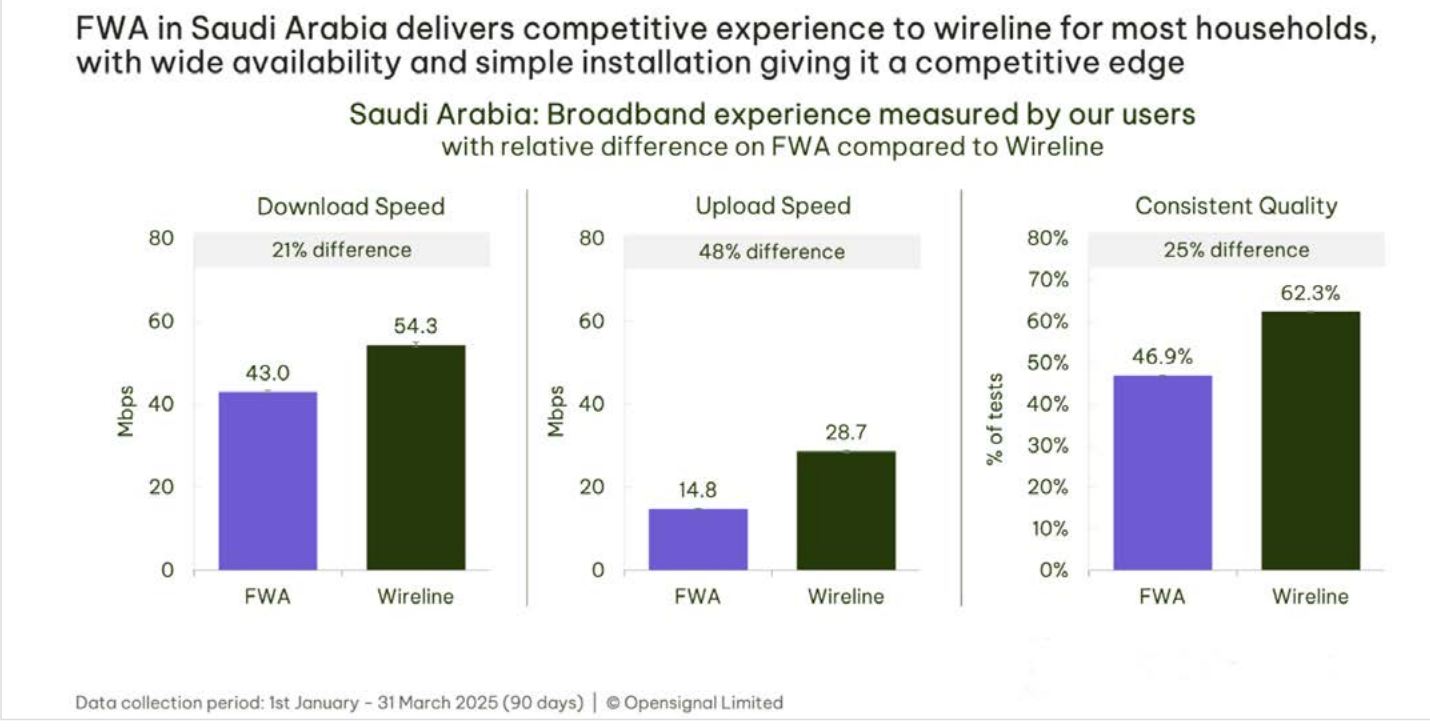
Saudi Arabia has established a robust platform for delivering mass-

Zain KSA: 5G FWA at the Centre of its 5G Business Strategy



Source: GSMA

KSA: Broadband Experience on Wireline vs FWA (March 2025)



Source: OpenSignal

market next-generation fixed wireless access. FWA already accounts for around 20% of broadband connections in Saudi Arabia – one of the highest proportions globally, underlining rapid uptake. FWA users experience average download speeds of 43 Mbps, compared to 54.3 Mbps on wireline (March 2025) – reflecting a modest 21% performance gap.

A key enabler of this rapid FWA growth has been Saudi Arabia's generous spectrum policy. Following the 2024 spectrum auction, the Communications, Space and Technology Commission (CST) released a total of 1400 MHz spectrum– spanning the sub-6GHz range – the highest allocation among the G20 countries. To drive meaningful deployment, the CST imposed strict coverage and Quality of Service (QoS) obligations. This acts as an additional lever on participating networks to fully utilize their available spectrum bands and has motivated the operators to enjoy a period of rapid growth and revenue diversification.

As 5G FWA scales, it supports Saudi Arabia's digital agenda in several dimensions. It promotes higher household connectivity – that leads to higher broadband speeds, and remote-working & learning is enabled even in less dense / semi-urban areas. Further, by making broadband simpler & quicker to deploy, it is motivating SMEs / enterprises to migrate to new technologies such as to cloud, SaaS, digital workflows etc.

3. Kazakhstan

Kazakhstan was one of the first countries in the Central Asia Region to launch 5G. In 2023, Kazakhstan officially entered the 5G era, with Tele2 becoming the first operator to commercially launch 5G services, followed by Kcell.

Fixed broadband in Kazakhstan is relatively mature in urban areas, with widespread fiber-to-the-home (FTTH) availability. However, semi-urban and rural regions remain under-served, due to geographic constraints (e.g., mountainous terrain) and the high cost of fiber rollout in sparsely populated areas. This presented an ideal opportunity for 5G FWA to act as a complementary broadband solution – bridging coverage gaps and delivering high-speed internet where fiber is unavailable.

The "Digital Kazakhstan" program explicitly aims to eliminate the digital divide between urban and rural areas, with 5G FWA identified as a key technology to achieve this goal.

It is in this context that Tele2 launched its FWA offerings. Tele2's 5G FWA initiative was aimed primarily at households in underserved areas, particularly where legacy copper networks or weak mobile coverage impacted quality of service. These users were typically price-sensitive but increasingly demanding in terms of speed and digital services, including streaming, remote work, and e-learning.

> *The "Digital Kazakhstan" program explicitly aims to eliminate the digital divide between urban and rural areas, with 5G FWA identified as a key technology to achieve this goal.*

The 5G FWA initiative by Tele2 represents a collaborative success, delivering substantial achievements across market leadership, customer adoption, network expansion planning, and digital capability enablement. A major focus was placed on the user's experience of trying immersive services, particularly in high-footfall

Tele2 5G Snowboarding Demo

Visitors can enjoy high-speed 5G internet on the Shymbulak Mountain Resort grounds, and the action could be followed live on YouTube via 5G Internet from Tele2 Kazakhstan.

Source: Tele2 Kazakhstan

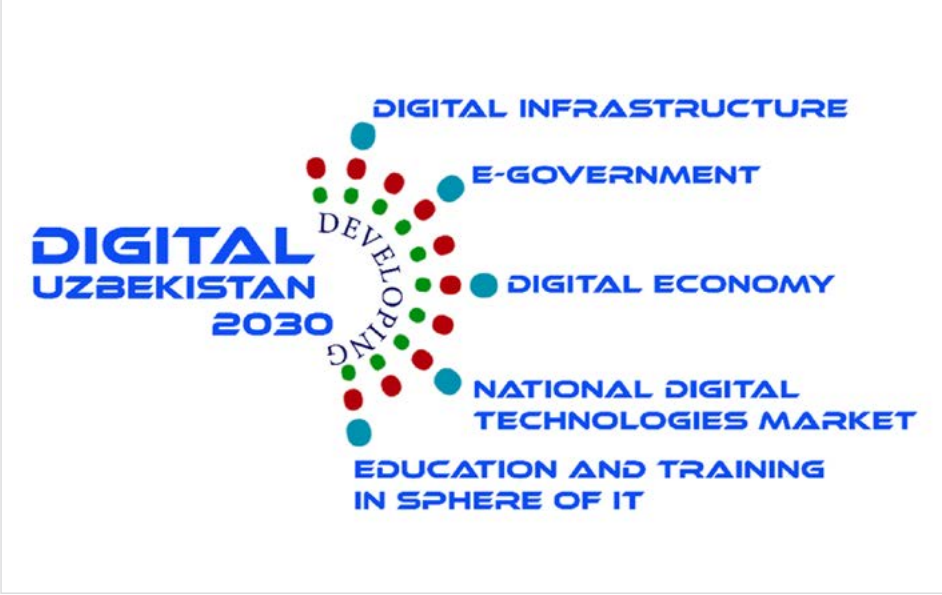
Digitize Kazakhstan Gives a Much-Needed Boost to the ICT & Telco Sectors

DIGITAL KAZAKHSTAN
"Digital Kazakhstan" state program

The government has launched the "Digital Kazakhstan" program aimed at improving the country's digital infrastructure.

Source: E-government Kazakhstan

The Priority Directions of 'Digital Uzbekistan 2030' Strategy



Source: Digital Uzbekistan 2030

locations. Dedicated 5G demo areas were created to allow potential customers to see, touch, and experience the FWA product. Visual storytelling, interactive displays, and trained specialists helped bridge the awareness gap and boost confidence.

As 5G networks expand and mature, FWA is poised to become a crucial solution for extending reliable and high-speed broadband to homes across Kazakhstan, especially in regions where laying physical cables is not feasible.

4. Uzbekistan

In 2023, Uzbekistan implemented its 'Uzbekistan 2030 Strategy' – focusing on national development roadmap with a core goal of transforming the country into an upper-middle-income and economically & technologically developed nation.

A key component of this is the 'Digital Uzbekistan 2030' strategy, which – among other things – actively promotes the use of FWA to expand broadband internet connectivity. Towards this, telecom operators need to provide the Internet to all settlements of Uzbekistan and increase the speed of access by 10 times. The coverage of optical fiber lines and broadband access should be brought to 100%.

FWA is proving to be a great support to realize these aims. In Uzbekistan, more than half of the population lives in villages and in hard-to-reach areas. At the same time, the terrain of the country is mainly flat, which allows the signal from base stations to be freely distributed over long distances. As a result, the demand for 5G FWA services is increasing.

Key Take Away for Governments and Telcos for FWA Planning & Roll-Out

From the examples of these countries, several lessons emerge for nations and telecom operators aiming to deploy 5G FWA as part of digital transformation program:

1. **Align with National Digital strategy**
   Countries where FWA is aligned to national digital strategies (such as in both UAE and KSA – where 5G FWA is aligned with national digital agendas) witness rapid and sustainable take up. This is because a national alignment ensures regulatory support, spectrum provisioning, and overarching infrastructure planning support. As more and more telcos align to their respective national digital agenda's – FWA will get an even bigger boast in the region.
2. **Start Implementations First within the High RoI Zones**
   From an implementation perspective, to begin with, telcos must focus their FWA efforts on suburban / new area, SME clusters or green-field developments where fiber is not available and will take long to be deployed. This drives early wins and measurable improvements and motivates the telcos to continue onwards on the FWA path.
3. **Plan Ahead for the Enterprise Take Up & 5G-Advanced (5G-A)**
   While consumer FWA is already scaling, the next wave is enterprise, industry verticals and private networks (5G-A, network slicing, edge-cloud etc.). The infrastructure built today for consumer FWA becomes tomorrow's enterprise platform. Operators must consider up-coming needs such as slicing, automation and industry-specific solutions as part of their future roll-outs and expansion plans.

Conclusion

In the Middle East and Central Asia region, digital transformation is not a future vision – it's happening now. The interplay of government ambition (broadband goals, digital services, enterprise focus etc.), operator investment (5G network roll-out, FWA offerings, digital services' bundling etc.) and technology enablers (cloud-ecosystem, partnerships etc.) is creating a sea change in how connectivity translates into productivity, inclusion and economic value.

5G FWA has emerged as a pivotal enabler in this journey. It offers speed, deployment agility and cost-effectiveness in markets where fiber roll-out alone cannot meet the pace of demand or the need for inclusion.

Ultimately, the telcos, governments and ICT partners that succeed will be those that treat connectivity not just as pipes, but as platforms – platforms for digital inclusion, productivity, social impact and economic diversification. In a region where the pace of change is accelerating and the stakes are high, 5G FWA is proving to be one of the most effective catalysts of national digital transformation.

SATELLITE NEWS

OQ Technology Achieves Europe's First Direct-to-Mobile Emergency Broadcast Message from Space

OQ Technology, a pioneering European direct-to-device (D2D) satellite connectivity provider with 60 MHz of MSS S-band spectrum rights, has achieved a major technological milestone using its Low Earth Orbit (LEO) satellite constellation to successfully deliver Europe's first direct-to-mobile emergency broadcast message from space — transmitted directly to standard smartphones without any hardware or software modifications. This milestone makes OQ Technology the first European satellite operator to demonstrate a direct-to-mobile emergency broadcast message, positioning the company at the forefront of sovereign, secure, and resilient space-based communications for public safety and disaster response — all supported by 60 MHz of MSS S-band spectrum, upper C-band, and IMT band partnerships. The live demonstration in Luxembourg showcased how OQ's LEO satellite network can transmit an emergency broadcast message directly to unmodified smartphones — including both iPhone and Android devices — ensuring citizens remain connected even when terrestrial networks are down, congested, or disrupted by cyberattacks. This capability is vital for public warning systems, disaster recovery, and communications resilience across Europe and beyond, providing a reliable communication layer that remains operational when terrestrial networks are compromised. "This achievement marks a turning point for Europe's sovereign space capabilities," said Omar Qaise, Founder and CEO of OQ Technology. "With our 60 MHz of MSS S-band spectrum rights and in-orbit infrastructure, OQ is building the foundation for a resilient and secure European direct-to-device service that connects people everywhere. With this milestone, we've proven that emergency broadcast messages can reach ordinary smartphones from space - anytime and anywhere." As a European-headquartered satellite operator, OQ Technology is advancing 3GPP-compliant D2D connectivity, ensuring seamless integration between satellite and terrestrial

mobile networks. The company has contributed to multiple 3GPP working groups shaping the Non-Terrestrial Network (NTN) standards that underpin global satellite-to-smartphone communication. By aligning its technology roadmap with these standards, OQ ensures that its S-band D2D network can operate natively with existing smartphones and mobile chipsets — supporting global interoperability, low-cost scalability, and widespread adoption across public and private networks. OQ's progress reinforces Europe's leadership in the emerging D2D ecosystem, combining regulated spectrum assets, LEO satellite infrastructure, and 3GPP-standardized technology to deliver secure, sovereign, and future-proof connectivity solutions. European Sovereignty: 100% European-led and headquartered in Luxembourg, backed by Luxembourg Space Agency, European Space Agency, European innovation Council, EU Cassini Accelerator, and the Luxembourg Government, advancing Europe's goal of sovereign, space-based communications.

- MSS S-Band Spectrum: Holder of 60 MHz of MSS S-band spectrum rights, enabling secure and satellite connectivity for mobile and emergency communications.
- Proven In-Orbit Capability: Demonstrated live, operational D2D service over OQ's own LEO satellite infrastructure, validating readiness for large-scale deployment.
- Public Safety Focus: Purpose-built to deliver D2D emergency broadcast messaging and connectivity when terrestrial networks are unavailable or disrupted.
- Standards Leadership: Fully aligned with 3GPP NTN Releases 17 and 18, ensuring seamless interoperability with existing smartphones and mobile network operators worldwide.
- Advancing Europe's Direct-to-Mobile Capabilities

Following this successful emergency broadcast messaging demonstration, OQ Technology will demonstrate direct-to-mobile voice services in the coming year, marking the next major milestone in its mission to expand European leadership in D2D connectivity. "This next phase will demonstrate more cellular D2D services and capabilities such as text and voice directly from space to smartphones, further proving the versatility of our technology," said Omar Qaise, Founder and CEO of OQ Technology. "With our 60 MHz of MSS S-band spectrum rights and operational LEO satellites, we are building the foundation for a secure and sovereign European D2D network that connects people everywhere."

Ofcom Approve Satellite Networks to Deliver 4G and 5G to UK Smartphones

The telecoms regulator, Ofcom, has approved UK mobile companies and satellite operators to join forces and use the airwaves (mobile spectrum bands) to support Direct to Device (D2D) services, which will allow standard unmodified Smartphones to connect via satellites to improve 4G and 5G (calls, texts and broadband) coverage in remote areas and roaming. Several satellite-based broadband networks are currently developing services that can directly connect to unmodified consumer Smartphones via regular mobile spectrum bands. Some examples of these include Starlink's Direct to Cell solution (e.g. O2 Satellite in the UK from early 2026) and AST SpaceMobile's deal with Vodafone. In fact, some phones, like the latest iPhone and Samsung handsets, already have a basic communication system that can work via satellite (e.g. for emergencies). However, the licenses held by UK mobile operators to provide communications services do not currently authorize transmissions from space. The introduction of D2D services in terrestrial mobile bands would have also raised a number of other issues, such as through the potential for an increased risk of interference between the satellite and the ground infrastructure of the mobile operators, as well as radars etc. But Ofcom believes they've found the solution. The regulator's previous work has uncovered plenty of support for D2D satellite services within the UK market, and they've issued their final decision to authorize the aforementioned change(s). Any mobile network operator that intends to provide direct-to-device services will naturally still need to request a change to its existing Ofcom license. But no license will be needed by ordinary smartphone users to get a signal from space. The decision also includes changes to avoid the shared mobile bands causing disruption (interference) to air traffic control stations and mobile networks in neighboring countries.

China Boosts Internet Satellite Numbers

China launched a group of internet satellites into orbit on December 9th reports China Aerospace Science and Technology Corp, the State-owned space contractor. The satellites, the 15th group of low-orbit hardware in China's State-owned internet network, were lifted by a Long March 6A carrier rocket from the Taiyuan Satellite Launch Center in Shanxi province and soon reached their orbital positions shortly after launch. The satellites were designed and built by the China Academy of Space Technology, a CASC subsidiary in Beijing. With this latest edition, China's State-run mega internet satellite network now includes more than 110 satellites. The launch marked China's 81st space mission and the 613th flight of the Long March rocket fleet. It was also the fifth time the Long March 6A model has been used to deploy low-orbit internet satellites.

New Partnership will Support LEO IoT Services in South Africa

Q-KON, an African provider of satellite communications, has signed a strategic trilateral agreement with China's Guodian Gaoke, a low-orbit communication satellite developer and operator, and satellite communication terminals and antennas specialist StarWin. The partnership plans to roll out next-generation Internet of Things (IoT) services leveraging the Tianqi low Earth orbit (LEO) satellite constellation across South Africa. The alliance, say the partners, positions Q-KON as the authorized service provider for Tianqi-based IoT solutions, leveraging its local market expertise and distribution network. Guodian Gaoke will supply the LEO constellation and associated satellite systems, while StarWin will provide certified ground terminals to ensure compliance with South African technical and regulatory standards. This is a useful new offering for Q-KON – and in particular for its flagship service Twoobii, which provides reliable connectivity for remote and underserved regions, supporting businesses, industries, and governments. Dr. Dawie de Wet, CEO of Q-KON, explains: "This strategic alliance marks a significant milestone in our quest to service the African market through the application of leading satellite technologies by expanding the Twoobii portfolio to include an IoT service." The Tianqi LEO constellation is designed for low-power, high-reliability communications, offering industrial data connectivity across sectors including mining, transport, agriculture, and utilities. The partnership will enable smart monitoring, automation, and real-time data management for enterprises and government agencies alike. This tripartite cooperation marks the Tianqi Constellation's first project in Africa.

MEASAT Teams with Guodian Gaoke, StarWin for LEOsat IoT

Malaysian satellite operator MEASAT announced that it has signed a strategic alliance agreement with Chinese companies Guodian Gaoke and StarWin to offer IoT services in Malaysia supported by Guodian Gaoke's "Tianqi" LEO satellite constellation. Under the agreement terms, MEASAT will serve as the authorized service provider for Tianqi's satellite-based IoT services in Malaysia, leveraging its market expertise and distribution network to drive commercial rollout next year. Guodian Gaoke will enable seamless integration of the Tianqi constellation and related systems with local businesses, while StarWin will supply and integrate certified ground terminals. The Tianqi constellation currently comprises 38 LEO satellites in its initial phase, delivering narrowband IoT connectivity globally across sectors such as forestry, agriculture, energy and environmental protection. MEASAT's chief operating officer Yau Chyong Lim said LEO satellite-based IoT will help overcome geographic challenges in Malaysia, including dense tree canopies, while easy installation and maintenance coupled with low power consumption makes it ideal for remote applications. "We can deploy flood forecasting and early warning systems in remote areas, implement smart utility management systems to monitor asset health and water quality, support renewable energy integration especially hydropower and solar, and enhance healthcare access through telemedicine," he said in a statement. "Additionally, smart agriculture and precision farming can be extended to even the remote areas." The Tianqi deal is MEASAT's second tie-up this year with a Chinese LEO satellite operator. In February, the company signed an MoU with Shanghai SpaceSail Technologies to offer multi-orbit services to MEASAT's customers, including direct-to-device (D2D) communications, satellite-based IoT and earth observation services. Chinese LEO satellite firm Geespace – a subsidiary of Chinese carmaker Zhejiang Geely Holding Group – entered the Malaysian market in September 2024 via deal with telecoms service provider Altel Communications to establish an R&D center in the country to develop use cases for D2D technology.

Vista Partners with Gogo to Bring Galileo Broadband Connectivity to Global Fleet

Vista, the world's leading private aviation group, announced a landmark partnership with Gogo to bring the new Gogo Galileo broadband connectivity system to its global fleet, setting a new benchmark for connectivity in the air. The rollout will begin in November 2025 across Vista's European fleet, followed by rapid implementation in the United States and Asia from January 2026. This will see one aircraft upgraded with the Gogo Galileo terminal every nine days, reaching at least 60 aircraft within the first 18 months. The new purpose built for business aviation system delivers enterprise-grade broadband powered by the Eutelsat OneWeb constellation. The low-latency connectivity allows Vista Members to stream, host video conferences, and connect with family, colleagues and clients seamlessly, from boarding to landing. Unlike traditional solutions that disconnect below 10,000 feet or over water, the Gogo Galileo terminals optimizes dedicated business aviation bandwidth ensuring consistent, high-speed service worldwide, without competing with residential bandwidth, or other industry sectors. The system combines a single AVANCE unit and Galileo antenna for simpler installation and greater reliability. It enables real-time monitoring, over-the-air updates and a self-service portal providing performance transparency for Vista's Operations teams. To guarantee immediate support, Vista and Gogo have already secured spare parts at all major Vista maintenance centers worldwide, minimizing potential downtime. For the first time, Vista Members will enjoy uninterrupted broadband across continents, oceans, and all phases of flight. Whether streaming a live event, finalizing a transaction or video-calling family at 45,000 feet, connectivity now mirrors the speed and reliability of the office or home. By mid-2026, all 270 Vista aircraft will feature either Gogo Galileo or upgraded Ku/ Ka-band connectivity — ensuring a consistent, high-speed experience on every flight worldwide. Thomas Flohr, Chairman and Founder, Vista said, our Members expect a global standard of ultimate excellence — in service, safety and now, connectivity. With Gogo Galileo, we are delivering the most advanced Wi-Fi experience available in business aviation, anywhere in the world. This partnership is another step in our ongoing investment to make every flight as seamless, productive and enjoyable as possible.

Amazon Expands Project Kuiper with New Satellite Launches

Amazon's Project Kuiper is moving ahead with its global satellite internet network, adding another 24 satellites to orbit as part of its ongoing deployment plan. The latest mission, known as KF-03, is scheduled for today, launching on a SpaceX Falcon 9 rocket from Cape Canaveral Space Force Station in Florida. The KF-03 launch will bring the total number of Kuiper satellites to 153, furthering the plan of Amazon to build a low Earth orbit constellation of more than 3,200 spacecraft. Once deployed at an altitude of 289 miles, the satellites will undergo health checks before being raised to their operational orbit of 392 miles. The mission marks Amazon's third collaboration with SpaceX as part of over 80 launches planned for the project. Earlier missions in 2025 included deployments using both SpaceX Falcon 9 and ULA Atlas V rockets. The first launch in April carried 27 satellites, followed by additional missions in June, July, August and September. Each operation has strengthened the foundation of Kuiper's network, which aims to provide reliable internet connectivity to customers and communities worldwide. Amazon's Project Kuiper represents a major investment in global connectivity infrastructure, with its Kennedy Space Center facility in Florida supporting multiple launch campaigns simultaneously.

Once complete, the system is expected to compete with other satellite internet networks by expanding digital access across underserved regions.

Low Earth Orbit Services Launched in Ghana

Leading Enterprise Network Solutions and internet services provider, Comsys Ghana Limited has announced a strategic partnership with the global Satellite Network Communications giant Eutelsat to deploy Low Earth Orbit (LEO) services in Ghana as it seeks to enhance access to state-of-art internet connectivity for sustained growth for businesses in Ghana and beyond. The strategic partnership will see Comsys leveraging its vast expertise in delivering transformative enterprise technology solutions and Eutelsat's innovative LEO satellite technology to extend internet connectivity across every part of the country particularly in the underserved areas. Speaking at the official launch event in Accra, Head of Operations at Comsys Ghana, Mr. Femi Lamptey, described the partnership as a game-changer that will offer seamless internet connectivity to its clients and partners in every part of the country to boost productivity and growth. "We [Comsys] are excited for the possibilities that this partnership brings as we anticipate more rollouts and deployments nationwide soon. We cannot wait to see how our clients are able to use such new connectivity—especially in new areas—for the growth of technology and industries in Ghana," he added. The Sales Director for West/Central Africa and Morocco of Eutelsat, Mr. Patrice Segura, noted that the deal formed part of his company's broader expansion drive across Africa, having found a worthy partner in Comsys Ghana. He indicated: "We settled on Comsys after going through all the rigorous selection processes. Under this partnership, we will be providing the infrastructure and I innovations that will empower Comsys to provide seamless internet services to clients across various sectors of the economy and enhance their penetration into remote parts of the country." On his part, the acting director of IT at the National Communications Authority (NCA), Ing. Raymond Akuetteh Bill expressed optimism that the rollout of Eutelsat's market-leading communications infrastructure in Ghana will enhance connectivity and experience for internet users. "As the industry regulator, we're excited about this partnership that will enhance internet connectivity, especially improving access to businesses in remote parts of the country. Satellite connectivity brings both competitions and options to the market," said. He added: "In the rare instance of disruptions as a result of fiber cuts, businesses can still operate seamlessly with satellites connectivity that has the capacity to carry enterprise solutions." Eutelsat's ONEWEB LEO service is a high-performance network that combines the benefits of both GEO and LEO to offer guaranteed video and internet connectivity reliably on land, at sea and in the air.

Uzbekistan and Amazon Kuiper Sign Agreement to Develop Satellite Internet

Uzbekistan's Ministry of Digital Technologies has signed a memorandum of understanding with the American company Amazon Kuiper Commercial Services LLC, marking a new step in the country's digital development. The agreement sets out plans for cooperation in the field of satellite internet and telecommunications infrastructure. Both sides discussed the prospects of deploying high-speed internet services based on Amazon's Project Kuiper satellite network, with the goal of expanding access to advanced digital solutions across Uzbekistan. Amazon Kuiper, a subsidiary of Amazon established in 2019, is developing a satellite constellation designed to deliver reliable broadband connectivity to users around the world, particularly in areas with limited traditional internet access. The partnership is expected to accelerate the rollout of modern communication technologies in Uzbekistan and strengthen the country's integration into the global digital economy. Kursiv also reports that Uzbekistan is approaching near-universal internet access, with 94.2% of the population connected as of early September.

Источник фото: https://digital.uz/en/news/view/92281

4iG SDT Agreement with Axiom Space Could Boost Hungary's Space Industry

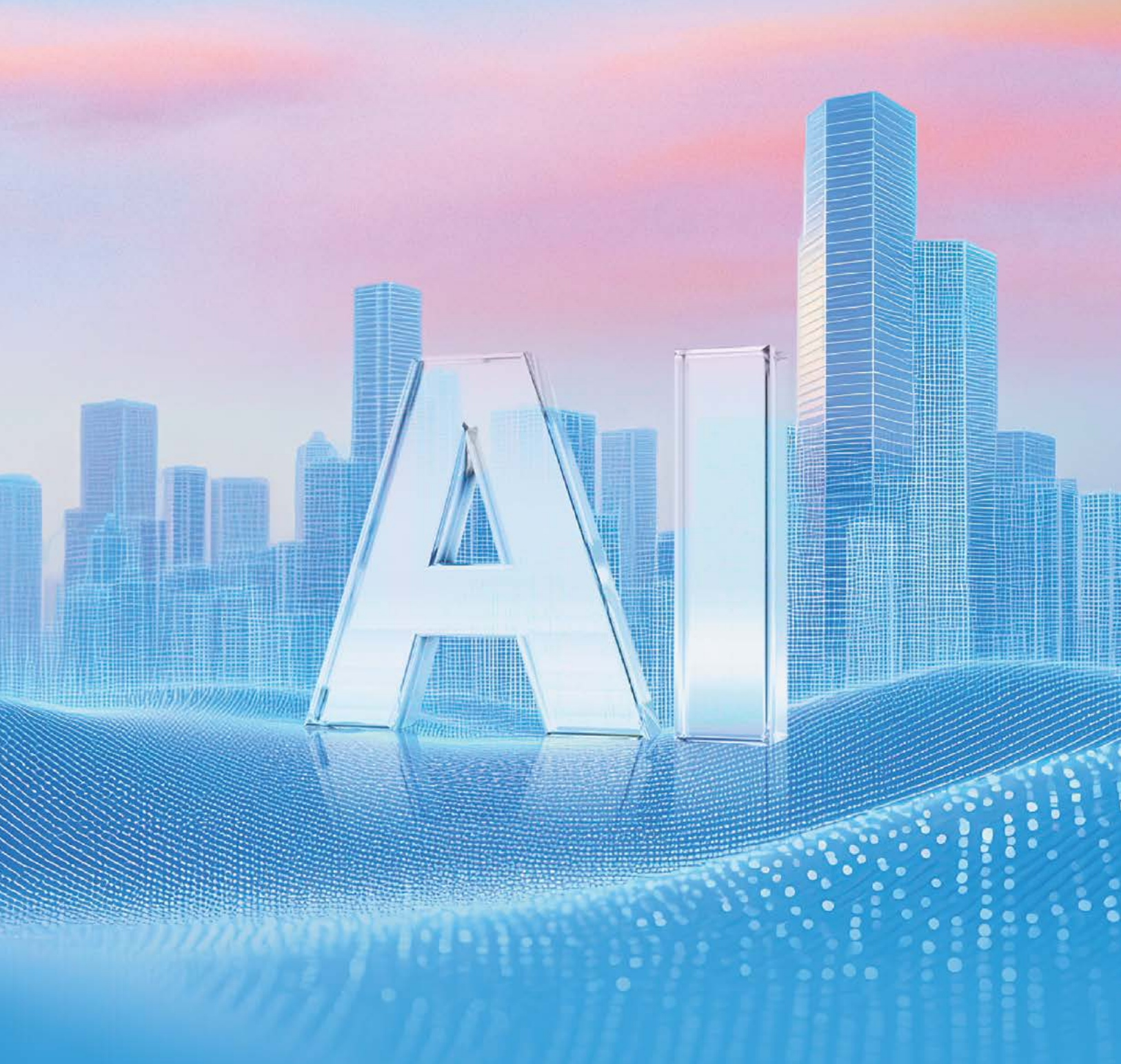
Hungarian company 4iG Space and Defence (4iG SDT) says it has signed a preliminary, non-binding commitment letter with US-based Axiom Space, a global leader in commercial spaceflight and low Earth orbit (LEO) infrastructure development. 4iG SDT, which has a strong space technology focus, is part of the 4iG Group, a provider of integrated telecommunications services in Hungary and the Western Balkans. Under the agreement 4iG SDT is said to be evaluating a US$100 million equity investment to acquire a stake in Axiom Space. The parties have also reaffirmed their commitment to collaborate on the development of orbital data center (ODC) systems. Under the agreement, 4iG SDT may become the first European technology company to join the ODC program and will also participate in the development of Axiom Space's global space marketplace. The ODC program aims to establish a next-generation data center in orbit, capable of processing and storing the vast amounts of data generated in space directly on-site. This, says 4iG SDT, represents a breakthrough compared to traditional terrestrial systems, as it enables real-time filtering and analysis of information in space, reduces the volume of data requiring downlink to Earth, and significantly enhances the efficiency of data management. As 4iG SDT points out, if this goes ahead, the project may serve as a link between Hungary and other strategic markets, securing a prominent international position for the Hungarian space industry. According to the letter, 4iG SDT will also leverage Axiom Space's global space marketplace, providing Hungarian technology developments with direct access to the international space industry ecosystem. István Sárhegyi, CEO of 4iG SDT, explains: "The agreement represents international recognition of Hungary's space capabilities, could open new horizons in research and development, and lays the foundation for long-term engagement with global market players." He adds: "Through the Orbital Data Centre program, we can not only leverage the expertise of Hungarian professionals but also inspire the next generation in space exploration and STEM." The concept of data centers in orbit is not just attracting the interest of Axiom and 4iG. Reuters reported a prediction from Amazon founder Jeff Bezos at a recent technology event that gigawatt-scale data centers will be built in space within the next 10 to 20 years and that continuously available solar energy meant they would eventually outperform those based on Earth.

Bell Plots Direct Satellite Service Launch in 2026

Operator Bell Canada advanced its satellite connectivity ambitions by placing a VoLTE call to standard smartphones using AST SpaceMobile BlueBird low Earth orbit satellites. The testing schedule also involved a video call, transmitting broadband data, video streaming, SMS and emergency alerts. Bell stated the VoLTE element is a first in Canada and the series of tests position it to launch a commercial satellite service in 2026, with coverage reaching north of the 59th parallel and into coastal maritime zones. The commercial service is set to cover 5.7 million square KMs using Bell's own terrestrial base stations. Mark McDonald, EVP and CTO of Bell, said the tests capitalize on investments the operator began making in AST SpaceMobile in 2021. He predicted "significant possibilities for enterprises including remote operations and monitoring in sectors like natural resources, energy and the environment, providing critical data and enabling new efficiencies for Canadian businesses". Bell stated the satellite capability would also boost emergency response services and improve remote operations in industries including mining, forestry, agriculture and energy. It also expects a connectivity bump for residential customers. AST SpaceMobile CCO Chris Ivory said the tests are a "breakthrough achievement" in the companies' mission to "bring the benefits of cellular broadband to Canadians". Canadian rival Rogers Communications beta launched a direct-to-device messaging service earlier this year, with a target of moving to a full service this month and ultimately offering connectivity for apps, data and voice services.

Amazon's Proposal for Satellite Internet Pilot in Vietnam Resubmitted

Amazon has resubmitted its proposal dossier to the Ministry of Science and Technology for appraisal of its participation in the controlled pilot program to provide Low Earth Orbit (LEO) satellite telecommunications services in Vietnam, Deputy Director of the Vietnam Telecommunications Authority (VNTA) under the Ministry of Science and Technology, Mr. Nguyen Anh Cuong, announced at a press briefing on December 1. Previously, on August 26, during a working session with Amazon Group, the ministry and Amazon representatives discussed Project Kuiper, an initiative to provide broadband Internet services via LEO satellites in Vietnam. At the working session, Deputy Minister Pham Duc Long assigned the VNTA and the Authority of Radio Frequency Management to urgently guide the project team in resolving obstacles and finalizing the project dossier in order for the ministry to submit the pilot dossier to the Prime Minister by September 2025. "Immediately after the working session between the two parties, the VNTA and the Authority of Radio Frequency Management developed a detailed set of guidelines regarding dossier requirements and the content Amazon needs to provide. However, it was not until November 24 that Amazon finalized and resubmitted the dossier," Mr. Cuong explained at the press briefing. Pursuant to Article 13 of the National Assembly's Resolution No. 193/2025/QH15 and Article 20 of the Government's Decree No. 88/2025/ND-CP, the ministry has coordinated with the Ministries of National Defence, Public Security, and Finance to research and evaluate Amazon's proposal. Based on the opinions of these ministries, the VNTA has notified Amazone and requested the latter to supplement and clarify certain contents of its dossier. Currently, Amazon Kuiper Vietnam Co., Ltd. is finalizing the dossier and will return it to the ministry for continued review and processing in accordance with regulations. Subsequently, the ministry will submit the pilot dossier for the deployment of Amazon's LEO satellite Internet service to the Prime Minister. The PM will then decide whether or not to authorize the pilot project, based on evaluation results concerning national defense, security, and socio-economic development impacts. If the investment policy is approved, Amazon will proceed with subsequent procedures, including enterprise establishment, investment registration, and application for a telecommunications license, similar to the process applied to Starlink. Mr. Cuong emphasized that the ministry is striving to support Amazon as quickly as possible. The next steps will depend largely on Amazon finalizing and providing full information at an early date so that the management agency can conduct a comprehensive evaluation of the project.



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SOVEREIGN AI

VEON's QazCode and MeetKai Sign Agreement to Power National LLM Training and Local-Language Agentic Services Across VEON Markets

VEON Ltd. (Nasdaq: VEON), a global digital operator ("VEON"), announced that QazCode, VEON's software company, has signed a strategic cooperation agreement with the sovereign AI firm MeetKai to develop and train next-generation large language models that will enable deployment of local-language agentic AI services across VEON's operating markets. This strategic sovereign partnership is designed to accelerate the creation of nationally governed AI capabilities that are culturally fluent, linguistically inclusive, and securely operated within each country's borders. MeetKai's Sovereign AI platform provides an end-to-end, customizable national AI stack — enabling countries to govern how models are trained, hosted, and deployed, aligned to domestic regulatory and data sovereignty requirements. The cooperation will enable VEON to scale safe, locally relevant AI digital services for over 150 million customers across Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Ukraine, Pakistan, and Bangladesh. It is expected to pave the way for a new generation of AI-based digital services across VEON markets — spanning areas like education, healthcare, agritech, public services, and enterprise productivity. These offerings will include AI agents similar to QazCode's Aventa, capable of operating seamlessly across the languages spoken in VEON's footprint, and tailored to the daily needs of local communities and businesses. "AI is a critically important and pervasive technology, yet today most global resources are concentrated on a small number of widely spoken languages," said Oleksii Sharavar, CEO of QazCode. "VEON

believes we have a responsibility to bring the benefits of augmented intelligence to the countries we serve — through large language models trained not only on words, but on local context. This partnership with MeetKai allows us to build sovereign, locally governed AI foundations that will help catalyze future AI developments across our markets." "True sovereign AI means countries decide how their models are built, governed, and deployed," said James Kaplan, Co-Founder and CEO of MeetKai. "Through this partnership with QazCode and VEON, we're proud to serve over 150 million people with national AI stacks that respect data sovereignty and deliver real, committed value in their language." QazCode and MeetKai will work directly with VEON's operating companies and local expert teams to ensure that every deployed model and agent reflects the language, history, and cultural norms of each nation. The partnership builds on QazCode's leadership in developing LLMs for under-resourced languages and VEON's broader commitment to inclusive digital growth. In Kazakhstan, QazCode pioneered national AI capability with KazLLM, the first Kazakh large language model — establishing a foundation for sovereign-grade AI services and local-language innovation.

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WHOLESALE NEWS

Malaysia Enables 4G Roaming in Timor-Leste

Major Malaysian mobile network operators have activated 4G roaming services in Timor-Leste effective Oct 17, as a welcome to the country into ASEAN as the 11th member. Communications Minister Datuk said this aligns with Malaysia's ASEAN Chairmanship theme "Shaping a Shared Digital Future." This milestone is achieved through close cooperation between the Malaysian Communications and Multimedia Commission (MCMC), Timor-Leste's National Communications Authority (ANC), and local operators (Telkomcel, Telemor, and Timor Telecom). This enables Malaysians to access affordable and seamless connectivity in Timor-Leste, similar to other ASEAN countries. "It represents a tangible step forward in advancing regional digital integration and cooperation. "Together, we can strengthen our communication networks, promote understanding, and build a future anchored in partnership and friendship," he said in his opening remarks during a Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) signing ceremony between Malaysia and the Timor-Leste in Kuala Lumpur yesterday. The MOUs were signed by Fahmi and Timor-Leste's Minister of Transport and Communications Miguel Marques Gonçalves Manetelu and Timor-Leste State Secretary for Social Communication Expedito Loro Dias Ximenes. The MOUs were regarding telecommunications cooperation which focuses on improving infrastructure, digital connectivity, and technical knowledge exchange, as well as for information and media development, aimed at promoting collaboration through news sharing, information exchange, and training for media professionals. The agreements highlight the long-standing friendly ties between the countries, with Malaysia having been one of the first to recognize Timor-Leste's independence in 2002. Both nations reaffirmed their commitment to stronger bilateral ties and regional collaboration. "Malaysia continues to fully support Timor-Leste's journey towards full ASEAN's membership. "We believe your inclusion will further strengthen ASEAN's unity, diversity, and capacity to respond to new challenges and opportunities," Fahmi said. Meanwhile, Manetelu believed that the telecommunications MOU marks a landmark step in Malaysia–Timor-Leste relations as it strengthens cooperation in the digital sector and recognizing modern, secure infrastructure as essential for national development, economic growth, and integration. "For Timor-Leste, this cooperation is a strategic opportunity which aligns perfectly with our national development goals to bridge the digital divide, enhance connectivity for our citizens, and empower our economy through digital transformation. "The potential for mutual benefit is immense, from enhancing cross-border connectivity to facilitating partnership between our telecommunications regulators, operators, and industry players," he said.

Telkom Indonesia to Spin-Off Wholesale Fiber Assets

Telkom Indonesia reached a deal to spin off its wholesale fiber connectivity business to subsidy Telkom Infrastruktur Indonesia (TIF) in a deal valued at IDR35.8 trillion ($2.2 billion). In a stock market filing, the operator stated the proposed transaction represents "a strategic step aligned with global trends", with operators establishing dedicated infrastructure entities to enhance transparency, efficiency and long-term value creation. The move is intended to enable "more focused business development, create added value, increase efficiency and optimize the utilization of fiber optic network assets". The operator will transfer its wholesale fiber assets through a partial spin-off to TIF, which will issue new shares to be subscribed by Telkom Indonesia. No cash payment will be made by Telkom Indonesia, and the proposed transaction is not expected to result in any change to the shareholding interests of existing shareholders, the filing noted. The deal covers its backbone fiber, aggregation access and supporting infrastructure. The value of the assets was determined by an independent appraiser. The transaction requires shareholder and regulatory approvals. Its mobile unit Telkomsel is the largest in the country, with 157.6 million connections at end-September, data from GSMA intelligence showed.

U Mobile Lines Up First Wholesale Access Partner

Malaysian operator U Mobile forged its first 5G and 4G wholesale access agreement, sealing a five-year deal with Eastel, which aims to launch MVNO services in the first quarter of 2026. U Mobile deputy CEO Kenneth Chang stated the agreement "marks the start of more 5G wholesale agreements to come", with the provider expected to achieve 80 per cent coverage of populated areas by the second half of 2026. Eastel is owned by Anchor Communications, a local communications provider. Anchor Communications executive director Aaron Lee noted the partnership is a significant milestone as "we prepare to launch a new kind of MVNO". He added it aims to support niche and customizable data-intensive applications for the community. U Mobile, the third-largest mobile operator by connections in Malaysia, launched the country's second 5G wholesale network under the Ultra 5G brand in August, with the service first available at its headquarters in Kuala Lumpur and on a bridge in Penang. It was awarded the wholesale 5G contract by the Malaysian Communications and Multimedia Commission in November 2024, after the government moved away from a single wholesale network strategy.

Major Polish Wholesalers Launch Collaborative API Project to Boost FTTH Access and Competition

Four of Poland's main Fiber-to-the-Home (FTTH) wholesalers – Fiberhost, Nexera, Polski Światłowód Otwarty and Światłowód Inwestycje – announced a landmark collaborative initiative, partnering with Optare Solutions, an IT Consulting & Engineering Services Company, to lead the design of a common API for FTTH wholesale communications in Poland. This joint, collaborative initiative aims to standardize FTTH wholesale API interfaces across the participating companies, but the designed solution will be available for the whole Polish market. By designing a common API, the project is expected to significantly reduce integration time and costs for new Internet Service Providers (ISPs) and wholesalers, streamline agreement processes, and accelerate sales. This standardization will also lower barriers to entry in the FTTH market, fostering greater competition. The communication standard being designed between wholesale operators and retail operators will be publicly available and also will be voluntary. This means that its provision will lower the barrier to access by increasing the possibility of cooperation through the addition of another communication option, without excluding other methods. The project implements the TM Forum Open APIs – a globally recognized framework within the telecommunications industry. By adopting this standard, the resulting solution will be modern, scalable, and aligned with international best practices. This approach guarantees interoperability and supports the future development of digital services, positioning the Polish market as both mature and innovative. For internet access subscribers, this initiative translates to a more dynamic and competitive market, leading to improved service offerings. The reduced integration time and cost for ISPs entails that new services can be brought to market faster, providing consumers with more freedom of choice and innovative solutions. A common API facilitates seamless service provisioning, testing, and ticketing, which can lead to faster installations, quicker resolution of issues, and an overall enhanced customer experience. Optare Solutions was selected as the partner for this consulting project due to its expertise in the telecommunications market, its prior knowledge of the FTTH market acquired across extensive previous projects and its commitment to designing a new API that reuses existing interfaces as much as possible while incorporating industry best practices and telecommunications standards. The project will focus on key wholesale operations, including service provisioning, service testing, and service ticketing. "This joint effort underscores our commitment to fostering a more efficient and competitive FTTH market in Poland. Partnering with Optare Solutions will enable us to standardize our current APIs, which benefits all participants and drives innovation across the industry. The standard will be available without cost for all market participants – all operators on the market." – said representatives for the four leading Polish FTTH wholesalers (Ignacio Irurita, CEO of Polski Światłowód Otwarty, Marta Wojciechowska, CEO of Fiberhost and President of the Management Board of Open Allies Foundation, Magda Russyan, CEO of Światłowód Inwestycje, Jacek Wiśniewski, CEO of NEXERA). The consulting project will involve a structured methodology including individual meetings with stakeholders to understand their current strategies and API interfaces, a comprehensive analysis of existing documentation, and the design and documentation of the new common API. The four participating companies are committed to providing Optare Solutions with full access to their current APIs and provisioning processes, ensuring the successful design of a unified standard.

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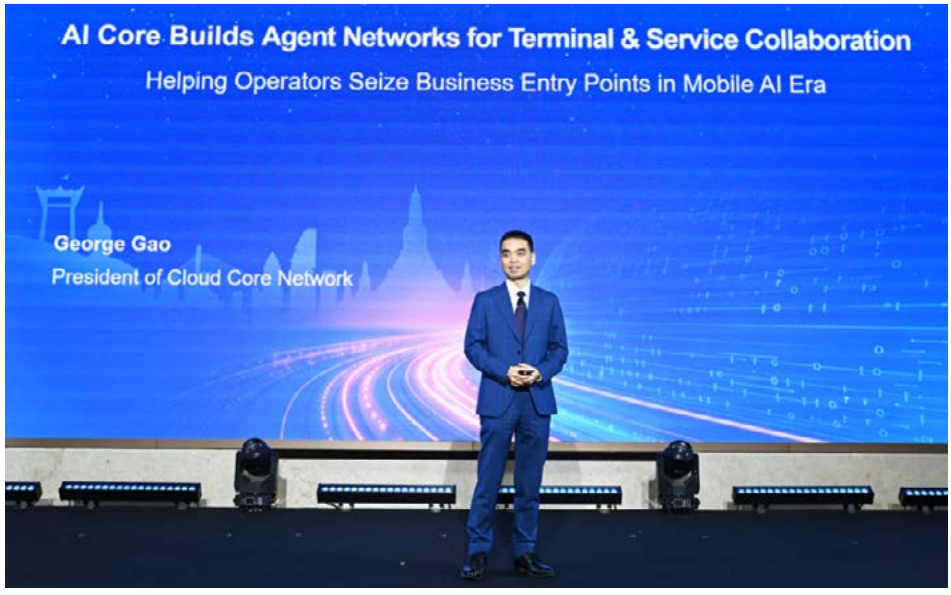
TECHNOLOGY NEWS

AI Core Unlocks Agent Networks with Terminal and Service Collaboration



At the 10th 5G Core Network Summit hosted by Informa Tech, George Gao, President of Huawei Cloud Core Network Product Line, delivered a keynote address calling on telco operators to capitalize on AI opportunities. Mr. Gao advocated for building an agent communication network featuring terminal service collaboration through network magnetization. Huawei also released the Striding Towards the Intelligent World White Paper 2025 on cloud core networks at the summit, which illustrates seven core network development trends around intelligent terminals, service scenarios, and AI core networks, facilitating industry collaboration and innovation. Mr. Gao emphasized that as terminals and service applications increasingly incorporate intelligent agent capabilities, networks must evolve to bridge ecosystem gaps. First, we can use intent entry, network service agents, network capability agents, and network O&M agents to make the network agent-based. The agentized network supports the agent-to-agent (A2A) protocol and the model context protocol (MCP), allowing agents to communicate with each other. This brings more efficient and intelligent terminal and service collaboration. The intent entry interacts with the terminal-side agents, letting them invoke network agents exactly when needed. Second, we can build an agent communication network across ecosystems. We can introduce A2A session management capabilities based on IP sessions, and expand the authentication mode from SIM card-based authentication to digital identity authentication and authorization. Mr. Gao also proposed four strategic actions to speed the evolution of operator networks into AI core networks:

Intelligent Network Services

Leveraging AI agents, we can roll out various intelligent services on the core network. AI Calling is a prime example. By introducing AI capabilities to calling services, we can build an AI call assistant that can understand user intent, emotions, and contextual information, creating more intelligent and efficient call experiences. Based on the data channel (DC), we can support interactive calling, which facilitates closed-loop service handling during calls. In this new model, the familiar dial pad serves as an entry point for AI services.

Network Capability Productization

By productizing network capabilities, we can help operators shift from just selling traffic to selling premium service experiences. Huawei has defined five essential elements for effective experience monetization: definable experiences, guaranteed quality, marketable products, perceptible exclusive identity, and reliable service provisioning. With technologies such as media relay, we can greatly improve HD video penetration rates and third-party service experiences, and reshape operator's business model.

Network O&M Autonomy

We can also introduce digital employees to advance network O&M autonomy, achieving high O&M efficiency and secure, high-stability networks. The AI core network uses key technologies such as agents, digital twins, and the industry's first mixture-of-models (MoM) architecture facilitating intelligent scheduling and collaborative inference between fast inference models and deep reasoning models. With the fusion of these technologies, we can enable the AI core network to achieve single-domain autonomy and accelerate the evolution to level-4 autonomous networks.

Diversified Telco Cloud Computing Power

We can integrate AI computing resources into the telecom infrastructure. Through resource pooling and unified orchestration and scheduling, we can build one cloud for general computing and intelligent computing, accommodating hundreds of billions of agents and vast service traffic in the mobile AI era.

Mr. Gao concluded by stating that the introduction of AI Core is not only a technological advancement, but also a reconstruction of the entire industry ecosystem. Huawei is committed to continuous innovation, to help operators unlock new revenue opportunities and secure a stronger position in the market.

Asia–Pacific 5G Subscriptions Set to Hit 4.6 Billion by 2030

5G subscriptions across the Asia–Pacific region are expected to reach 4.6 billion by 2030, up from 2.7 billion in 2025, according to GlobalData. The analyst house expects adoption to grow at a CAGR of 11.4%, driven by rising availability of low-cost 5G devices, ongoing network expansion in major markets, and upcoming commercial launches in Pakistan and Sri Lanka. GlobalData telecom analyst Sarwat Zeeshan said government-backed digital strategies, enterprise transformation efforts and demand for high-speed, low-latency connectivity are all accelerating standalone 5G deployments. "The need for high-performance networks to support applications such as smart manufacturing, autonomous mobility and cloud gaming is driving 5G adoption across the region," Zeeshan stated. Several governments - including Australia, China, India, South Korea, Japan and Taiwan - have rolled out national 5G action plans aimed at developing domestic 5G ecosystems. These frameworks typically include public sector support for 5G use cases, tax incentives, industry–government collaboration, and regulatory measures to improve spectrum utilization. China is expected to remain the world's largest 5G market through the forecast period. GlobalData anticipates that around 75% of China's mobile subscriptions will be on 5G by 2029, supported by continued investment and policies to extend coverage to rural areas and industrial zones. China deployed roughly 4.2 million 5G base stations in 2024, increasing that figure to 4.6 million by September 2025. Operators across APAC are also ramping up investments. GSMA estimates that regional telcos will spend US$254 billion on infrastructure through 2030, with much of this directed toward 5G. These rollouts are expected to create new revenue opportunities through premium 5G mobile plans as well as enterprise services, including private 5G networks. Zeeshan noted that the combination of 5G with emerging technologies such as AI, data analytics and IoT will help operators expand into verticals including manufacturing, mining and healthcare. "APAC has become the center of the technological race for 5G+," Zeeshan said. "South Korea, Japan and China are already moving beyond deployment into developing broader 5G ecosystems, supporting their IT and manufacturing sectors and driving new IoT and M2M opportunities."

Deutsche Telekom Nears Total 5G Coverage

Qatar ranks among the top countries globally for broadband quality, data infrastructure, digital government services, and innovation, according to a report by Digital Co-operation Organization (DCO). For example, the report notes that Qatar recorded a higher number of Internet exchange points, improvements in online banking services, and growth in innovative companies. Digital Co-operation Organization, which is an international organization dedicated to advancing inclusive and sustainable digital economies, launched the Digital Economy Navigator 2025 (DEN 2025) during the Second World Summit for Social Development in Doha. The report highlights Qatar's world-class digital infrastructure, advanced governance frameworks, and pioneering investments in sustainability technologies, reaffirming its role as one of the region's most future-ready digital economies. Qatar's early adoption of 5G networks and investment in green, energy-efficient data centers position it as a leader in sustainable digital innovation. Drawing on 145 indicators and insights from more than 41,000 respondents, it provides policymakers, businesses, and development partners with a detailed view of how nations are using technology to drive inclusive, sustainable growth. DCO Secretary-General Deemah al-Yahya said DEN 2025 illustrates both the progress already made and the opportunities ahead. Commenting on DEN 2025, she said: "The Digital Co-operation Organization envisions a future where every nation can participate meaningfully in the digital economy, not only as consumers of digital services, but as creators and innovators." She added that collective effort will be essential to turn this potential into reality. "DEN 2025 is a reminder that our collective progress depends on decisive action. We must move from measuring digital transformation to accelerating it, with governments adopting agile and forward-looking policies, businesses investing with purpose and responsibility, and societies embracing innovation as a force for inclusion. The cost of inaction is exclusion, but the rewards of collaboration are limitless. If we work together across borders, sectors, and communities we can shape an inclusive, trusted, and sustainable digital future where every nation has the opportunity not only to participate, but to lead." The DEN 2025 shows that digitalization is creating new opportunities for growth across all income levels. Internet access now reaches more than four in five people globally, and lower-middle-income countries are recording the fastest progress. The report estimates that connecting underserved communities could enable more than 1.3bn people to benefit from digital banking and online services, enhancing inclusion and economic resilience. Artificial intelligence continues to advance rapidly, and the new "Digital for Sustainability" pillar highlights how innovation can support more efficient, environmentally responsible economies. The DCO notes that Qatar's leadership in green digital infrastructure and sustainable policy integration demonstrates how advanced economies can balance technological ambition with environmental stewardship. The DCO encourages policymakers, the private sector, and innovation stakeholders to use the DEN 2025 as a framework for collaboration and shared progress. Qatar's achievements in connectivity, governance, and sustainability illustrate how long-term planning and investment can build resilient, inclusive digital economies.

UAE Enters Space Manufacturing Era with Orbitworks' Sovereign Capability

The UAE has officially entered a new phase of space leadership with the inauguration of Orbitworks' state-of-the-art satellite manufacturing and integration facility in Abu Dhabi's KEZAD economic zone—the first commercial satellite production hub of its kind in the Middle East. The facility marks the start of production for Altair, the region's first homegrown, AI-enabled Earth-observation satellite constellation, positioning the UAE as a global player capable of designing, building, operating, and exporting advanced space technologies. Dr. Ahmad Belhoul Al-Falasi, Minister of Sports and Chairman of the UAE Space Agency, hailed the launch as a historic milestone demonstrating the maturity and competitiveness of the national space sector. He emphasized that Orbitworks strengthens the UAE's ambition to build a sustainable, innovation-driven space economy powered by advanced manufacturing and private-sector leadership. Orbitworks features a comprehensive end-to-end manufacturing ecosystem—including ISO-standard cleanrooms, testing chambers, thermal vacuum capabilities, vibration tables, EMI facilities, and mission simulation labs—enabling full satellite assembly, integration, and qualification under one roof. Built for modular, parallel production, the facility can manufacture up to 50 satellites per year, reducing traditional production timelines from years to months. Beyond manufacturing, Orbitworks serves as a collaborative hub where governments, companies, and research institutions can co-locate, co-develop, and launch space missions. It provides turnkey programs, hosted payloads, rideshare opportunities, and sovereign procurement channels for sensitive technologies—offering partners a unique pathway to build space capability from Abu Dhabi. At the heart of its mission is the Altair constellation, a 10-satellite AI-enabled fleet capable of analyzing data directly in orbit. With optical, infrared, thermal, and RF sensors combined with onboard AI, Altair delivers near real-time intelligence by detecting events, capturing imagery, processing data instantly, and sending actionable insights within minutes. This next-generation capability supports national security, disaster response, climate monitoring, agriculture, maritime surveillance, and environmental protection. Developed through a joint venture between Marlan Space (IHC) and Loft Orbital (US), Orbitworks merges regional industrial strategy with world-class satellite platform expertise. Its rapid 12-month completion reflects the UAE's focus on building a sovereign, export-ready space industry aligned with national initiatives such as Operation 300bn and Make It in the Emirates. With industrial-scale manufacturing capacity, advanced AI-enabled spacecraft, and global partnership opportunities, Orbitworks is set to transform the UAE into a major producer of space infrastructure—cementing its role as a bridge between East and West and a rising power in the global space economy.

Spectrum Boosts Wi-Fi 7 Speeds to Nearly 10 Gbps with MLO & Aa Small Slice of 7GHz Band

The quest for faster Wi-Fi never ends – and this week at SCTE TechExpo25 in Washington D.C. US cableco (aka Charter Communications) demonstrated Wi-Fi 7 speeds of close to 10 Gbps using the 6 GHz band plus an additional small slice of 7 GHz spectrum. The test rig was provided by Broadcom. Spectrum says it is realistic to expect that the additional spectrum could be released to Wi-Fi. Sometimes small amounts of spectrum can make a huge difference. This week's demonstration by Spectrum and Broadcom at SCTE TechExpo25 showed that a mere 125 MHz of additional spectrum in the lower 7 GHz band (7.125 to 7.250 GHz to be exact) can boost Wi-Fi speeds to nearly 10 Gbps towards a single device. Spectrum and Broadcom used the additional band plus the existing 6 GHz band to enable a total of four 320 MHz channels of which two were combined with MLO to deliver the huge data rate. Spectrum says it is reasonable to expect that the additional 125 MHz of spectrum could be made available to Wi-Fi under similar rules as today exist for the current 6 GHz band. "The band is being used by federal agencies but it is likely that a similar sharing model as for the current 6 GHz band could be applied, meaning allowing Wi-Fi operation in low power indoor mode. This would be sufficient to enable the types of services we've demonstrated today," says Rob Alderfer, VP of Technology Policy at Spectrum. He also says that Spectrum is pushing for more Wi-Fi spectrum in order to draw closer to achieving parity between future 10 Gbps broadband speeds delivered to the home and Wi-Fi data rates within the home. "Utilization of this technology across this band of spectrum will enable speeds approaching 20 Gbps to WiFi devices like mobile phones, AR/VR devices, gaming systems, and computers, ensuring that Wi-Fi in U.S. homes and businesses does not become a bottleneck," Spectrum says in a statement here. Spectrum takes a great deal of pride in delivering fast Wi-Fi and mobile services. In 2021 Spectrum Mobile services were – according to Spectrum – statistically 'fastest overall' meaning 43% faster than Verizon, 41% faster than T-Mobile, and 29% faster than AT&T (read more here). This can be attributed to the fact that Spectrum uses home Wi-Fi to boost Spectrum Mobile speeds and hence uses a converged mobile/Wi-Fi connectivity strategy to serve their clients better.

Jazz and DynaSys Launch Pakistan's First City-Wide Lorawan Network

In a landmark move for Pakistan's digital transformation, Jazz, the country's leading digital operator, has partnered with DynaSys Networks to launch Pakistan's first city-wide Long Range Wide Area Network (LoRaWAN) in Lahore. This initiative marks a defining step toward building Smart Cities across the country, with nationwide expansion already underway. Unlike traditional connectivity frameworks, LoRaWAN technology enables low-power, long-range, and scalable deployments, opening possibilities across sectors — from smart agriculture and environmental monitoring to industrial automation and urban planning. The new network is designed to power Internet of Things (IoT) applications that can transform how cities operate and how citizens interact with technology. "This is a defining moment in our journey to build a truly digital Pakistan," said Chaudhary Shahzad Rasheed, President Enterprise Solutions at Jazz. "The launch of LoRaWAN is key to unlocking the potential of IoT — transforming how businesses operate and communities thrive. By enabling seamless access to real-time data, Jazz is driving innovation that will shape Pakistan's digital future." Ali Akhtar, Founder & CEO of DynaSys Networks, added: "Our collaboration with Jazz brings together their nationwide digital reach and our IoT expertise to create a powerful platform for a smarter Pakistan. We invite enterprises, institutions, and government bodies to join us in leveraging this technology to unlock growth, efficiency, and sustainability." The new LoRaWAN infrastructure is fully compliant with the Pakistan Telecommunication Authority's (PTA) IoT licensing framework, with all systems hosted locally to ensure data privacy, security, and sovereignty. By fostering an open, collaborative ecosystem, Jazz and DynaSys aim to position Pakistan at the forefront of IoT innovation — enabling smart infrastructure, environmental intelligence, and data-driven decision-making for a more sustainable and connected future.

Let's advance together digital transformation for all!
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REGULATORY NEWS

TRA Announces the Launch of Satellite Direct-to-Device Services in the Kingdom of Bahrain

The Telecommunications Regulatory Authority (TRA) has announced the launch of Satellite Direct-to-Device (D2D) services in the Kingdom of Bahrain, marking a significant milestone in the country's telecommunications landscape. This initiative represents a major step in reinforcing Bahrain's position as the first country in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) to implement Satellite Direct-to-Device services, further strengthening its status as one of the most advanced and best-connected nations globally. The launch of these services follows the completion and publication of the related consultation report, which forms a key pillar of the TRA's broader strategy to position Bahrain as a global leader in connectivity and digital innovation. Through this initiative, the Kingdom becomes the first in the region to authorize the use of innovative technology that enables standard mobile phones to connect directly to satellites in areas beyond terrestrial network coverage, including maritime zones. By introducing Satellite Direct-to-Device services, the TRA aims to ensure that essential communication services remain accessible at all times, enhancing safety, resilience, and connectivity for citizens, residents, and visitors alike. Commenting on the launch, Philip Marnick, General Director of the Telecommunications Regulatory Authority, said: "Satellite Direct-to-Device services represent a significant advancement in Bahrain's telecommunications ecosystem. By being the first country in the GCC to authorize this technology, we are reinforcing Bahrain's position as a leader in digital connectivity and innovation. This initiative ensures that people remain connected even beyond the reach of terrestrial networks, supporting safety, economic activity, and national resilience, while reflecting our continued commitment to providing world-class telecommunications services." The introduction of Satellite Direct-to-Device services underscores the TRA's ongoing efforts to enhance nationwide connectivity, support emerging technologies, and ensure that Bahrain's telecommunications framework remains future-ready and aligned with international best practices.

African Regulators Address Quality and Cost of Services

Two recent news stories – from Madagascar and Chad – indicate that some African regulators feel they need to respond strongly to public concerns about quality and cost of mobile services – although powers to enforce these responses often differ from country to country. For example, Madagascan regulator L'Autorité de Régulation des Technologies de Communication (ARTEC) has announced that it has formally engaged with mobile network operators in Madagascar following a wave of public complaints regarding the high cost of mobile internet services. The regulator has called on all telecommunications operators to reassess and adjust their tariffs for mobile internet connections as soon as possible, in order to make services more accessible to users. However, as the TechAfrica News website points out, while this initiative is part of ongoing regulatory efforts, which began in late 2024 and resulted in tariff adjustments currently in effect, ARTEC does not directly set prices applied by operators. Instead, its role is to act as a facilitator and mediator, promoting collaboration among industry stakeholders to reach balanced, equitable, and lasting solutions that benefit the entire digital ecosystem. In Chad meanwhile, the Autorité de Régulation des Communications Electroniques et des Postes (ARCEP) has announced the completion of its 15th national audit of mobile network service quality. The operation measured key indicators such as call success rates, voice quality, 4G coverage and Internet connection speeds. As the Ecofin news agency notes, ARCEP states that "the results reveal better signal stability in several urban centers, reflecting operators' investment efforts". The news is not all good, however. The agency adds: "Weaknesses remain, mainly linked to energy supply, ageing infrastructure and irregular coverage on some routes." ARCEP appears to see this as an ongoing mission to ensure operators comply with defined standards. Indeed, two years ago we reported that it had fined operator Airtel Chad about US$8.3 million for failing to meet quality of service requirements. However, as recently as September we noted ongoing consumer complaints over outages, unstable internet and low service quality – despite high tariffs. In addition, there was then, and presumably still is, far from universal coverage.

NTRA Egypt and the RIPE NCC Convene the Ninth Roundtable Meeting for Arab Governments and Regulatory Authorities

The National Telecommunications Regulatory Authority of Egypt (NTRA), in cooperation with the RIPE NCC, hosted the ninth annual Roundtable Meeting for Arab Governments and Regulatory Authorities on Thursday, 4 December 2025, at the Nile Ritz-Carlton in Cairo. The meeting brought together high-level delegations from ten Arab countries, including the heads and directors of national regulatory authorities, the League of Arab States, the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) and AFRINIC. This year's roundtable was held under the theme "Strengthening Regional Synergies in Internet Infrastructure and Governance", with discussions focused on advancing Internet ecosystems across the Arab region. Participants explored opportunities to deepen regional cooperation, expand connectivity, adopt global best practices in routing security and align with global developments in Internet governance, including WSIS+20 and the Global Digital Compact. H.E. Eng. Mohamed Shamroukh, CEO of NTRA, opened the meeting by affirming Egypt's leadership in supporting digital stability in the region, stating: "Egypt's hosting of this meeting reinforces our regional role in safeguarding Internet stability and developing Internet-related policies. Together, we are building digital infrastructure capable of addressing geopolitical complexities and meeting the requirements of digital transformation. Arab digital integration is no longer optional: it is essential for service continuity and for building resilient and robust networks."

H.E. Hans Petter Holen, CEO of the RIPE NCC, emphasized the importance of technical cooperation with Arab governments: "This year saw remarkable progress in IPv6 deployment and routing security across the Arab region. We remain committed to supporting regulators, governments and the Internet community through capacity-building and transparent measurement data that enables long-term planning. Our role is to safeguard the foundations of an open Internet and support governments in developing evidence-based policies that protect global technical operations."Dr. Khaled Wali, Plenipotentiary Ambassador, Director of the Communications and IT Development Department at the League of Arab States, highlighted the importance of joint Arab cooperation: "Strengthening digital infrastructure in the Arab region is a top priority. Collaboration with the RIPE NCC has yielded significant progress in IPv6 deployment and network security. We are now integrating measurement tools into the Arab institutional framework, enabling decision-makers to rely on accurate and transparent data. This meeting is another step towards a more balanced and sustainable Arab digital future." Dr .Noah Al-Shayab, Commissioner at Jordan's Telecommunications Regulatory Authority, stressed the value of a unified Arab position: "The experience of the past year shows that joint Arab action delivers tangible results, whether in IPv6 deployment or routing security. Jordan is proud to have contributed alongside Egypt and Lebanon to drafting the unified WSIS+20 submission, most of which was adopted, demonstrating the power of speaking with one voice." Dr. Jenny Gemayel, CEO of Lebanon's Telecommunications Regulatory Authority, spoke about Lebanon's new regulatory phase: "Lebanon is undergoing a renewed regulatory phase aimed at revitalizing the authority's institutional mandate and strengthening cooperation on priority topics such as IPv6, routing security and IXPs. Lebanon's participation in the WSIS+20 process reflects our commitment to supporting unified Arab positions and reinforcing our region's presence in global digital governance." Eng. Abdulbaset Al-Baour, CEO of Libya's General Authority for Communications and Informatics, stated: "Libya continues implementing its National Communications Strategy 2023–2027, with IPv6 deployment as a core objective. We are advancing next-generation networks, expanding national measurement systems and deepening cooperation with the RIPE NCC and AFRINIC to build infrastructure capable of meeting global developments." Dr. Al-Sadiq Jamal El-Din, Director General of Sudan's Telecommunications and Postal Regulatory Authority, emphasized network security: "Digital stability begins with strong, secure networks capable of protecting critical data and services. This roundtable provides a vital platform for developing a shared vision that enhances routing security and strengthens Arab digital infrastructure." Eng. Abdulrahman Al Marzouqi, Acting Director General of the UAE Telecommunications and Digital Government Regulatory Authority,

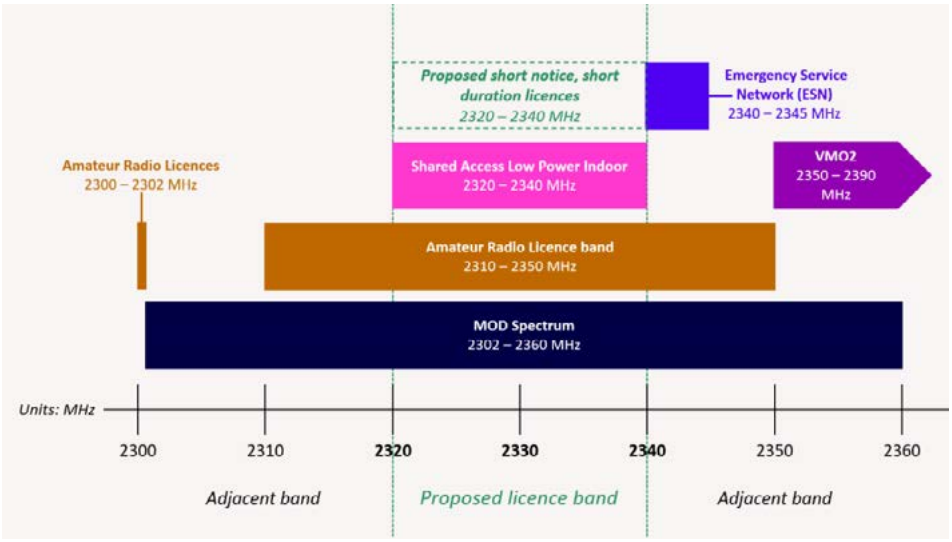
underscored the role of innovation: "Adopting modern technologies and developing digital infrastructure are essential to boosting regional competitiveness. A strong Arab digital future requires collaborative work rooted in innovation and skills development." Eng. Manal Mazyad, Vice Chair of the Communications and Information Technology Authority of Kuwait, added: "Arab experience shows that integrated digital infrastructure development is the most effective path for sustainable digital transformation. Kuwait continues to support IPv6 deployment, routing security and IXP development, alongside capacity-building and cooperation with the RIPE NCC." Eng. Mohammed Al Nuaimi, Director of Technology and Network Security at Bahrain's Telecommunications Regulatory Authority, highlighted: "Routing security and resilient digital infrastructure are essential for service sustainability and user trust. Achieving this requires broad Arab cooperation and continuous coordination between governments and technical bodies." From Qatar, Eng. Maryam Al Ishaq, Director of Infrastructure at the Communications Regulatory Authority, noted: "Qatar has achieved remarkable progress in IPv6 deployment. We are working with the RIPE NCC to strengthen measurement capabilities at the national IXP. IXPs are essential for reducing dependence on external routing paths and improving network efficiency." AFRINIC representative Ms. Wafa Dhamani confirmed the organization's return to normal operations: "AFRINIC has entered a new phase of stability and governance. We thank Arab states, Egypt and the RIPE NCC for their support during challenging years and look forward to renewed cooperation with all stakeholders." The sessions of the meeting covered several key topics, including the deployment of IPv6 as a foundation for growth, innovation and the digital economy; strengthening the security of Internet infrastructure through the adoption of secure routing standards to reduce hijacks and leaks; and the role of Internet exchange points (IXPs) in enhancing service quality and reducing reliance on external routes. Participants also discussed the latest regional and international developments in Internet governance, including preparations for the WSIS+20 process, the renewal of the mandate of the Internet Governance Forum (IGF) and a review of outcomes from related international meetings. The Arab delegations stressed the importance of coordinating Arab positions and enhancing regulatory authorities' participation in international forums to ensure an influential Arab role in shaping global digital policy. Experts from the RIPE NCC and the National Telecommunications Regulatory Authority of Egypt delivered technical presentations on the latest data and trends related to IPv6 deployment, routing security and critical Internet infrastructure. They also highlighted initiatives undertaken by the organization in several Arab countries during 2025, including specialized training programs and partnerships with the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) and the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) to support digital skills development, Internet measurements and sustainable digital transformation. At the conclusion of the meeting, participants' recommendations underscored the importance of continuing joint Arab efforts to build strong and secure digital infrastructure; developing regulatory policies capable of keeping pace with technological and economic challenges; launching initiatives to strengthen local content hosting and promote regional interconnection among Arab countries; and supporting technical programs that enhance the readiness of regulatory bodies to address global developments. The roundtable was reaffirmed as a central platform for fostering cooperation and building a more inclusive and sustainable digital future for the Arab region

PTA Gives Conditional Approval as PTCL Accepts Terms for Telenor Pakistan Acquisition

The Pakistan Telecommunication Authority has granted conditional approval to Pakistan Telecommunication Company Limited for its acquisition of Telenor Pakistan, marking a major breakthrough in one of the country's most closely watched telecom deals. The decision follows PTCL's formal and unconditional acceptance of the regulatory conditions attached to the merger-and-acquisition process. Officials confirmed that PTA had requested written confirmation on whether PTCL would comply with all conditions related to service continuity, consumer protection, network integration, and post-merger compliance. PTCL's affirmative response has cleared a critical regulatory hurdle that has delayed progress for months. The move now opens the path for final regulatory processing of the multi-billion-rupee transaction, which is expected to reshape Pakistan's telecom landscape and influence competitive dynamics ahead of the next spectrum auction. The Competition Commission of Pakistan has already approved PTCL's acquisition of Telenor Pakistan as well as Orion Towers, further accelerating the deal's trajectory. Industry observers say that once all approvals are secured, the acquisition will strengthen PTCL Group's position as Pakistan's second-largest telecom operator. The deal also marks the end of Telenor's nearly 20-year presence in the country's telecom sector. With PTCL's unconditional acceptance on record, the merger process is expected to move swiftly through the remaining procedural stages toward completion.

Ofcom UK Approve Short Duration 2.3GHz Licenses for Pop-Up Mobile Cover

The UK telecoms regulator, Ofcom, has given its blessing to the "early 2026" introduction of short "notice, short duration licenses" for outdoor and indoor use in the 2320-2340MHz radio spectrum band, which could support everything from pop-up 4G and 5G mobile (broadband) coverage to TV broadcasting etc. The idea seems to be that companies and organizations could harness the spectrum to power temporary mobile networks (e.g. 4G and 5G), such as for news-gathering and broadcast of major events, sports coverage, pop-up mobile coverage and private network demonstrator events. Such solutions already exist (e.g. Cells on Wheels [CoW]), so this is extending that sort of capability. "We expect that the new short notice, short duration license product will be available to applicants from early 2026. We will provide an update on our PMSE licensing and Shared Access pages when the new product becomes available. Applications will initially be made through our usual PMSE licensing processes, although the product will be available to any user meeting the license conditions," said Ofcom's statement.



Senegal and ITU Partner to Advance Digital Development for Young Women

A partnership agreement has been announced between the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), the United Nations specialized agency for digital technologies, and Senegalese regulator ARTP. The aim of this agreement is to support young women in digital development. The agreement between the ITU and l'Autorité de Régulation des Télécommunications et des Postes du Sénégal (ARTP) is titled "Promoting digital commercial ecosystems integrating young women in Senegal in its phase 1". It aims to create a framework for close collaboration between the two institutions for the implementation of the project. It was signed on the sidelines of the World Telecommunications Development Conference (CMDT-25), organized in Baku, Azerbaijan, from 17 to 28 November 2025, which certainly seems appropriate. The conference is a special platform for high-ranking officials from ITU Member States, to express their views on emerging trends and on matters of strategic importance to the development of the telecommunication and ICT sector. The Senegalese project will, it is hoped, support young women by strengthening their participation in digital trade through targeted skills development, ecosystem support and the development of digital tools. That said, precise details are not yet available, although the ARTP website promises that a project documenting specific operational procedures and the distribution of roles and responsibilities will eventually be made available. The Director General of the ARTP, Dahirou Thiam, who was a co-signatory along with Director of the ITU Development Office Dr Cosmas Luckyson Zavazava, apparently stressed that this approach reflects the desire of the Senegalese authorities to make digital one of the engines of the national economy.

BTRC to Auction 700MHz Spectrum in January 2026

Bangladesh is set for its first-ever auction of the 700MHz band, a move expected to significantly strengthen nationwide mobile coverage and accelerate future 5G expansion. The Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission (BTRC) on 27 November published the Instructions for Radio Frequency Auction 2026, confirming that 25MHz of spectrum will be auctioned on 14 January 2026.

The 700MHz band, valued globally for its long-range coverage and strong indoor penetration, has long been considered essential for boosting 4G quality and preparing for widespread 5G adoption. According to BTRC, the auction will offer five blocks of 5MHz each through an open-outcry process. Another 20MHz could be added if demand warrants. Each 5MHz block carries a reserve price of Tk1,185 crore for a 15-year tenure, though operators will ultimately pay a prorated amount for about 13 years, as all mobile licenses expire in March 2039. Participation will be restricted to the country's four existing operators — Grameenphone, Robi, Banglalink, and Teletalk. In the first round, no operator may buy more than two blocks. Any unsold spectrum will then be offered in a second round, where operators may acquire one additional block. Bidding will increase in increments of Tk2.5 crore per MHz. Winning bidders must pay 10% of the total amount within 30 days, with the remainder spread over nine annual instalments. Each participant must deposit Tk100 crore in earnest money and pay a non-refundable application fee of Tk15 lakh. The auction timeline is tight. Queries must be submitted by 10 December, followed by a pre-bid meeting on 11 December. Applications are due on 21 December, the list of qualified bidders will be published on 24 December, earnest money must be deposited by 8 January, and the auction will take place on 14 January. The move comes after nearly 20 years of controversy surrounding the 700MHz band. In 2007, BTRC mistakenly allocated 12MHz of this highly valuable spectrum—at a nominal fee—to small ISP Always On Network Bangladesh Ltd (AONB), at a time when the band's global importance was not yet fully recognized. As mobile broadband evolved, international bodies — including the ITU — reclassified the 700MHz band for LTE and 5G use. By 2015, the 694–790MHz range had become part of a harmonized global IMT band plan. Recognizing the strategic value, BTRC revoked AONB's allocation in 2014. A lengthy court battle ensued, and in 2023 the High Court ruled the cancellation unlawful. AONB has since sought compensation of up to Tk1,800 crore. The BTRC has appealed, and the matter now awaits a final verdict in the Appellate Division. As a result, around 20MHz of the band remains tied up in litigation and cannot be auctioned at present. Faiz Ahmad Taiyeb, special assistant to the chief adviser on posts, telecom and ICT, told The Business Standard that the decision marks a long-awaited breakthrough. He noted that the new base price, Tk237 crore per MHz, values the full band at more than Tk11,000 crore. "For years, international organizations including the GSMA have accused Bangladesh of having the highest spectrum prices in the world,"

he said. Taiyeb further said, "We reduced prices by about 30% this time to address that concern. The hope is that operators will reinvest the savings in equipment and network expansion."

He added that Bangladesh is aligning with the global shift away from revenue-maximizing auctions and toward service-driven models. He went on to say that the regulator is now focusing on freeing and utilizing other unused bands to improve both coverage and capacity in the telecom sector. High stakes for operators Often called the "digital dividend," the 700MHz band can cover areas roughly four times larger than 1,800MHz using the same number of towers, making it critical for improving service quality in underserved regions. Operators have repeatedly warned that shortages of sub-1 GHz spectrum are a major constraint on network performance. Industry experts anticipate strong bidding, particularly from Grameenphone and Robi. If all 25MHz sells at the reserve price, the government stands to earn about Tk5,925 crore, with potential for much more if bidding intensifies. Unsold blocks may later be assigned administratively at the discovered market price or reauctioned within a year. With the auction guidelines now public, operators have a clear window to shape their bidding strategies. The coming weeks will determine whether this long-delayed auction finally unlocks the promise of nationwide, affordable high-quality mobile broadband.

ITU and UK Collaborate to Close Digital Divide

Digital connectivity is no longer a luxury. For societies and economies worldwide, it has become a lifeline. Yet in underserved communities, especially across the Global South, billions of people are not using the Internet. Many struggles with slow and unreliable connectivity or find digital services unaffordable. Hundreds of millions have no Internet access at all. Closing these gaps is essential to building stronger economies and ensuring everyone can participate fully in today's digital society. For nearly five years, the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) and the United Kingdom's Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) have worked side by side to advance inclusive, responsible, and sustainable digital transformation, in line with the UK Digital Development Strategy 2024–2030.

Our joint efforts have delivered tangible results in Brazil, Indonesia, Kenya, Nigeria, and South Africa, and are informing similar initiatives across the respective regions.

Key achievements include:

- Helping countries optimize national funds to expand last-mile connectivity through our Universal service financing efficiency toolkit, which has been shared with digital regulators across Africa, including members of the Communications Regulators' Association of Southern Africa.
- Providing vital policy and regulatory support, with tailored guidance and training helping national regulators shape inclusive digital transformation policies. Through regulatory and public policy support in Brazil, we helped enhance the design of the national school connectivity plan, while further support is strengthening digital health systems.

- Advancing research and capacity building with country-level studies on collaborative regulation (Kenya, Nigeria, and South Africa), public policies for meaningful connectivity (Brazil), digital skills assessments (Kenya and Nigeria), and research on last-mile and alternative access solutions.
- Offering self-paced training in broadband mapping to bolster national broadband planning efforts.
- Providing technical assistance and policy support for digital sustainability in Indonesia, helping the government lay the groundwork for an Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) system to manage electronic waste (e-waste) safely and sustainably; and in Brazil and South Africa, to increase the countries' regulatory capacity to collect data on greenhouse gas emissions and energy consumption across the information and communication technology (ICT) sector.

A commitment to collaboration

The ITU-UK partnership, grounded in shared values, represents a commitment to co-designing solutions with countries. We have supported governments and key stakeholders in strengthening policy and regulation, attracting responsible investment, and implementing practical, country-led strategies to expand inclusive digital access.

Robust collaboration enables us to provide tailored support that helps countries take concrete steps toward digital inclusion and sustainability. Whether we are improving universal service financing, building digital skills, strengthening digital policies and regulations, or safeguarding the environment, our work makes a difference on the ground.

Why it matters

Initiatives like this are crucial to promote affordable, meaningful connectivity, locally relevant digital content, and accessible digital services for marginalized groups in developing countries around the globe.

As we expand our collaboration further, we are helping countries monitor the climate impact of the digital sector and harmonize their data collection for better-informed policymaking. These are important steps to build resilient and environmentally responsible digital ecosystems. Our shared vision is clear: A digital future that is inclusive, resilient, and sustainable. We, together with our partners on the ground, aim to ensure that no one is left behind in the digital age.

Telia and Net4Mobility Secure Licenses in the 1800 MHz Band - PTS

Telecommunications operator Telia and Net4Mobility have been awarded licenses in the 1800 MHz band, the Swedish Post and Telecom Authority (PTS) announced. Hi3G Access also participated in the auction, but ultimately, Telia and Net4Mobility emerged as the winners. From the auction proceeds, Net4Mobility--which is jointly owned by Tele2 and Telenor--will receive SEK 465.9 million, while Telia will receive SEK 186.3 million. The licenses will be valid from 2028 through 2054 and are designed to enable contiguous frequency allocations across the entire 1800 MHz band, contributing to more efficient frequency utilization. "There are now strong conditions for continued technological development and usage for 5G. This will contribute to the ongoing digitalization of Sweden. At the same time, Sweden's security has been considered. We can conclude that the auction has worked very well as a tool for allocating frequencies," said Dan Sjöblom, Director-General of PTS.

Oman Accelerates Digital Transformation as National Strategies Drive E-Government Growth

Oman is deepening its transition toward a digital, investment-friendly economy, with the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion (MoCIIP) leading an ambitious push to modernize services, enhance competitiveness and attract high-value investments. The Ministry confirmed that national strategies for e-government and digital transformation now form the backbone of the country's shift to a knowledge-based economy, supported by major advances in human-capital development, regulatory reform, and digital infrastructure readiness. Commercial activity continues to show strong momentum. By Q3 2025, Oman recorded 395,100 commercial registrations, 75,663 Oman Business Platform transactions and 70,900 foreign investment registrations. Industrial licensing reached 108,800 approvals across all governorates. Foreign direct investment rose to RO 30.279 billion by mid-2025 — a 12.8% increase year-on-year — with RO 2.701 billion directed toward manufacturing. Total trade with global markets reached RO 26.707 billion by August. Manufacturing contributed RO 1.965 billion to GDP by June 2025, with industrial activities making up 18.6% of GDP. More than 25,000 certificates of origin were issued in Q3, and Omanization in the manufacturing sector reached 23.9%. MoCIIP continues to expand the Oman Business Platform, introducing digital lease contracts, financial reporting tools, interactive trade-name services and smartphone applications. With integration across 17 government entities and data exchange with 35 more, the platform enables unified digital transactions. By late 2024, 76.5% of all MoCIIP services were fully digitized and 89% of commercial activities were licensed automatically, resulting in over 748,000 automatic licenses issued since 2021. As of September 2025, Oman recorded 580,189 commercial licenses, 108,829 industrial licenses and 113,674 investment licenses, alongside more than 2.8 million platform transactions. MoCIIP is advancing 15 new initiatives this year, from standards and metrology to investment facilitation, and has already completed over 70% of last year's 41-initiative program. Intellectual property filings remain steady, with 3,718 applications submitted in Q3 2025. The Ministry has also reduced registration fees for foreign investors to ensure parity with Omani investors and launched the "Invest in Oman" Hall to centralize services across 14 government bodies and six private partners. Fourth Industrial Revolution adoption is advancing through the "Smart Production Factories" project, now in its second phase assessing 60 factories. The National E-Commerce Plan has reached 75% completion, achieving full progress in e-procurement, legal frameworks and business facilitation. MoCIIP continues to support job creation, skills development and private-sector growth. Over 10,800 Omanis were employed in key sectors in Q1 2025. Sanad Service Centers processed more than 813,000 transactions in the first ten months of the year. The National Team for Combating Illicit Trade remains active across 106 monitored activities to safeguard business integrity and support a competitive investment environment.

GSMA Calls for Spectrum Action To Support

The GSMA urged governments to accelerate 6G spectrum planning, warning that countries face a crunch in the next decade unless they expand mid-band allocations. In its latest report, titled "Vision 2040: Spectrum for the Future of Mobile Connectivity", the industry association found that 6G networks will require up to three times the mid-band spectrum typically available today as AI-powered services and advanced applications spike data consumption. According to estimates, global markets will need an average of 2GHz to 3GHz of mid-band spectrum by around 2035 to 2040, with high-demand countries requiring 2.5GHz to 4GHz. Today, most nations have around 1GHz earmarked for mobile connectivity. According to the report, the first wave of commercial 6G launches are expected from 2030, led by China, Japan, South Korea, the US, Europe, the GCC, Vietnam and India. Although 4G and 5G will remain widely used, more than 5 billion connections, or half the global total, are forecasted by 2040. Traffic is also set to surge, while urban areas remain pressure points producing 83 per cent of global traffic despite occupying just 5 per cent of land area. This is where mid-band capacity becomes a critical factor, the report noted. To avoid early 6G bottlenecks and poor user experience, the GSMA insisted that countries must have at least 2GHz of mid-band spectrum operational by 2030, warning that decisions made now will determine whether countries will face congestion, slower speeds and lagging digital economies in the future. GSMA chief regulatory officer John Giusti stated that meeting these needs will "support robust and sustainable connectivity" and help fuel long-term economic growth.

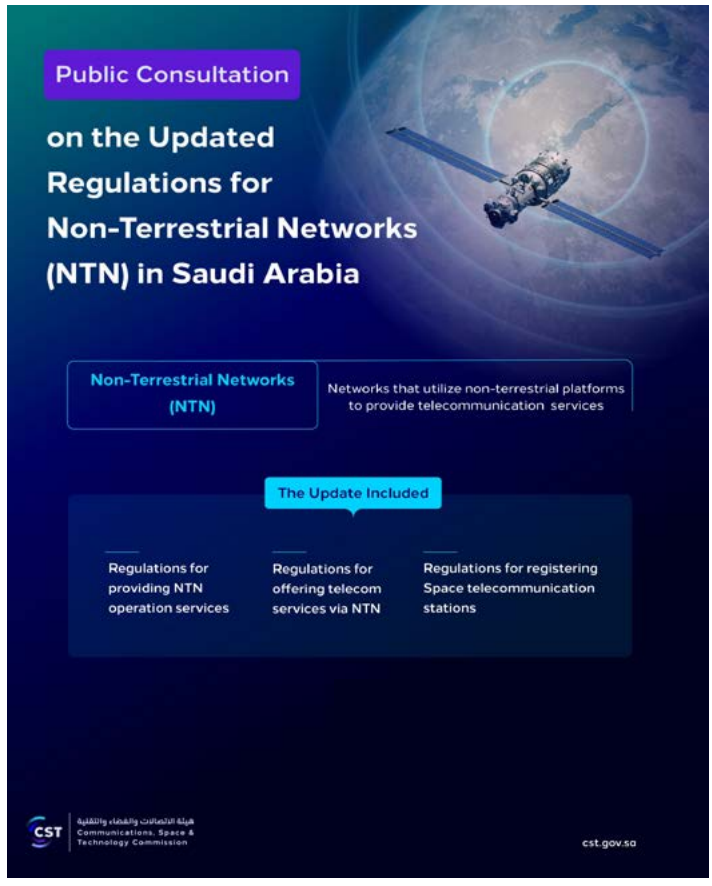
Saudi Arabia's Draft Regulation for Registration of Telecommunication Space Stations

Saudi Arabia's Communications, Space & Technology Commission (CST) has issued the second draft of the Regulation for Registration of Telecommunication Space Stations for public consultation, aiming to establish a transparent framework for managing space-based communications. On October 10, 2025, Saudi Arabia's Communications, Space & Technology Commission (CST) released the Second Version of the Regulation for Registration of Telecommunication Space Stations (hereinafter, the "draft regulation") for public consultation. The proposed framework sets out detailed procedures for the registration, management, and oversight of space-based telecommunication assets, reflecting Saudi Arabia's growing commitment to developing a transparent and competitive space and communications ecosystem. Established as the unified regulatory body for the communications, space, and technology sectors, the CST plays a central role in coordinating Saudi Arabia's transformation into a digitally driven and innovation-led economy. Over recent years, the Commission has expanded its oversight from traditional telecommunications to include emerging technologies, digital infrastructure, and national space policy implementation, a convergence that mirrors global trends in integrated communications regulation. The release of this second draft regulation marks another step in this evolution, reinforcing the CST's position as the Kingdom's lead authority on the governance of space-enabled communications. The new draft regulation outlines the definitions, scope, and obligations applicable to operators of telecommunication space stations, ranging from satellite communication platforms to associated ground-based components. It establishes a unified registration system that defines the rights and duties of service providers, specifies procedural steps for obtaining and maintaining registration, and introduces provisions for compliance monitoring. By setting these parameters, the CST aims to strengthen legal clarity and accountability across the rapidly expanding space communications sector, ensuring that operators adhere to national and international standards of safety, data protection, and orbital coordination.

Supporting Vision 2030 and space sector growth

The move comes as Saudi Arabia accelerates its space industry development under Vision 2030, with the Kingdom seeking to diversify its economy and position itself as a regional hub for next-generation communications infrastructure. Initiatives under the Saudi Space Agency (SSA) and CST have increasingly focused on creating a robust regulatory environment that enables both domestic and international investment in satellite services, Earth observation, and space-based connectivity. The new registration framework complements these efforts by providing a structured mechanism for transparency and operational oversight, key factors in attracting private sector participation and fostering international collaboration. As the global space economy grows, Saudi Arabia's alignment with international best practices will be crucial to ensuring sustainable market access and regulatory credibility.

Industry context and implications



The timing of the draft regulation is significant. Across the Middle East, governments are modernizing telecom and space governance to support new commercial models driven by low Earth orbit (LEO) constellations, data-intensive satellite applications, and cross-border connectivity demands. In this context, Saudi Arabia's proactive regulatory reform signals its readiness to compete for investment and partnerships in the broader satellite and communications value chain. For industry participants, the regulation introduces important compliance considerations. Operators, service providers, and downstream users will need to assess how the proposed rules affect: Licensing and operational authorizations under existing telecom and space service frameworks; Coordination with international spectrum management regimes such as those of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU); and

Data and security obligations, including how space-based communication interacts with national cybersecurity and data protection requirements. Engagement in the public consultation will be essential for stakeholders aiming to shape a balanced and innovation-friendly regulatory outcome.

Satellite-communications industry overview

The broader satellite-communications industry is poised for significant growth and forms a critical backdrop to the proposed regulation. Globally, the satellite communications market was

valued at approximately US$90.3 billion in 2024 and is projected to reach around US$159.6 billion by 2030, reflecting a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of about 10.2 per cent from 2025-30. In the Middle East specifically, the satellite communications segment is estimated at US$3.74 billion in 2025 and expected to grow to about US$5.35 billion by 2030 (a CAGR of roughly 7.4 per cent). Furthermore, the satellite-data-services sub-market in the Middle East & Africa generated around US$728.9 million in revenue in 2024 and is forecast to grow at a CAGR of approximately 14.6 per cent through 2030. These figures underscore both the opportunity and urgency for clear regulatory frameworks. As the number of space-enabled services and operators expands, so too do the demands for registration, oversight, spectrum coordination, security and compliance, all of which the draft regulation by the CST seeks to address. The release of this second version demonstrates Saudi Arabia's intent to establish a governance model that balances innovation, investment, and regulatory accountability. By integrating space station registration into its broader digital and space policy framework, the Kingdom is taking another step toward a future in which space-enabled communications play a central role in national infrastructure, economic diversification, and digital transformation. The consultation period also reflects an important shift in regulatory culture, toward openness, industry dialogue, and the co-development of rules that support a sustainable and competitive space ecosystem in the Middle East.

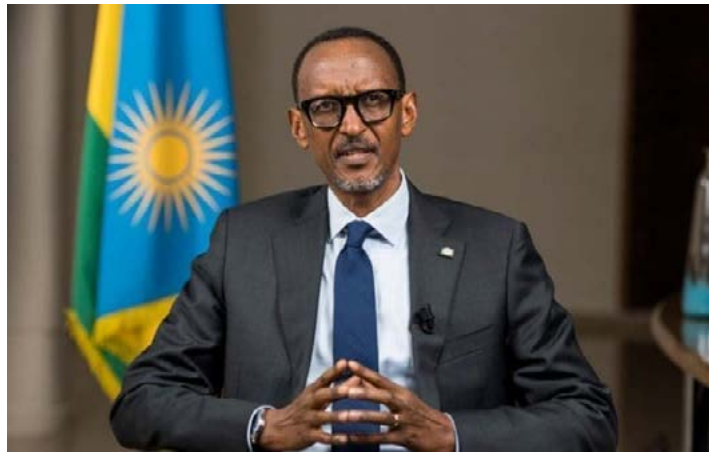
Digital Divide in Developing Markets Persists Despite Connection Growth: ITU

New data released by the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) indicates that while the number of internet connections is growing, the digital divide is still deepening in other key metrics such as speed, reliability, affordability and skills. According to the ITU's Facts and Figures 2025 report, roughly 6 billion people – about three-quarters of the world's population – are using the Internet in 2025, up from a revised estimate of 5.8 billion in 2024. The number of unconnected people dropped from a revised estimate of 2.3 billion in 2024 to 2.2 billion in 2025. While connectivity numbers show progress in getting more people online, the report shows that digital development remains closely linked to economic development, gender, and location, which means several digital divides persist despite the growth in connections. For example, 94% of people in high-income countries use the Internet, in contrast to only 23% in low-income countries. In fact, the report notes, 96% of those offline live in low- and middle-income countries. Meanwhile, more men are online than women (77% vs 71%), while urban areas unsurprisingly continue to have higher internet connectivity than rural areas (85% of urban dwellers vs 58% in rural areas). There's also the question of connection quality. For instance, the report – which measures 5G connectivity for the first time – says that 5G subscriptions now number around 3 billion, which account for about a third of all mobile broadband subscriptions worldwide, with networks cover an estimated 55% of the global population. However, that 5G coverage is heavily skewed towards high-income countries, where 84% of people have access to 5G, compared with only 4% in low-income countries. While most people in low- and middle-income countries do have access to 3G and 4G, those services struggle to keep pace with advancing technologies. This quality gap is illustrated in the finding that a typical user in a high-income country now generates nearly eight times more mobile data than one in a low-income country, the report says. Even when higher-quality mobile broadband connectivity is available in low-

income countries, affordability remains a key barrier, despite the continuing decrease in the median price of a data-only mobile broadband package. The ITU report estimates access remains unaffordable in around 60% of low- and middle-income countries. The digital skills gap also presents a barrier to adoption. According to the report, most Internet users possess basic skills, while more advanced capabilities – such as online safety, problem-solving and digital content creation – are being developed more slowly. "In a world where digital technologies are essential to so much of daily life, everyone should have the opportunity to benefit from being online," said ITU Secretary-General Doreen Bogdan-Martin in a statement. "This report highlights how today's digital divides are being defined by speed, reliability, affordability, and skills, all of which we must prioritize as we work toward our mission of universal connectivity."

Kagame Urges Policy Harmony as Africa Targets 95% 4G Coverage

President Paul Kagame has called for sweeping policy alignment across Africa's digital landscape, warning that without harmonized regulations and coordinated efforts, the continent risks turning transformative technology into a tool for deepening inequality rather than closing gaps. Speaking at the opening of Mobile World Congress Kigali 2025, the Rwandan leader emphasized that Africa's remarkable journey from limited connectivity to a mobile-driven economy now stands at a critical crossroads. The three-day summit, which runs through at the Kigali Convention Centre, brings together industry leaders, policymakers, and technology executives to chart the continent's digital future. Kagame highlighted mobile banking as perhaps Africa's most successful homegrown innovation, describing it as a global model that has empowered small business owners and women entrepreneurs while linking rural communities to broader economic opportunities. But he cautioned that despite visible progress, only a fraction of Africans enjoys connectivity levels matching global averages. "If this gap persists, the same technology meant to expand access will instead widen inequality," Kagame warned. He urged governments, private sector players, and development partners to create enabling environments where innovation can flourish across borders rather than being constrained by fragmented regulatory frameworks. Rwanda's approach centers on building a knowledge-based economy through artificial intelligence integration in national planning, investments in research, human capital development, and digital infrastructure aimed at boosting productivity and improving public service delivery. The president underscored cross-border cooperation as essential, noting that harmonized data systems, payment networks, and digital regulations would enable secure and seamless connectivity between African economies. He commended efforts by the African Union, regional blocs, and Smart Africa to reduce costs and advance creation of a single digital market. Axian Telecom Group CEO Hassan Jaber announced an ambitious commitment to expand 4G coverage to 95 percent of Africa's population by late 2027, positioning the target as fundamental to accelerating digital inclusion and securing the continent's place in the global digital economy. Through its YAT



unified Pan-African mobile network brand and MIP fixed network identity, Axian Telecom reportedly empowers over 300,000 people and communities while investing heavily in digital education, startup acceleration, coding bootcamps, and e-learning programs tailored for Africa's youth. "Africa's true strength lies not only in technology but in people, especially young Africans," Jaber emphasized. With nearly 60 percent of the continent's population under 35 and projections exceeding 700 million mobile subscribers by 2030, most of them women, the demographic opportunity appears substantial. The convergence of ambitious infrastructure targets, device affordability initiatives, and policy harmonization efforts suggests Africa's digital transformation may be entering a decisive phase. Whether the continent can translate these commitments into tangible connectivity gains for hundreds of millions of people will likely determine not just economic trajectories but also how equitably the benefits of the digital age get distributed. President Kagame framed the challenge succinctly in his opening remarks: "The future we must build is an Africa that is bold, connected, and competitive." The question facing delegates gathered in Kigali is whether coordinated action can match the scale of ambition.

A SNAPSHOT OF REGULATORY ACTIVITIES IN THE SA-ME-NA REGION

Afghanistan

The Ministry of Tele-communications and Information Technology said that currently 26 million SIM cards are active, covering 80 to 85 percent of the country. The ministry's spokesman, Enayatullah Alokozay said that over the past four years, the ministry has planned 550 new telecom sites, of which 120 are already operational, and private telecom companies have established more than 1,050 new towers across various provinces. He emphasized that extending telecom services has been a national priority, especially in remote and previously underserved areas. Alokozay said that the regions that had no access to communication networks in the past two decades are now connected, marking a major milestone in Afghanistan's digital expansion. (November 3, 2025) www.thekabultimes.com

Algeria

The Minister of Post and Wire and Wireless Transport, Syed Ali Zarouqi, inspectied the headquarters of the Algerian Company for Information and Communications Technology (SATICOM), a subsidiary of Algeria Telecommunications Corporation. The visit is part of a series of field engagements with key sector stakeholders. During the visit, SATICOM officials presented an overview of the company's services and technical solutions developed for institutions and public administration. The Minister also toured the company's Data Center and IP Multimedia Subsystem Center, which support the infrastructure of Algeria Telecommunications. The Minister underscored the importance of integrating and developing digital solutions anchored in research, development, and innovation, including open innovation approaches. He highlighted the need to expand SATICOM's activities to meet the evolving demands of the national market, while ensuring Algeria's telecommunications infrastructure is prepared for the upcoming launch of 5G services by mobile operators. This inspection visit aligns with Algeria's broader strategy to strengthen national industry, encourage innovation, and localize digital solutions. By prioritizing these initiatives, the Ministry aims to reinforce the country's digital sovereignty and ensure long-term resilience in its communications sector. (October 1, 2025) www.techafricanews.com

Bahrain

TRA has concluded the 18th meeting of its Spectrum Strategy and Coordination Committee (SSCC), reinforcing its commitment to driving the Kingdom's digital transformation in alignment with Bahrain Economic Vision 2030. The committee focused on preparing for the World Radiocommunication Conference 2027 (WRC-27), where Bahrain's positions on key spectrum issues will be finalized. These preparations are crucial for securing allocations that support emerging technologies such as 6G, next-generation satellite connectivity, and enhanced global mobile broadband—while ensuring the continuity and evolution of current services. The meeting also explored advancements in 5G and Internet of Things (IoT) private networks, highlighting their potential to accelerate industrial automation and strengthen critical sectors such as energy and utilities. Members underscored the importance of adopting technology-neutral frameworks that foster innovation, safeguard data sovereignty, and uphold stringent standards for network security and reliability. Eng. Mariam Ahmed Al Juman, TRA's Director of Technical & Operations and SSCC Chairperson, emphasized Bahrain's forward-looking approach: "The SSCC reflects Bahrain's proactive spectrum management, ensuring our strategies enable world-class connectivity, foster innovation, and protect national interests." The TRA reaffirmed that the SSCC will continue to be a key driver of Bahrain's spectrum policy—positioning the Kingdom as a regional leader in digital transformation and telecommunications innovation.

(October 8, 2025) www.meatechwatch.com

Bangladesh

The Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission (BTRC) has proposed a new licensing framework that would require broadband operators and fixed-line telephone service providers to share 5.5 percent of their annual revenue with the regulator -- similar to the system already in place for mobile operators. According to the draft guideline, the companies would also need to contribute 1 percent of their annual gross revenue to the "Social Obligation Fund", which is meant for financing the expansion of telecom infrastructure and services in underserved or unprofitable areas. According to the BTRC, the proposed "Regulatory and Licensing Guidelines for Fixed Telecom Service Provider" will streamline operations, attract investment, and promote digital inclusion. But broadband operators argue that the revenue-sharing model will eat into their already thin profit margins and could discourage smaller providers from formalizing their operations. They say the financial pressure may eventually be passed on to consumers through higher bills or poorer service quality. The draft guideline has been published on the BTRC website for public consultation. "ISPs operate on very thin profit margins, roughly around 5 to 6 percent. If we are required to share 5.5 percent of our annual revenue with the regulator and contribute another 1 percent to the Social Obligation Fund, there will be no profit left," said Mohammad Aminul Hakim, president of the Internet Service Providers Association of Bangladesh (ISPAB).

(October 29, 2025) www.thedailystar.net

Egypt

Egypt has achieved a major milestone in digital inclusion, advancing 40 points in the United Nations Index for “Individuals using the Internet” over the past decade. The remarkable progress reflects the country’s sustained investment in digital infrastructure and efforts to expand access to telecommunications services nationwide. According to the latest figures from the Cabinet, Egypt’s telecom sector now serves 90.64 million mobile internet subscribers and 12.18 million fixed broadband users as of July 2025. This surge underscores the success of national initiatives aimed at enhancing connectivity, improving service quality, and integrating digital technologies into daily life. The government’s commitment to advancing ICT infrastructure—through projects in fiber deployment, network upgrades, and digital transformation programs—has positioned Egypt as a regional leader in digital accessibility. These achievements align with Egypt’s Vision 2030 strategy, which prioritizes technological empowerment, economic diversification, and inclusive digital growth.

(October 30, 2025) www.meatechwatch.com

The National Telecom Regulatory Authority (NTRA) approved allowing companies specialized in manufacturing smart vehicles to operate Internet of Things (IoT) services. for cars in Egypt. These services enable drivers to benefit from navigation systems, tracking features, and emergency assistance tools in a secure and regulated manner. This is all while ensuring the protection of users’ data and privacy. Minister of Communications and Information Technology (MICT) Amr Talaat witnessed NTRA signing new licenses with seven international companies. The agreements allow these companies to provide IoT services for vehicles across Egypt. The signing included these seven international automotive companies, OnStar (General Motors), Mansour MG Automotive (IM brand, China), Global Auto (BMW), Alpha Ezz El-Arab (Volvo, Aston Martin, Lotus, and Lynk & Co) Egyptian International Motors-EIM (Zeekr and BAIC), Egyptian Automotive and Trading Co. (Audi, Škoda), SMG Engineering Automotive Co. (Porsche, Scania). The ICT Minister emphasizes in his remarks that introducing these services aim to enhance the driving experience in Egypt. This is due to automakers expanding the use of information and communication technologies. Furthermore, he adds that this step provides citizens with higher levels of safety and convenience. The Minister also explains that AI technologies will continuously improve these services. He also points out that IoT will enable citizens to interact securely and efficiently with various devices, particularly vehicles. Thus, it aims to create a more advanced user experience. These licenses come within the framework of the Digital Egypt strategy. The strategy seeks to adopt cutting-edge global technologies and deliver more advanced and secure services to Egyptian users. (October 8, 2025) www.waya.media/egypts-ntra-licenses

Jordan

Experts in information and communication technology have emphasized that the 2025 regulations for mobile number portability, recently published in the Official Gazette, will enhance competition in Jordan's mobile services market. The service allows subscribers to retain their mobile numbers when switching between operators, granting them freedom of choice and promoting fair competition based on service quality and pricing rather than "number ownership." Commissioner Ayman Al-Draisah, a member of the Telecommunications Regulatory Commission (TRC), stated that number portability will reduce obstacles for users to move between providers without changing their numbers. This will encourage companies to offer better deals and higher-quality services to retain subscribers, benefiting consumers overall. Heitham Al-Rawajbeh, representing the ICT sector at the Jordan Chamber of Commerce, noted that the service supports digital transformation and improves telecommunications infrastructure in line with the national digital economy policies.

(October 7, 2025) www.jordannews.jo

Kuwait

Kuwait is accelerating its digital transformation efforts and expanding international partnerships to strengthen communication systems and foster a sustainable, inclusive digital economy, according to Omar Al-Omar, Minister of State for Communication Affairs. Speaking to KUNA following his participation in the Bloomberg Technology Summit in London, Minister Al-Omar emphasized that Kuwait's engagement in global technology forums underscores its commitment to advancing innovation and competitiveness under the framework of Kuwait Vision 2035. Al-Omar noted that Kuwait's participation in summit discussions — which addressed critical topics such as artificial intelligence (AI), cybersecurity, and digital infrastructure sustainability — provided valuable insights for shaping national strategies and policies. These exchanges, he said, will support Kuwait's efforts to build a resilient digital ecosystem capable of driving economic diversification and sustainable growth. The Kuwaiti delegation included Sheikh Abdullah Al-Sabah, Assistant Director General of the Kuwait Direct Investment Promotion Authority, Dr. Dhari Al-Huwai, Board Member, and Bader Al-Khaifi, Head of the Minister's Office, among other senior officials. Held on October 20–21, the Bloomberg Technology Summit convened global leaders, experts, and policymakers to explore Europe's pursuit of technological sovereignty and address emerging challenges in AI, cybersecurity, and sustainable innovation. (October 28, 2025) www.meatechwatch.com

Kuwait reaffirmed its commitment to strengthening regional cooperation in the field of internet infrastructure and governance, in line with rapid digital transformations and in support of future services across the region. This came in the statement delivered by the Deputy Director General of the Communication and Information Technology Regulatory Authority (CITRA), Engineer Manal Al-Mazyad, during Kuwait's participation in the 9th Annual Arab Regulators Roundtable for governments and telecommunications regulatory bodies. The event was organized by the National Telecom Regulatory Authority of Egypt in cooperation with RIPE NCC, with the participation of official delegations from various Arab countries. Engineer Al-Mazyad stated that "Kuwait's participation comes within the framework of the country's Vision 2035, which aims to transform Kuwait into a regional financial and commercial hub attractive to investment," noting that Kuwait ranked first globally in 5G leadership for 2024—an achievement that reflects its readiness to support technological and digital advancement. She added that "the meeting underscores the need to unify Arab efforts to ensure a secure and sustainable digital infrastructure," highlighting Kuwait's key contributions, which included supporting the deployment of IPv6, enhancing routing security (RPKI), strengthening Internet Exchange Points (IXPs), and localizing data traffic. Al-Mazyad emphasized "Kuwait's commitment to capacity building and empowering national talent in infrastructure development," praising the ongoing partnership with RIPE NCC, which has contributed to advanced training programs and preparations to host the Internet Measurements Day in May 2026 as part of the regional measurement initiative launched by the organization in cooperation with the League of Arab States.

(December 7, 2025) www.citra.gov.kw

Morocco

The Government Council approved three draft decrees granting licenses for the establishment and operation of telecommunications networks using fifth-generation (5G) mobile technology. The decrees were presented by the Minister Delegate to the Head of Government in charge of Digital Transition and Administrative Reform. The first draft decree (No. 2.25.876) grants a license to Itissalat Al-Maghrib (Maroc Telecom) to establish and operate 5G telecommunications networks, government spokesperson and Minister Delegate for Relations with Parliament Mustapha Baitas announced during a press briefing following the Council meeting. The second decree (No. 2.25.877) grants a similar license to Médi Telecom, while the third (No. 2.25.878) authorizes Wana Corporate to deploy and operate 5G networks under the same framework, he added. Baitas emphasized that the issuance of these licenses follows a competitive call for bids launched by the National Telecommunications Regulatory Agency (ANRT), in accordance with Law No. 24-96 on postal and telecommunications services, as amended and supplemented. He also recalled that this procedure was preceded by the approval of the specifications attached to the decrees, validated by the administrative committee established under Decree No. 2.25.565 of July 11, 2025. (October 31, 2025) www.en.yabiladi.com

Nepal

Minister for Communications and Information Technology, Jagdish Kharel, has directed Nepal Telecom to ensure quality in its service. Expansion of service needs quality as well, he reminded. At a program organized to announce the 'NT Fiber Student Offer' on Sunday, Minister Kharel also asked Nepal Telecom to establish itself as a company of good governance. "Government's focus is on election and good governance, so Telecom's service should be aligned with this priority. Good governance helps in controlling corruption," he said, adding that government is in pressure to do something good despite short term. There are both challenges and enthusiasms. The Telecom was further directed to cancel the contracts that were protracting the projects. The contractors with good track record can be awarded the projects, he suggested. The Minister assured support from government side to the Telecom for its efforts on expansion of effective and quality services. The remote area must be paid heed in this respect. The new scheme of Nepal Telecom is launched targeting the students born after 2054BS by providing them high quality internet service at a concessional rate. The scheme was launched at the central office of Nepal Telecom. Kharel also inspected the office itself. He thanked the Telecom for introducing the service to the students at a concessional rate. "Voice and data are key communication tools of Telecom," he said, reminding students and youths' connection to quality technology. The Minister informed that the recently launched scheme of the Telecom was envisioned by the government in a bid to gift something new to the Gen Z and students, which he further believed, would help the students not only from cities but also from the far-flung areas.

(November 10, 2025) wwwrisingnepaldaily.com

Oman

Telecommunications Regulatory Authority (TRA) has launched the trial phase of its new Central Number Portability System, a service that will allow mobile users to retain their existing phone numbers when switching between telecommunications providers. The trial, which began on October 19, will continue until November 13, 2025. The system aims to make number portability faster and simpler, with transfers completed through reliable procedures within minutes, according to the TRA. The authority said the trial phase is designed to test the technical readiness and operational efficiency of the new system before its full public rollout. It will evaluate system performance, ensure a smooth user experience, and address potential challenges. Earlier in August, the TRA had announced a temporary suspension of existing mobile number portability services across all operators to prepare for the migration to the new platform. The authority said the suspension, effective from August 18, ensured a seamless transition to the upgraded system. The initiative marks a major step for Oman's telecom sector, removing one of the main barriers to switching providers. By enabling users to keep their numbers, the system is expected to enhance competition, improve service quality, and give consumers more flexibility in choosing providers. (October 20, 2025) www.muscatdaily.com

Oman's Telecommunications Regulatory Authority (TRA) will convene a public engagement session on December 14 to

address the growing threat of electronic fraud and its impact on users across the country. The meeting will explore the latest scamming methods, how fraud spreads through digital networks, and the challenges faced by consumers in protecting themselves. The session is part of the TRA's ongoing "Constructive Dialogue" series, a platform created to encourage direct communication between the regulator and the public. Through these engagements, the Authority aims to exchange views on key sector challenges and develop practical solutions to improve telecom services and enhance user satisfaction. This year's dialogue will place a strong focus on electronic fraud. Discussions will examine the most common e-fraud patterns, the role of telecom networks in the spread of scams, and current levels of public awareness. The session will also include structured brainstorming workshops designed to produce actionable recommendations for strengthening consumer protection and boosting community awareness of cyber risks. The TRA has invited all interested stakeholders and members of the public to participate by registering through the official announcement published on its digital platforms.

(December 10, 2025) www.meatechwatch.com

Pakistan

The Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA) has finalized a new regulatory framework aimed at fortifying cybersecurity and ensuring greater data sovereignty across the telecom sector. Under the new Critical Telecom Data and Infrastructure Security Regulations (CTDISR), all licensed telecom operators will now be required to host their data within Pakistan, ensuring that sensitive information remains under national jurisdiction. The PTA has circulated the draft regulations to industry stakeholders, inviting feedback by November 7, 2025, before full enforcement begins. The framework emphasizes data protection, network resilience, and consumer privacy, marking a major step in Pakistan's digital infrastructure governance.

Key Regulatory Highlights

All telecom operators must store customer and operational data within Pakistan to strengthen digital sovereignty and reduce exposure to foreign cybersecurity risks. Each company must appoint a Chief Information Security Officer (CISO) responsible for implementing security frameworks, monitoring cyber threats, and ensuring compliance with national cybersecurity standards. Operators are required to conduct annual risk assessments and independent cyber audits, and to maintain robust Disaster Recovery and Business Continuity Plans to minimize downtime during cyber incidents. The regulations mandate adoption of a Zero Trust Security Model, requiring continuous verification of users and devices to prevent unauthorized access. In the event of a major cyber breach, operators must report incidents within 24 hours to the PTA. The authority retains the right to ban non-compliant foreign software or equipment deemed a cybersecurity risk. Telecom firms must establish Information Security Steering Committees and ensure security protocols across their supply chains to address third-party vulnerabilities. These new rules are designed to enhance Pakistan's cyber resilience, improve oversight of critical telecom infrastructure, and strengthen public trust in digital communications. The PTA has underscored that adherence to CTDISR will be essential for maintaining both national security and consumer data integrity in an increasingly connected economy. (November 6, 2025) www.meatechwatch.com

The Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA) and the Ministry of Climate Change and Environmental Coordination (MoCC&EC) have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to promote Green ICT initiatives and foster a climate-resilient digital infrastructure across Pakistan. The collaboration marks a major step toward environmentally responsible digitization, aiming to tackle e-waste management, energy efficiency, and eco-friendly innovation in the telecom and ICT sectors. Under the MoU, both entities will work jointly on policy frameworks, knowledge sharing, and capacity-building programs to reduce the environmental footprint of Pakistan's growing digital ecosystem. The focus will include the deployment of energy-efficient telecom networks, sustainable ICT infrastructure, and awareness campaigns that encourage responsible digital practices. PTA Chairman described the agreement as a milestone in embedding environmental responsibility into Pakistan's digital transformation journey. He emphasized that the initiative aligns with the Digital Pakistan Vision, Vision 2025, and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The PTA further noted that by reinforcing Pakistan's commitment to the ITU G5 Regulatory Framework, the partnership will help build a sustainable, inclusive, and environmentally conscious digital future. (October 30, 2025) www.meatechwatch.com

The Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA) has granted a No Objection Certificate (NOC) to Pakistan Telecommunication Company Limited (PTCL) for the acquisition of Telenor Pakistan (Pvt.) Ltd., after a comprehensive review under the applicable regulatory framework. PTA evaluated the transaction's impact on market competition and consumer interests, and consulted relevant government bodies to ensure full compliance with statutory requirements. With this NOC, PTCL may proceed with the acquisition, subject to completion of all legal and commercial formalities. Both companies must ensure continuity and quality of services and uphold all license obligations throughout the transition. PTA will closely monitor the process to safeguard consumer rights and maintain a competitive and forward-looking telecom sector. (December 6, 2025) www.pta.gov.pk

Qatar

The Communications Regulatory Authority (CRA) of Qatar has issued an updated Regulation for the Construction, Installation, and Sharing of Radio Communications Sites, creating a unified framework designed to ensure safer, more efficient, and future-ready mobile network infrastructure nationwide. Developed through public consultation and industry collaboration, the new regulation merges three existing frameworks—covering radio station construction, base station standards, and site-sharing—into one comprehensive policy. This consolidation aims to streamline processes, eliminate duplication, and enhance coordination between service providers and municipal authorities.
Key Provisions Include:
Infrastructure Sharing: Operators are now required to co-locate and share sites wherever feasible to reduce redundancy and environmental impact.
Simplified Coordination: Early engagement between telecom providers, developers, and government entities will accelerate site approvals.
Technical & Safety Standards: The CRA has defined clear guidelines for tower design, rooftop installations, EMF exposure limits, and structural load requirements in line with international benchmarks.
Enhanced Oversight: The authority will conduct periodic audits, compliance assessments, and enforce corrective measures to maintain high safety and operational standards.
The CRA emphasized that the modernized regulation supports Qatar's digital transformation goals, paving the way for faster deployment of 5G and next-generation technologies while promoting sustainability and public safety. Ali Al-Suwaidi, Director of the Technical Affairs Department at CRA, stated: "This Regulation strengthens network quality, enhances consumer experience, and reduces deployment costs. It reflects our commitment to environmental planning and sustainable telecom growth aligned with Qatar National Vision 2030."

(November 11, 2025) www.meatechwatch.com

The Communications Regulatory Authority (CRA) in collaboration with International Telecommunication Union (ITU) held a specialized workshop on "Instruction and Knowledge Building towards the Work of ITU" for its staff from September 28 – 30, 2025. The workshop aimed to provide participants with a comprehensive understanding of the ITU's operating mechanisms and foster a practical knowledge of international governance in the Information and Communications Technology (ICT) sector. The workshop reviewed ITU's structure, rules, procedures, and operations, with a particular focus on the upcoming World Telecommunication Development Conference (WTDC-25) and the Plenipotentiary Conference (PP-26). Sessions covered how to prepare for related global conferences, handle study groups and committees, and draft impactful contributions and resolutions to influence decision-making. Through this workshop, CRA staff gained practical experience in formulating national positions and engaging in strategic dialogues. This enhances their representation of the State of Qatar in the ITU study groups and council meetings. These efforts align with the State's broader ambition, under the Qatar National Vision 2030, to establish itself as a hub for research, innovation, and digital transformation. The initiative reflects CRA's commitment to enhancing the institutional capacity of its staff to actively engage in international telecommunication governance. By equipping its staff with the knowledge, skills, and tools to participate effectively, CRA aimed to strengthen the State of Qatar's role within the ITU and contribute substantively to key global conferences. The WTDC-25 will take place in Baku, the Republic of Azerbaijan from November 17 to 28, 2025, will set strategies and objectives for global ICT development. The PP-26 will take place in Doha from November 9 to 27, 2026, as ITU's highest decision-making body, will define the Union's general policies, elect leadership, and establish strategic plans.

(October 1, 2025) www.meatechwatch.com

The Ministry of Communications and Information Technology (MCIT) has renewed its framework agreement with Google Cloud, reinforcing Qatar's push to modernize government digital infrastructure. Announced at MWC25 Doha, the renewed partnership enables government entities to continue leveraging secure cloud services, generative AI, and advanced data analytics through Google Cloud's local Doha region. The agreement was signed by Sami Mohammed Al Shammari, Assistant Undersecretary for Infrastructure and Operations Affairs at MCIT, and Ghassan Kosta, Regional General Manager of Google Cloud for Qatar, Oman, Bahrain, and Iraq. The renewed framework ensures continued access to scalable, secure, and innovative cloud solutions to enhance operational efficiency and improve public service delivery. Al Shammari said the collaboration has played a key role in advancing Qatar's digital landscape and aligns with Qatar National Vision 2030 by strengthening public-sector innovation, efficiency, and data-driven decision-making. He added that the agreement reflects the success of the partnership and Google Cloud's tangible contributions to national digital transformation. Kosta stated that Google Cloud remains fully committed to supporting Qatar's digital ambitions through its local region, emphasizing the role of artificial intelligence, security, and intelligent cloud infrastructure in accelerating public services and fostering a knowledge-based economy.

(December 11, 2025) www.meatechwatch.com

Saudi Arabia

The Communications, Space and Technology Commission (CST) has launched the Software Escrow Guideline, aiming to introduce the software escrow concept, detail its enabling procedures and best practices, and highlight its role in protecting digital applications. As well as raising awareness, supporting business continuity in the software sector, building trust between software developers and beneficiaries, advancing the maturity of the local software market, and unlocking new market opportunities. The guideline targets the public and private sectors, individuals, software developers, and software escrow agents. It included an introduction to the model that can be adopted and the role of escrow agents in securely managing computer software, source code, and associated technical documents through a software escrow agreement. It also highlights the benefits for both developers and costumers from these safeguarding and delivery services, while outlining clear procedures for accessing the source code that protect rights and ensure business continuity. The guideline targets costumers (individuals and the public and private sector), software developers, and escrow service provider. This initiative is stems from CST's commitment in regulating the technology sector, developing the software market and industry in the Kingdom, while supporting tech companies and introducing the software escrow as a key enabler for business continuity and software assets safety by including a third party that enhances trust in the software. (November 28, 2025) www.cst.gov.sa

The Communications, Space and Technology Commission (CST) in collaboration with the Venture Capital and Private Equity Association, organized the "Investment in the SpaceTech" the Next Big Thing workshop at the premises of CODE. This is part of a series of specialized workshops for venture capital and business angels who would like to invest in SpaceTech and all the surrounding opportunities. The workshop started with the welcoming remarks from the Venture Capital and Private Equity Association, followed by a speech from the Acting Deputy Governor of the Space Sector, Mr. Frank M. Salzgeber, who emphasized the big potential of Space technologies as a driver in DeepTech and dual use. Mr. Wojtek Walniczek, Partner at OTB Ventures a leading Space VC, delivered a keynote session where he explored modern business models in the Space economy, funding, and global trends that present attractive opportunities for investors and entrepreneurs. He also highlighted experiences in building investment ecosystems that support space innovation. The workshop wrapped up with a networking session that brought together investors and startups to enhance connections, exchange knowledge, and unlock new prospects for collaboration and investment. This workshop is part of CST's ongoing series of initiatives aimed at developing a dynamic investment environment in the Space sector and supporting the growth of startups, all in line with the goals of Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030. (November 25, 2025) www.cst.gov.sa

The Communications, Space and Technology Commission (CST) invited the public to provide feedback on the regulatory approach for Direct-to-Device (D2D) communication technologies, which enable direct connectivity between mobile devices and satellites. The consultation aims to define the regulatory approach for this technology, identify potential opportunities and challenges in providing its services, outline possible use cases and business models, and determine relevant technical standards, with the goal of enhancing connectivity across the Kingdom by expanding mobile coverage to remote areas. CST also invited the public to share their views on updated regulations for Non-Terrestrial Networks (NTN) in the Kingdom, including the Regulations for Provisioning of Operation Services of NTN, the Regulations for Provisioning of Telecommunication Services over NTN, and the Regulations for the Registration of Telecommunication Space Stations. The updates aim to establish a regulatory environment that attracts investment, promotes the adoption of advanced wireless technologies, and enables the digital economy in the Kingdom. CST urged all relevant stakeholders and interested parties inside and outside the Kingdom to submit their feedback on the consultation document and to support their views with detailed analysis and comparative studies.

(October 14, 2025) www.spa.gov.sa

The Digital Regulatory Academy (DRA) held an executive program on "Innovation in the Regulatory Environment", in collaboration with UC Berkeley Executive Education. The program aims to develop national leaders in the digital sector and provide them with the skills needed to balance between innovation and regulatory compliance, through deeper understanding of regulatory frameworks and effective governance requirements. The 4-day program, attended by 27 experts in public policies, regulatory, economics, and engineering from 12 different entities representing the digital economy, Space, and innovation ecosystem, as well as members of the National Regulations Committee and the ICT service providers, focused on providing participants with the needed skills to innovate in regulatory frameworks. The program covered a range of topics, including the regulation principles, distinguishing between rules and standards, innovative thinking techniques, the economics of regulation, and lessons learned from Silicon Valley in fostering innovation. The program featured important practical aspects such as regulatory compliance, coordination between agencies locally and internationally, and regulatory penalties. It also included field visits focusing on the technology, government, and communications sectors in Silicon Valley, and concluded with discussions on fostering innovation while avoiding regulatory overreach, along with studies on data privacy and artificial intelligence.

(December 9, 2025) www.cst.gov.sa

Sri Lanka

Sri Lanka has announced an ambitious national push to accelerate digital transformation in 2026, backed by 30 billion Sri Lankan rupees ($98 million) in new budget allocations. President and Finance Minister Anura Kumara Dissanayake said the budget marks a decisive shift toward a fully digital government, with a strong focus on improving service delivery, operational efficiency, and transparency. The largest share of funding will support the Unique Digital Identity (SLUDI) program, alongside major upgrades to the e-Grama Niladhari system and the Digital Economy Advancement Program. Investments are also set to expand electronic procurement, e-payment systems, and revenue administration modernization through enhanced inter-agency data integration. Sri Lanka will simultaneously upskill public officials with digital competencies needed to operate next-generation systems. This follows earlier investments in blockchain and AI, signaling the country's long-term commitment to emerging technologies and digital public infrastructure.

(November 17, 2025) www.meatechwatch.com

Hutch Sri Lanka, in collaboration with the Telecommunications Regulatory Commission of Sri Lanka (TRCSL), hosted the opening ceremony for the 2nd Meeting of the South Asia Telecommunication Regulators' Council (SATRC) Working Group on Policy, Regulation and Services, welcoming nearly 75 delegates from across South and Southeast Asia. The high-profile event brought together senior officials from TRCSL, the Ministry of Digital Economy, and telecom regulators representing India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, the Maldives, Afghanistan, Iran, Bhutan, Nepal, Thailand, and Sri Lanka. "Connectivity is no longer a utility; it is an enabler of national productivity," said Hutch CEO Saumitra Gupta, highlighting the company's commitment to advancing telecommunications governance and digital inclusion across the region. The event set a collaborative tone ahead of the SATRC Working Group's formal sessions, positioning Sri Lanka as a hub for regional telecom policy dialogue and Hutch as a key partner in shaping the region's digital future.

(October 29, 2025) www.meatechwatch.com

Syria

Syria has signed a landmark agreement with Barcelona-based Medusa Submarine Cable System to establish the country's first international subsea cable landing, marking a major step in rebuilding its long-neglected digital infrastructure, state-run Ikhbariya TV reported. The Medusa cable system will connect 12 countries across North Africa and southern Europe, creating a strategic digital corridor linking the Mediterranean Sea to the Atlantic Ocean and Red Sea. This expansion will integrate Syria into one of the region's most ambitious telecommunications networks, significantly improving global data connectivity and resilience. The agreement represents a turning point for Syria's digital transformation, following more than a decade of civil conflict and ongoing Western sanctions that severely hampered its telecom development. Currently, Syria's internet infrastructure remains fragmented, forcing citizens to rely heavily on expensive mobile data services for basic online access. Earlier this year, government officials revealed plans for a $300 million national fiber-optic expansion project in partnership with major regional telecom operators — including Zain, Etisalat, STC, and Ooredoo — aimed at strengthening domestic broadband capacity and extending fiber coverage to underserved areas.

(October 29, 2025) www.meatechwatch.com

Tunisia

The Instance Nationale des Télécommunications (INT) of Tunisia has launched a public consultation on the framework for sharing fiber optic infrastructure, a move aimed at accelerating the country's transition to high-speed internet access under the National Very High-Speed Plan (Plan National THD) adopted in 2024. The initiative builds on Decision Coll/Reg/16/2024, which defined technical and operational guidelines for fiber optic sharing, but highlighted coordination challenges among telecom operators, particularly in new developments. By promoting the principle of metallization—shared use of infrastructure—the INT aims to reduce duplication, cut costs, and speed up nationwide fiber rollout. Key elements of the consultation include the role of Points of Metallization (PMs), where multiple operators connect to access lines serving homes and businesses. Stakeholders are encouraged to provide input on PM capacity, placement, deployment rules, and mechanisms to guarantee fair, non-discriminatory access for operators. The consultation also emphasizes the importance of operators publishing wholesale access offers with transparent technical and pricing conditions, subject to regulatory approval.

(October 2, 2025) www.meatechwatch.com

Turkey

Turkey's highly anticipated 5G spectrum auction has concluded with impressive results, generating US$2.95 billion in total bids — or US$3.534 billion including VAT — far exceeding the government's initial minimum revenue target of US$2.125 billion, according to Minister of Transport and Infrastructure Abdulkadir Uraloglu. The nation's three main telecom operators — Turkcell, Vodafone, and Türk Telekom — secured key frequency blocks across the 700MHz and 3.5GHz bands, setting the stage for the rollout of 5G services across Turkey. Turkcell emerged as the highest bidder, spending US$429 million on the A1 block in the 700MHz band and acquiring four additional blocks in the 3.5GHz range, with total bids reaching US$1.22 billion. Türk Telekom followed closely with US$1.1 billion in winning bids, including the A3 package worth US$425 million. Vodafone, meanwhile, secured the A2 block for US$426 million, along with a 3.5GHz block, for a total of US$627 million. The Turkish government confirmed that 5G services will go live on 1 April 2026, starting in major cities and expanding nationwide within just over a year. "The rollout will begin in densely populated areas and gradually extend to the entire country," Minister Uraloglu stated, emphasizing the government's commitment to strengthening digital connectivity and innovation. The tender also extended the authorization for existing 2G and 3G services — originally set to expire in 2029 — until the end of 2042, with operators required to pay 5% of their annual sales from these services to the national Treasury. The last spectrum auction took place in 2015, when operators paid roughly US$4.66 billion (including VAT) for 4.5G frequencies, underscoring the significance of this new milestone in Turkey's journey toward a fully connected digital future.
(October 21, 2025) www.meatechwatch.com

Minister of Transport and Infrastructure Abdulkadir Uraloğlu stated that they will bring the quality of mobile communication services in line with the requirements of the age by implementing 5G technology in Türkiye. Minister said, "We will introduce 5G signal to our country on April 1, 2026, and we will have widespread use of it in our country within two years." Minister made a statement about 5G in the Grand National Assembly of Turkey during the discussion of the 2026 Budget Law Proposal and the 2024 Final Accounts Law Proposal of the Ministry and its affiliated and related organizations. "We are bringing together speed, capacity, and service quality in mobile communication with the demands of the modern age." Minister stated that another strategic step strengthening the integrated service concept in the field is the 5G process, which reinforces Türkiye's communication infrastructure with next-generation technologies, and added, "Turkey is entering another phase in its digitalization journey. By deploying 5G technology in our country, we are bringing speed, capacity, and service quality in mobile communication together with the requirements of the age." Minister stated that with this transition, communication speed would increase approximately tenfold; citizens would have access to faster, more reliable, and more uninterrupted communication.
(December 11, 2025) www.uab.gov.tr

United Arab Emirates

The UAE's Telecommunications and Digital Government Regulatory Authority (TDRA) has hosted the ICT Development Forum 2025 in Dubai under the theme "Envisioning the Future of the Telecommunications Sector: Future Trends, Challenges, Innovations, and Opportunities." The event brought together leading representatives from government, telecom operators, global technology firms, and consultancy companies to discuss emerging innovations and the next phase of the UAE's digital transformation. Participants included Dubai Police, e&, EITC, Deloitte, Analysys Mason, Arthur D. Little, Huawei, and Ericsson—reflecting the UAE's holistic public–private collaboration model. Dubai Police emphasized rising threats from fraudsters and digital security risks, calling for stronger joint action with telecom operators to safeguard the community. Industry speakers shared insights on future technologies, innovation trends, smart networks, and regulatory frameworks needed to support the UAE's evolving digital landscape. The forum reinforced TDRA's role in advancing innovation, strengthening cooperation across the ICT ecosystem, and positioning the UAE as a global leader in digital transformation. Bringing regulators, operators, and technology leaders together on one platform, the event highlighted how collaboration, innovation, and safety will remain central to building a connected and secure digital future for the nation. (November 20, 2025) www.meatechwatch.com

The Telecommunications and Digital Government Regulatory Authority (TDRA) of the United Arab Emirates has announced the launch of the 6th Generation (6G) Initiative, marking a major step toward positioning the UAE as a global leader in next-generation connectivity. The announcement came during the inaugural meeting of the 6G Committee, which brought together key representatives from government entities, telecom operators, universities, R&D centers, and global mobile technology providers. Opening the session, HE Eng. Mohammed Al Ramsi, Deputy Director General of the Telecommunications Sector at TDRA, highlighted the UAE's early leadership in 5G deployment in 2019, which now covers 99.5% of populated areas through over 23,000 sites serving 10 million subscribers. "These achievements pave the way for a new phase in which we work with our partners to

develop a national 6G roadmap that will revolutionize connectivity by integrating digital and cognitive worlds, leveraging AI, quantum computing, and satellite networks to enable the applications of the future," Al Ramsi said. The 6G Initiative aims to: Develop a comprehensive national 6G ecosystem through collaboration among national and international partners. Establish research and innovation programs in future communications across universities and R&D institutions. Accelerate adoption of emerging technologies in priority sectors. Support international 6G standards development and spectrum management strategies. Two specialized subcommittees — the R&D Working Group and the Integration & Strategic Partnerships Working Group — have been formed to execute the initiative's roadmap. The program reflects the UAE's commitment to becoming a hyper-connected smart nation, leveraging AI, quantum computing, and satellite systems to advance digital transformation, innovation, and sustainable national growth. (November 12, 2025) www.meatechwatch.com

The Telecommunications and Digital Government Regulatory Authority (TDRA) has rolled out five new digital trade license documents through the UAE PASS digital wallet, further strengthening the country's shift towards paperless government services. The launch was carried out in partnership with four key entities: the Abu Dhabi Registration Authority, Jebel Ali Free Zone Authority (Jafza), Fujairah Municipality and the Department of Economic Development in Umm Al Quwain. The UAE PASS digital wallet serves as a central and secure platform for storing official papers, enabling both citizens and residents to access verified documents whenever needed. The service removes the need to carry physical copies and makes document sharing faster when dealing with banks, service providers and private sector institutions. Eng. Majed Sultan Al Mesmar, Director General of TDRA, said the new launch represents a major step forward in supporting the country's business landscape. "The introduction of these five commercial documents through the digital wallet marks a significant milestone in empowering businesses in the UAE and strengthening public trust in government digital solutions. We aim to offer a secure and seamless digital experience for entrepreneurs and residents, simplifying access to essential trade documents and fostering stronger collaboration between government and the private sector," he said.

(December 11, 2025) www.gulfnews.com

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REGULATORY ACTIVITIES BEYOND THE SA-ME-NA REGION

Australia

Australia's media watchdog introduced new rules requiring organizations to register branded identifiers with their mobile operator as it cracks down on scammers using text messages to impersonate brands. Australian Communications and Media Authority chair Nerida O'Loughlin explained the SMS sender ID register, which goes into effect in the middle of 2026, means messages with unregistered sender IDs will appear in a single 'unverified' message thread on mobile phones, indicating it may be a scam. Mobile operators and electronic message service providers will need to verify every business and organization planning to use a sender ID and prove they have a valid reason for its use, she noted. O'Loughlin urged businesses to contact their mobile operator about the new requirements. The measures also require participating providers to inform their business customers about registration requirements and educate consumers about what to expect when the register goes live on 1 July. The government began work in late 2024 to introduce a mandatory SMS sender ID register, initially targeting a launch in late 2025. (October 9, 2025) www.mobileworldlive.com

China

Costa Rican telecommunications regulator Sutel has formally rejected a proposed merger between two of the nation's largest private operators, Liberty and Tigo. The decision, which became public on Thursday, stalled a deal first unveiled in August 2024, when parent companies Liberty Latin America (LLA) and Millicom International Cellular announced an agreement to combine their Costa Rican operations. Ticosland, a portal covering Costa Rican business news, says that the proposed structure would have created a dominant market force, with LLA slated to hold an approximate 86% stake in the joint entity, while Millicom would retain the remaining 14% share. It adds that this plan was positioned as a move to create a more robust, integrated service provider for Costa Rican consumers. As for why the merger has been blocked, it may be about protecting consumers. Consolidation, as the would-be partners would no doubt suggest, could increase efficiency and innovation. However, while Sutel has not yet released the specific rationale behind its decision, the apparent involvement of the country's competition commission Coprocom could indicate concerns with the potential risks of a concentrated market, such as price hikes and a reduction in service quality or choices, implying that antitrust considerations are at the core of the rejection. Kölbi, a state-owned carrier, would be the only significant competition after the merger.

(November 7, 2025) www.developingtelecoms.com

China recorded significant growth in the number of 5G base stations this year, according to the Ministry of Industry and Information Technology. As of the end of October, the total number of 5G base stations in the country reached around 4.76 million, with a net increase of 507,000 from the end of last year, accounting for 37 percent of all mobile base stations, News.Az reports, citing Xinhua. In the first 10 months, China's telecom industry maintained stable performance, with the construction of new infrastructure progressing steadily. The country's telecom revenue exceeded 1.46 trillion yuan (about 207 billion U.S. dollars) during the period, marking a year-on-year increase of 0.9 percent. As of the end of October, the number of 5G mobile phone users topped 1.18 billion, a net increase of 170 million from the end of 2024, accounting for 64.7 percent of all mobile phone users. (December 5, 2025) www.news.az.com

Costa Rica

Costa Rican telecommunications regulator Sutel has formally rejected a proposed merger between two of the nation's largest private operators, Liberty and Tigo. The decision, which became public on Thursday, stalled a deal first unveiled in August 2024, when parent companies Liberty Latin America (LLA) and Millicom International Cellular announced an agreement to combine their Costa Rican operations. Ticosland, a portal covering Costa Rican business news, says that the proposed structure would have created a dominant market force, with LLA slated to hold an approximate 86% stake in the joint entity, while Millicom would retain the remaining 14% share. As for why the merger has been blocked, it may be about protecting consumers. However, while Sutel has not yet released the specific rationale behind its decision, the apparent involvement of the country's competition commission Coprocom could indicate concerns with the potential risks of a concentrated market, such as price hikes and a reduction in service quality or choices, implying that antitrust considerations are at the core of the rejection. Kölbi, a state-owned carrier, would be the only significant competition after the merger.

(November 7, 2025) www.developingtelecoms.com

Georgia

At the Global Symposium for Regulators 2025 (GSR-25) in Riyadh, Ekaterine Imedadze, Commissioner at the Georgian National Communications Commission (ComCom), advanced Georgia's international partnerships through bilateral high-level meetings and the signing of a landmark Memorandum of Understanding. On the sidelines of GSR-25, Ms. Imedadze met with ITU leadership, honorable heads of agencies, and senior officials of the Communications, Space & Technology Commission (CST) of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia — the esteemed host of GSR-25 — as well as distinguished leaders from India, Egypt, Turkey, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and leading global industry players. Discussions centered on AI-enabled regulation, regtech innovation, cross-regional connectivity, and policy harmonization. A key highlight was the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding with the National Telecommunications Regulatory Authority (NTRA) of Egypt, establishing a framework for cooperation on regulatory innovation, capacity building, digital skills, and inclusive connectivity. The agreement symbolizes a deepening of cross-regional collaboration and strengthens Georgia's role as a trusted bridge between Europe and Asia in advancing sustainable digital transformation.

(October 1, 2025) Press Release

Ghana

The National Communications Authority (NCA) of Ghana and the Autorité de Régulation des Communications Électroniques et des Postes (ARCEP) of Burkina Faso have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on Free Roaming between the two countries. The signing ceremony took place on 21st November, 2025 as part of the Digital Week event in Ouagadougou, where Ghana participated as Guest of Honor. This MoU establishes the framework for technical and regulatory collaboration, paving the way for seamless mobile communication across borders. Mobile subscribers travelling between the two countries will be able to make calls, send messages, and use data services without incurring additional roaming charges. With this development, Ghana has successfully concluded free roaming arrangements with all its neighboring countries. Speaking at the signing ceremony, the NCA' s Deputy Director General for Technical Operations, Mr. Suleman Salifu, emphasized that the collaboration reinforces the longstanding relationship between the NCA and ARCEP Burkina Faso. He reaffirmed Ghana's commitment to deepening regional connectivity and ensuring that communication services become more accessible, affordable and seamless for citizens. Mr. Salifu further expressed confidence that the agreement will further strengthen institutional cooperation and lay the foundation for more joint initiatives in the future.

(November 24, 2025) www.nca.org.gh

India

The Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (Trai) has issued a new advisory, urging people to report spam calls and messages using its official DND app, and reminding users that simply blocking numbers on a personal phone doesn't solve the core issue. According to the advisory, blocking only conceals the nuisance on one's device, while the spammer keeps targeting thousands of others with new or recycled numbers. According to the PIB press release, over the past year, Trai states it has acted on citizen complaints filed through the DND app to disconnect and blacklisting more than 21 lakh mobile numbers and nearly one lakh entities involved in sending fraudulent or unsolicited messages. The report indicates that every disconnection was initiated by a user report, demonstrating that public participation remains the most effective tool in combating telecom misuse. Officials explained that when a user reports a spam call or message on the Trai DND app, the system enables Trai and telecom operators to trace the source, verify misuse, and permanently block access for the offender. According to the PIB press release, this back-end investigation is only possible when complaints are logged through official channels. In contrast, when a number is blocked on the handset, the incident remains hidden from regulators, allowing scammers to continue operating unchecked. (November 24, 2025) www.fortuneindia.com

A proposal by the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) to reduce backhaul spectrum fees by up to 50 per cent would translate into significant savings for the country's three major mobile operators and improved margins, the Economic Times reported. The TRAI is expected to recommend the reduction, which then has to be approved by the Department of Telecommunications. Operators' total annual payment for backhaul spectrum charges is estimated at between INR40 billion ($446 million) and INR55 billion, the newspaper stated. The spectrum usage charge for backhaul ranges from 0.15 per cent to 3.95 per cent of operators adjusted gross revenue. The proposal would reduce operating expenses for the sector and would be a welcome measure for debt-laden Vodafone Idea. The operator is in talks with banks to secure debt financing support its capex plans of INR500 billion to INR550 billion. Its deferred payment obligations were INR1.8 trillion at end-September.

(December 1, 2025) www.mobileworldlive.com

Indonesia

The Ministry of Communication and Digital Affairs (Kemkomdigi) announced that the price bidding stage for the 1.4 GHz radio frequency spectrum auction for broadband wireless access services will begin on October 13, 2025, through the e-Auction system. "The price bidding stage will start on Monday, October 13, 2025, via the e-Auction system," Kemkomdigi said in a written statement received here on Wednesday. During the registration period in August, seven telecommunications operators collected application documents. Following the submission and administrative evaluation, three companies were declared eligible, PT Eka Mas Republik, PT Telemedia Komunikasi Pratama, and PT Telkom Indonesia (Persero) Tbk. These three operators will proceed to the next stage, the price bidding, which will be held starting October 13, 2025, via the e-Auction system. "In accordance with the provisions of the Selection Document for the Use of the 1.4 GHz Radio Frequency Spectrum for Broadband Wireless Access Services in 2025, and based on the results of the Administrative Evaluation, the selection process will proceed to the Price Bidding stage," Kemkomdigi said. The ministry explained that the spectrum allocation aims to expand internet coverage at more affordable costs.

(October 1, 2025) www.en.antaranews.com

Kazakhstan

Fixed internet access is currently available in 1,902 villages through ADSL and in 2,654 villages via fiber-optic (FTTH) connections, Kazinform News Agency cites the Government's press service. Across Kazakhstan's 6,179 settlements, communication networks are available in 119 cities and 4,906 villages, of which 2,724 have 3G access and 2,182 are covered by 4G. An additional 2,689 villages are expected to gain access to high-speed internet by the end of 2027. Another 504 remote settlements will be connected via satellite technologies — 176 through KazSat and 328 more via OneWeb by the end of 2025. In June 2025, Kazakhstan signed an agreement with Starlink, which officially launched its services in the country on August 13. Today, Starlink's satellite internet is available in over 1,700 rural schools. More than 3,000 rural settlements across Kazakhstan are expected to be connected to high-speed internet between 2025 and 2027. As reported earlier, the Kazakh Digital Development, Innovations and Aerospace Industry Ministry and Kazakhtelecom JSC have signed an investment agreement on installing fast internet in over 3,000 rural settlements. (October 21, 2025) www.qazinform.com

Kyrgyzstan

Kyrgyzstan ranks first in mobile network accessibility among Central Asian nations, Trend reports, citing data from ITU DataHub. 99.2 percent of the country's population is covered by 4G mobile networks. Out of 2,227 settlements across the country, 2,210 have access to 4G services. Only 13 settlements remain without mobile coverage—seven in the Issyk-Kul region, three in Jalal-Abad, two in Osh, and one in Naryn—according to official reporting documentation. The data portal shows that 4G coverage in neighboring countries stands at 97 percent in Uzbekistan, 91.6 percent in Kazakhstan, 80 percent in Tajikistan, and 67 percent in Turkmenistan. To note, the first 4G LTE mobile network in Central Asia kicked off in Uzbekistan in July 2010, when MTS rolled out a trial LTE network in Tashkent, marking a significant step in bringing high-speed mobile internet to the region.

(November 7, 2025) www.trend.az

Malaysia

CelcomDigi has announced that it has accepted new spectrum assignments from the Malaysian Communications and Multimedia Commission (MCMC). More specifically, the telco has received assignments of 2x5MHz in the 1800MHz spectrum frequency band and 2×20 MHz of the 2600MHz spectrum frequency band. These took effect on 30 November, and are up until 30 June 2032 for the former, and until 30 June 2027 for the latter. CelcomDigi also says that it has made price component payments of RM292.5 million to the MCMC for both bands. Beyond that, the company will also commit cumulative annual payments adding up to RM120 million across the assignment period of the respective bands. Both the 1,800 MHz and 2,600 MHz bands are commonly used for 4G LTE as well as 5G, but for the latter it serves more of a supplementary purpose. These assignments, CelcomDigi says, will help ensure its "network capabilities and the quality of experience for all customers". The telco also says that this "also affirms the company's commitment to infrastructure investments to meet rising connectivity and digitalization needs in Malaysia". Back in October, Maxis accepted a spectrum assignment offer from the MCMC for 2x10MHz in the 2100MHz band. Payment for this consists of RM100 million upfront and cumulative annual payments of RM300 million across the unspecified assignment duration.

(December 1, 2025) www.lowyat.net

Mozambique

Mozambique's government has made 5G coverage compulsory in all provincial capitals, while scrapping its earlier plan to auction spectrum licenses to mobile operators. Government spokesperson Inocencio Impissa said the decision reflects changes in the national telecommunications market that have "compromised the effectiveness" of spectrum auctions as a means to deploy next-generation networks. Speaking after a cabinet meeting in Maputo, Impissa confirmed the repeal of a previous resolution authorizing the auction of frequencies in the 700MHz, 2.6GHz, 3.5GHz and 26GHz bands. The new framework instead introduces coverage obligations - requiring operators to provide 5G in all provincial capitals and 4G across the country. "This measure aims to accelerate access to 5G, ensure digital inclusion, and promote efficient spectrum use," Impissa said. He added that the government will closely monitor compliance, warning that penalties and license revocations could follow in cases of non-compliance. The cabinet also approved a new telecommunications traffic control regulation, replacing a 2023 decree, to strengthen oversight of digital communications. The updated regulation introduces new mechanisms for monitoring telecom network traffic, covering all licensed operators and service providers.

(November 3, 2025) www.developingtelecoms.com

New Zealand

As technology and telecommunications markets evolve, it is expected that telecommunications services for New Zealand consumers will be partly or fully based overseas. The Government intends to ensure that all telecommunications providers, including overseas providers, must fulfil relevant regulatory obligations regardless of whether they, or the infrastructure they rely on, is based in New Zealand or overseas. To achieve this, the Telecommunications and Other Matters Amendment Bill would amend the Telecommunications Act 2001, the Telecommunications (Interception Capability and Security) Act 2013, and the Radiocommunications Act 1989.

(November 26, 2025) www.scoop.co.nz

Nigeria

The Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC) has entered into a strategic partnership with Swedfund, Sweden's Development Finance Institution, to enhance the security, reliability, and resilience of Nigeria's fifth generation (5G) mobile networks. The collaboration is anchored on a grant agreement designed to support the development of a risk-based cybersecurity framework that ensures Nigeria's 5G and future network systems are designed, deployed, and operated securely. As Nigeria continues to scale its 5G infrastructure—offering faster speeds, lower latency, and support for millions of connected devices—the NCC emphasized that maintaining security and public trust remains a top priority. The initiative seeks to safeguard national interests while reinforcing confidence in the country's expanding digital ecosystem. The partnership will also support key sectors such as energy, healthcare, transport, and education, enabling safer and more reliable connectivity across critical national infrastructure. By working with Swedfund, the NCC aims to align Nigeria's digital transformation with global best practices, advancing the country's ambition to build a secure, inclusive, and innovative digital economy.

(October 30, 2025) www.techafricanews.com

The Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC) has unveiled a new crowdsourcing report and National Coverage Maps as part of its strategy to promote data-driven regulation, transparency, and improved consumer experience in the country's telecommunications sector. Developed in partnership with Ookla, a global leader in network intelligence and performance analytics, the initiative reflects the NCC's growing focus on using advanced analytics to enhance Quality of Service (QoS) and Quality of Experience (QoE) across mobile and broadband networks. The new platform allows users to visualize network coverage, speed performance, and service availability nationwide—empowering consumers with accurate information while encouraging telecom operators to raise performance standards. Chip Strange, Chief Strategy Officer at Ookla, described the initiative as "a pivotal moment for Nigeria's telecom industry." He noted that when citizens can view and share performance data, it drives accountability and continuous improvement. "The NCC's commitment to data-driven regulation signifies a major leap forward for Nigeria, and we're proud to support this effort through benchmarking and capacity-building initiatives," he said.

(October 24, 2025) www.meatechwatch.com

Serbia

Serbia's telecommunications agency, RATEL, said it has awarded 5G spectrum licenses to all three mobile operators active in the country - state-controlled Telekom Srbija, Emirates Telecom-controlled Yettel, and A1 Srbija, part of A1 Telekom Austria Group - for a total fee of 300.1 million euro ($348 million). RATEL in September launched a public auction for individual licences for 694-790 MHz, 880-915/925-960 MHz, 1710-1785/1805-1880 MHz, 1920-1980/2110-2170 MHz, 2500-2690 MHz and 3400-3800 MHz radio frequency bands. (November 17, 2025) www.seenews.com

All three mobile operators active in Serbia - state-controlled Telekom Srbija, Emirates Telecom-controlled Yettel, and A1 Srbija, part of A1 Telekom Austria Group - have launched 5G networks in the country, they said. The 5G networks will initially be available in major Serbian cities, Telekom Srbija, Yettel, and A1 Srbija said in separate press releases on Tuesday. Serbia's telecommunications agency, RATEL, said in a statement that it had officially awarded 5G spectrum licenses to the three operators after they paid the first of two equal instalments of the license fee, totaling 150 million euro ($175 million). Last month, RATEL said that Telekom Srbija, Yettel, and A1 Srbija emerged as winners at a public auction for individual licenses for 694-790 MHz, 880-915/925-960 MHz, 1710-1785/1805-1880 MHz, 1920-1980/2110-2170 MHz, 2500-2690 MHz and 3400-3800 MHz radio.

(December 3, 2025) www.seenews.com

South Africa

The Independent Communications Authority of South Africa (ICASA) has published the Draft Amendment to the 2011 Municipal Party Elections Broadcasts and Political Advertisements Regulations on 31 October 2025. These Regulations will apply during the election period to broadcasting service licensees, political parties and independent candidates contesting the upcoming 2026 municipal elections. The Regulations provides for the framework and guidelines for the broadcast of political election broadcasts (PEBs) and political advertisements (PAs). ICASA invites interested stakeholders to make written comments on the Draft Regulations by 09 January 2026. In addition, ICASA will host workshops across all nine provinces from 24 November to 11 December to provide clarity on the Draft Regulations and to solicit input from stakeholders to ensure an inclusive and transparent regulatory process.

(November 14, 2025) www.icasa.org.za

Thailand

The National Broadcasting and Telecommunications Commission (NBTC) has tightened measures regarding text messages sent from other countries in its efforts to curb fraud. According to NBTC commissioner Pol Gen Nathathorn Prousoontorn, the latest move is in response to scam SMS messages originating from overseas. He added that while the number of scam calls has declined, the number of inbound scam text messages has increased since the beginning of last month, with over 1 million of them a day having been blocked. Recently, the NBTC subcommittee on enforcing the law suppressing technology crime held a meeting with related authorities concerning its ongoing implementation of the measures aimed at preventing online crime. The meeting discussed the new measures governing the sending of SMS messages in the application to persons or A2P format. The measures requires the telecom operators to place the senders of A2P SMS messages into two categories -- those sending such messages from within the country, and those sending them from overseas. Moreover, the telecom operators must register those that wish to send SMS messages domestically in the A2P format. They must be clearly separated from those sending SMS messages from other countries. In addition, the telecom operators must implement a firewall to screen potentially risky SMS messages, especially those sent from other countries. After these SMS messages sent from abroad pass their screening process, the operators must place the symbol of an exclamation mark in front of these messages to alert users that it is an international SMS. The operators must urgently implement all the measures and immediately inform customers about the measures. The NBTC will start registering SIM boxes in November and only registered ones are eligible to connect with telecom networks. This means the SIM boxes of call center gangs will not be able to connect with the telecom operators' networks.

(October 21, 2025) www.bangkokpost.com

United Kingdom

British technology Minister Liz Kendall urged the communications regulator Ofcom to speed up enforcement of tougher online safety rules designed to protect children from harm, saying that she was concerned about delays. "I remain deeply concerned that delays in implementing duties, such as user empowerment, could hinder our work to protect women and girls from harmful content and protect users from antisemitism," Kendall said in a letter to Ofcom. Ofcom has been phasing in the Online Safety Act, which imposes tough new requirements on platforms such as Facebook, YouTube, TikTok and X, as well as sites hosting pornography, to protect children and remove illegal content. The watchdog said it planned to publish a register categorizing which companies will be required to verify its users and be subject to other duties around July, a year later than its previous deadline. An Ofcom spokesperson said the delay was caused by factors beyond its control, in particular a legal challenge that raised "complex issues". In August, Wikipedia operator Wikimedia Foundation's case against parts of the law was dismissed by London's High Court, but the judge said the company could bring a further challenge if regulator Ofcom deemed Wikipedia to be a so-called Category 1 service - the highest tier under the new rules. The law has been criticized by free speech activists and some U.S. companies who say its broad implementation has censors legal content, while supporters argue it forces companies to take greater responsibility over their platforms. (November 18, 2025) www.reuters.com

United States

The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) will begin a process to accelerate the build out of wireless infrastructure, with plans to update rules meaning states and local lawmakers cannot unlawfully block 5G or future 6G deployments. The regulator stated it has voted to expedite deployment of towers and other mobile connectivity facilities, “supercharging the deployment, densification and upgrading of wireless networks”. Where necessary, it will seek to clarify that state and local restrictions can no longer hinder 5G and future 6G buildouts. As part of a consultation process, the FCC added it will seek comments “to expedite the resolution of permitting disputes, including possibly through a ‘rocket docket’ process”. The process will also seek to expedite state or local approval of certain modifications of existing tower and base stations, as “envisioned” by the watchdog’s Spectrum Act of 2012. It will also aim for clarification on FCC’s small cell deployment rules and “if or when further preemption of the specific state and local regulations is necessary to ensure compliance with the Telecommunications Act”. FCC explained that too often, regulations inhibit the installation and modernization of wireless networks, resulting in an effective prohibition of 5G wireless services. Under FCC chair Brendan Carr, the agency stated it has pursued a Build America Agenda to drive growth through high-speed deployment, freeing up spectrum and cutting red tape. (October 1, 2025) www.mobileworldlive.com

Zambia

The Zambia ICT Authority (ZICTA) has ordered the country’s telecom operators to improve the quality of services provided to consumers, under threat of sanctions. Several directives were issued to them during a press conference on Tuesday, November 4th. Telecom operators are urged to invest in increasing capacity and coverage, particularly in rural and underserved areas. They must also equip all their central sites with reliable backup power systems to ensure service continuity in the event of a power outage. To this end, they have been advised to deploy renewable energy technologies such as solar or hybrid systems to improve resilience and reduce disruptions. “ZICTA will not compromise on quality standards. The Authority will use its regulatory powers against any operator that fails to meet the prescribed service quality thresholds. The time for excuses is over. We are actively monitoring performance and all service providers will be held accountable to the public they serve,” the telecoms regulator said in a statement published on Facebook. The ZICTA had already issued several warnings to operators in 2025. In February, it fined Airtel Zambia 4 million kwacha (US$180,000) in compensation to its customers for recurring disruptions to its network. In June, the operator had to compensate its customers with 5.2 million kwacha, pay an additional fine of 828,000 kwacha, and issue a public apology. In March, MTN Zambia was also forced to pay 800,000 kwacha in compensation for the unavailability of its services. (November 6, 2025) www.extensia.tech.com

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