



Africa CEO Forum 2024: A Catalyst for Continental Progress



By Bernard Kimani

The Africa CEO Forum 2024 concluded on Friday, May 17th, leaving attendees inspired by a series of high-calibre discussions, panels, and roundtables. This year's forum underscored the immense potential of Africa's creative industries in generating jobs and boosting the continent's economies. Moreover, it emphasized the transformative power of effective leadership and digital innovation in propelling Africa towards a prosperous future.

One of the forum's highlights was the Presidential Panel, which featured influential leaders such as H.E. Paul Kagame, President of Rwanda; H.E. Dr. William Ruto, President of Kenya; and H.E. Filipe Jacinto Nyusi, President of Mozambique. Their insights into governance and leadership strategies have been crucial in advancing their respective nations.



President Paul Kagame of Rwanda urged a departure from the mentality of victimhood, advocating instead for a proactive approach: "We must create the Africa we want by doing what is right," he stated. He further emphasized, "We need to leave far behind us the sense of victimhood... We just need to seize the moment because we really have everything to do us proud."

Kenya's President, H.E. Dr. William Ruto, stressed the importance of leadership starting at the grassroots level: "Leadership starts from where you are, from the family," he noted. He also committed to strengthening the African Union, stating, "We will make the African Union a fit-for-purpose institution."

H.E. Filipe Jacinto Nyusi of Mozambique highlighted the necessity for change and progress within the continent's leadership: "We don't want to see the African continent leadership fail. We have the history, but we need to change it and make it better!"



The forum also delved into the digital transformation sweeping across Africa, particularly through the Strategic Roundtable Discussion titled “Africa Goes Digital: How Can Businesses Gain?” This discussion featured Mr. Joe Sang, the Managing Director of Kenya Pipeline Company (KPC), who is well known for his strategic expertise and leadership in finance and planning.



Mr Sang over two decades of experience, including notable roles at East Africa Breweries Limited and National Oil Corporation of Kenya. He holds a Master of Business Administration in Strategy and a Bachelor of Arts in Economics and is a Certified Public Accountant. Under Mr. Sang’s leadership, KPC has achieved remarkable progress, particularly in infrastructure upgrades and operational efficiency. He highlighted the critical role of technology in business transformation: “The application of technology is not just an operational enhancer but a strategic imperative. At KPC, we’ve seen firsthand how technology, like our fiber optic cable network, can revolutionize efficiency and connectivity,” he remarked.



KPC’s venture into fiber optic cabling exemplifies its commitment to technological advancement and regional digital infrastructure development. “Our fiber optic cable initiative is a leap towards future-proofing our operations and contributing to the region’s digital infrastructure,” Mr. Sang added.



The roundtable featured Jesse Moore, Co-founder & CEO of M-Kopa; Iain Usiri, CEO of Ramani; Daniel Yu, Founder & CEO of WASOKO; and Stephen Gitagama, Group CEO of Nation Media Group. Susan Lund, Vice President for Economics and Private Sector Development at IFC, also shared valuable insights, making the discussion a rich exchange on leveraging digital technologies for business growth in Africa. The session was moderated by Paulo Mauro, Director of the Economic and Market Research Department at IFC.



The Africa CEO Forum 2024 was a testament to the continent’s drive towards economic development and digital innovation. The discussions and insights shared during the event highlighted the critical steps needed to harness Africa’s full potential, ensuring a prosperous and technologically advanced future for the continent.