

**REPUBLIC OF RWANDA**



**THE PRIME MINISTER**

**Keynote address by the Rt. Hon. Prime  
Minister**

**Dr. Ngirente Edouard**

**At India-Africa ICT Expo 2019**

**Kigali Convention Center, August 5<sup>th</sup>, 2019**

- **Distinguished guests and participants,**
- **Business Leaders**

**Good morning,**

1. Let me start by welcoming you all to Rwanda and to this year's India-Africa ICT Expo. We are pleased to host it for the first time here in Kigali.
2. Over the years, Africa and India have enjoyed economic and business relations. As mentioned earlier, trade between India and Africa has grown over time from 7.2 billion USD in 2001 to more than 60 billion in 2018.
3. This impressive growth in trade between Africa and India is a result of many factors. As you all know a number of strategic initiatives have been put in place, especially "Focus

Africa” created by the government of India in 2002 to boost trade and investment between Africa and India, and the India-Africa Forum Summit launched in 2008.

- 4.** This India Africa ICT Expo 2019 is part of the continuous efforts to strengthen, grow and optimize these strategic initiatives.
- 5.** As Africa has given priority to ICT to achieve full digital transformation such as affordable and reliable connectivity for all, smart devices penetration, a mindset that drives digitization; India is one of the model countries of how technology has radically transformed every aspect of the economy and lives of people.

This forum therefore, gives us an opportunity to draw lessons from India’s experience as Indian companies explore and also learn from Africa’s experience.

## **Distinguished guests**

- 6.** Over the next two days, I hope both business communities from Africa and India can connect and innovate new ways of creating and capturing value while sustaining their business growth.
  
- 7.** Our bilateral interests are extensive. They range from agriculture to education, healthcare and construction, among others. This India-Africa ICT expo focuses on the role of a transformative switch for socio-economic transformation in Africa through Information Communications and Technology.
  
- 8.** As we consolidate efforts in the drive to accelerate the digital transformation, we aim to leverage on partnerships with India, and utilize this as a platform to increase collaboration between our public and private

sectors. It is therefore obvious that this will expand the size of our markets, share innovations, technologies, solutions and business models that will benefit all of us.

**9.** With the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) in effect, Africa becomes the largest free trade area in the world. It will provide access to an even wider market that will boost intra-Africa trade. This is a remarkable market opportunity for investors to explore the benefits that this bloc will bring.

**10.** In that regard, it is my hope that as you gather here, you will discuss and find a common ground on the required frameworks to facilitate the digital technologies and innovation in Africa.

**11.** Similarly, as we move into a digital era, digital trade will increase, and it is in forums like this that we can collectively determine ways to reduce trade barriers that may slow progress. This will also facilitate our private sectors to export their innovations and best practices.

**Distinguished guests,**

**12.** As I conclude, I want to thank the government of India and Indian business community, for their commitment to the growth and development of Africa.

**13.** I hereby declare this expo open and wish you productive deliberations over the next two days.

**I thank you for your kind attention.**