



National Communications Authority

- Press Release

NCA leads Ghana's Celebration of the 2024 World Telecommunication and Information Society Day (WTISD)

Accra, May 17, 2024: At the NCA Tower in Accra today, the National Communications Authority (NCA) joined the International Telecommunications Union (ITU) and other member states of the Union to celebrate this year's World Telecommunication and Information Society Day (WTISD). The theme for this year's celebration was, 'Digital Innovation for Sustainable Development'.



Director General of the NCA, Dr. Joe Anokye, delivering a welcome address

The Director General of the NCA, Dr. Joe Anokye, giving his welcome address expressed his delight in this year's WTISD celebration and its theme. He said the NCA as a member state of the ITU accords WTISD with optimum importance and has been commemorating it locally over the years. He continued that digital innovation has emerged as a potent catalyst for sustainable development and it is in that regard that the Government of Ghana is championing the Digital Agenda which is an all sector-inclusive initiative to propel the nation's digital economy.

Dr. Anokye noted that the NCA on its part, under the supervision of the Ministry of Communication and Digitalisation (MoCD), continues to develop regulatory frameworks and

review existing frameworks to accommodate and encourage innovation while ensuring consumer protection and data privacy.

He commended the ITU for its continued support to African Member States in realising the full advantages of digital transformation through addressing policy and regulatory challenges and fostering innovation across economic sectors, and stressed on the NCA's readiness to avail its regulatory facilities for the capacity development of sister regulators in the Africa Region.

Dr. Joe Anokye took the opportunity to announce to the general public that following the subsea cable cut which led to the March 14 incident, all the four (4) Subsea Cable Landing Service Providers (ACE, MainOne, SAT-3 and WACS) have completed repair works.



Minister for Communications and Digitalisation, Hon. Ursula Owusu-Ekuful, delivering her keynote address

In her keynote address, the Minister for Communications and Digitalisation, Hon. Ursula Owusu-Ekuful, said WTISD is reminder of the tremendous impact that telecommunications and ICTs have had on lives, businesses and the economy growth of all countries. She noted that the world is now advocating for innovations to solve developmental issues and also offer opportunity for entrepreneurial development with a strong case often made at international forums that the agreed sustainable development goals can be facilitated and achieved when digital technologies are utilised.

Hon. Owusu-Ekuful went on to emphasise that it is the goal of the Government to build a sustainable future in a quest to meet the targets of the sustainable development goals. This, she said, requires that employment of innovative thinking and action in policy formulation for the common good of all citizens.

“We must pursue the adoption and promotion of digital innovation technologies to solve the many developmental challenges that we face as a people to leapfrog to an improved living condition. Employing digital innovative technologies in sectors such as health, education, employment, rural development, and climate monitoring just to mention a few will advance our nation” Hon. Ursula Owusu Ekuful remarked.

The Honourable Minister recognised the Government of Ghana’s steadfast effort in fostering a culture that embraces innovation, adaptability, and continuous evolution emphasising on the National ICT for Accelerated Development Policy, 2003 which set the roadmap for building the foundations for Ghana’s digital journey. This policy, she said, identified fourteen (14) key pillars that address all the sectors of the economy to embrace ICTs in their operations and functions. She also announced that Cabinet has approved Ghana’s Digital Economy Policy meant to consolidate the gains the country has made and to build on what the ICT4AD policy. According to the Minister, the Digital Economy Policy is a forward-looking document with five (5) policy focus areas and strategies to enable the country to pursue the low hanging initiatives that the policy identifies. She added that, Empowering individuals by fostering their competencies, capabilities, and skills to use digital technologies is one of the pillars of the digital economy policy.

Again, Hon. Owusu-Ekuful underscored the paramount importance of collaboration among stakeholders to drive digital innovation for sustainable development highlighting that while dialogue is crucial, the time has come translate these discussions into action. She stressed the need to strengthen collaboration to collectively advance sustainable development by unlocking the immense value creation potential of digital economy initiatives.

Bringing her address to a close, the Honourable Minister hinted that government is putting in place the necessary pillars to make Ghana the ICT Hub for West Africa and therefore urged the private sector to join hands with government in supporting digital transformation, particularly in the development of smart and sustainable cities.

In a video message, the Secretary-General of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), Ms. Doreen Bogdan-Martin acknowledged that innovation has always been a uniquely human endeavour irrespective of historical timelines or the pace of technological advancement. She emphasised that innovation can arise from anyone, adding that digital technology not only enables sharing of ideas but also fosters connections among individuals.

The UN Secretary General, Antonio Guterres, in an address read for him by a representative of the UNESCO Country Office, Carl Ampah, the Project Specialist (Culture), noted that developing economies face obstacles in accessing the digital technologies that could help to mitigate growing inequalities, climate change and environmental depletion. This, he hinted, is the rationale which will lead countries to agree on a Global Digital Compact aimed at safeguarding technology as a force for human wellbeing at the upcoming Summit of the Future in September this year.



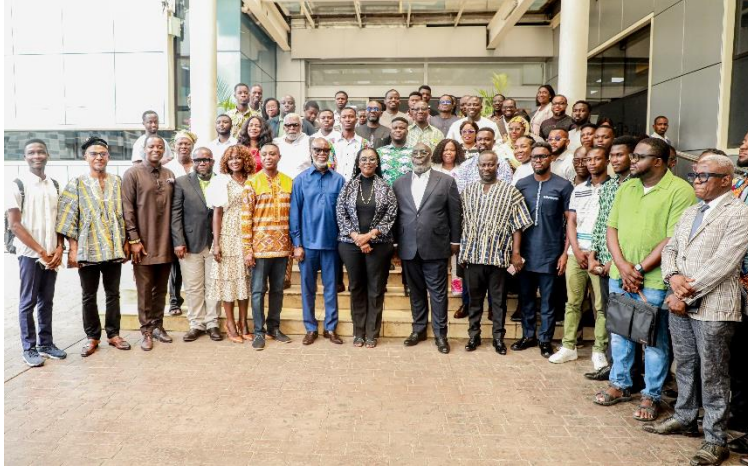
Carl Ampah from the UNESCO Country Office reading the UN Secretary General's message

As part of the event, presentations were made by three (3) local entities using digital innovation and technology to provide solutions within the Ghanaian economy. The entities were Complete Farmer Ltd, providers of farming solutions including the platform for buyers to access directly and vice versa; Glico E-Health, providers of virtual access to medical doctors and mobile laboratory and pharmacy services, and Reservoir Management Group, an organization using cutting-edge AI technology to elevate health, safety and security at the workplace.



The Flag Hoisting Ceremony being done by the dignitaries with the support of the Ghana Army

The event, which was held at the NCA Tower, was climaxed with a flag hoisting ceremony at the NCA premises led by the Hon. Minister for Communications and Digitalisation, Mrs. Ursula Owusu-Ekuful, and supported by Carl Ampah of the UNESCO Country Office and the Board Chairman of NCA, Okatakyie Ababio Boakye Danquah II.



A group photograph of some participants with the Minister for Communications and Digitalisation

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About NCA

The National Communications Authority, (NCA), was established by an Act of Parliament, Act 524 in December 1996, which has been repealed and replaced by the National Communications Authority Act, 2008 (Act 769). The Authority is the statutory body mandated to license and to regulate electronic communication activities and services in the country.

About World Telecommunication & Information Society Day, 17 May 2022

World Telecommunication and Information Society Day (WTISD) has been celebrated annually every 17 May since 1969 to mark the founding of ITU and the signing of the first International Telegraph Convention in 1865.

The ageing of the global population will be the defining demographic trend of the 21st century—yet our societies struggle to see the opportunities that this trend can unfold. Telecommunications and information communication technologies (ICTs) have a role to play in achieving healthier ageing, but also in helping people build smarter cities, combat age-based discrimination at the workplace, ensure financial inclusion of older persons, and support millions of caregivers across the world.

WTISD 2022 will allow ITU membership, partners and other stakeholders to raise awareness about the important role of telecommunications/ICTs in supporting people to stay healthy, connected and independent, physically, emotionally and financially – to a life of healthy ageing – and as critical for the sustainability of economic and health systems.

As part of ITU's efforts towards the UN Decade of Healthy Ageing and the theme of WTISD 2022, "Digital technologies for Older Persons and Healthy Ageing", ITU invites you to actively participate in commemorating, contributing, and innovating throughout the year with national, regional, and international initiatives to accelerate digital technologies for older persons and healthy ageing.