

**Department of Infrastructure and Energy**

**Information Society Division**

***Concept Note***

***Validation Workshop of The Draft Continental Strategy On Artificial Intelligence (AI)***

***9-10 May 2024, Online.***

1. ***Background***

The unprecedented speed and reach of Artificial Intelligence have sparked international debates and caused both excitement and alarm, and raising important questions about the impact of this revolutionary technology on economies and societies.

Artificial Intelligence is already becoming a reality with an increasing number of industries and government institutions integrating this technology and an increasing number of users of AI applications are recorded every day. Thefore the huge impact of AI is such that societal, scientific, educational, cultural, legal and regulatory elements should be equally considered by all stakeholders when developing or implementing AI systems including by private sector and tech industry.

It’s within this context, the 44 Th Ordinary Session of the African Union Executive Council endorsed the Conceptual framework and tasked the AU Commission to expedite the development of a Continental AI Strategy that is comprehensive, forward-looking and action-oriented to effectively harness the potential of AI potential to transform the continent in line with the AU Agenda 2063 goals, while managing associated risks and harms.

Against this background, the AU Commission established and operationalized a Working Group on AI composed of AU Member States and Pan-African Organizations to support and guide the development of a continental approach and strategy on AI that responds to Africa’s context, address its needs and position the continent as an active player at global level.

Building on the AU AI Conceptual Framework and online stakeholder consultations held on 19-24 April 2024 , the AU Commission with financial and technical support from UNESCO developed a Draft AI Strategy that places an emphasis on eight pillars namely building the capabilities of AU Member States in AI skills, Research and Development, Datasets, Infrastructure, Governance and Private sector-led Innovation, as well as ensuring regional and international cooperation and coordination on this fast-moving and disruptive technology.

1. ***Objective Expected Results***

The meeting will be a platform for the representatives of AU Member States, Regional Economic Communities (RECs), AU Specialized Institutions and Regional Organizations to:

* Review and validate the "Draft Continental Strategy on Artificial Intelligence (AI)" and its Implementation Plan
* Discuss and deliberate on the follow-up actions to mobilize African Countries towards an effective and inclusive adoption of AI Technologies.
1. ***Participation***

The discussions will be of particular interest to Senior Experts and Policymakers from AU Member States as well as representatives of Regional Economic Communities, AU Specialized Agencies and Institutions and other Regional Organizations dealing AI.

In order to support effective discussions, Working Documents can be found using the link below:

[**https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1ZomCRWwYdEeHTLHA-9N4WTemHjSe3\_0p**](https://eur03.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fdrive.google.com%2Fdrive%2Ffolders%2F1ZomCRWwYdEeHTLHA-9N4WTemHjSe3_0p&data=05%7C02%7CSouhilaA%40africa-union.org%7C2fc80c3beb644983aa9708dc65eb800f%7C4f56f714477c44a1a135a2fb27680aaf%7C0%7C0%7C638497309329252038%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=W0apbrR7K74V3pwyLXFVtBaRWdR9KlWlYqcwoldRCGA%3D&reserved=0)

1. **Venue and Dates**

The meeting will be held virtually on Zoom Platform and participants are kindly requested to register in advance using below link. After registering, they will receive a confirmation email containing the login details to the meeting.

[**https://zoom.us/meeting/register/tJIlfuyrrjgqHdDLBj\_T8Y\_SaRa3yLxqZafj**](https://eur03.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fzoom.us%2Fmeeting%2Fregister%2FtJIlfuyrrjgqHdDLBj_T8Y_SaRa3yLxqZafj&data=05%7C02%7CSouhilaA%40africa-union.org%7C95f416914fa94f1c7efc08dc65e43477%7C4f56f714477c44a1a135a2fb27680aaf%7C0%7C0%7C638497278029729934%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=LCjaAikxUpboHxH1Wd1i7IFUfhQ8we%2BKr3Oycfc4EzY%3D&reserved=0)

1. **Agenda of the validation workshop**

The Validation Workshop to review the draft strategy will be organized in two sessions respectively on 9 Th and 10 Th May 2024 .

**Day 1: Thursday 9 May 2024**

**Time:** 2.00 -4.30 pm EAT (GMT+3)

**Duration:** 2.500 Pm

**Objective:** **Review and validate the "Draft Continental Strategy on Artificial Intelligence (AI)"**

**Draft Program:**

**Opening remarks: AUC and UNESCO**

**Introduction and Context**

* Global AI initiatives and implications on Africa
* Situation analysis of AI readiness in Africa

Q/A, Open discussions

**Presentation of the Draft Strategy**

* Methodology and approach
* Vision
* Mission and guiding principals
* Presentation of Key Priority Areas
* Maximizing AI benefits for Socio-economic development
* Minimizing AI risks for Africa

Q/A, Open discussions

**Day 2: Friday 10 May 2024**

**Time:** 2.00-4.30 pm EAT (GMT+3)

**Duration:** 2.5 h00

**Objective:** **Review and validate the "Draft Continental Strategy on Artificial Intelligence (AI)"**

**Draft Program:**

 **Presentation of the Draft Strategy (continued)**

* Presentation of Key Priority Areas (Pillars)
* Building Africa AI capabilities
* Regional &International Cooperation and Partnerships
* Fostering Investment in African AI systems

 Q/A Open discussions

**Presentation of the Draft Implementation plan**

* Presentation of the implementation road of the AI strategy

Q/A, Open discussions

**Way forward / Next Steps regarding the "Draft Continental Strategy on Artificial Intelligence (AI)"**

 **Closing Remarks** : UNESCO and AUC

1. ***Contact Information***

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