

Uganda Calls for AI Governance to Be Shaped with Developing Countries

Geneva, 6 July 2026 – Uganda has called for a more inclusive approach to global artificial intelligence governance, urging that developing countries must be part of shaping the rules, standards and systems that will guide the future of AI.

The call was made during the High-Level Governmental Plenary Segment of the United Nations Global Dialogue on AI Governance, held in Geneva, co-chaired by El Salvador and Estonia and supported by ITU, UNESCO and other UN partners.

Delivering Uganda's statement on behalf of His Excellency the President of the Republic of Uganda, Hon. Alioni Yorke Odria, Minister of State for ICT and National Guidance, reaffirmed Uganda's commitment to responsible AI governance that advances sustainable development, supports inclusive digital transformation, and reflects the priorities of developing countries.

“Uganda does not come to this Dialogue to receive policies and guidelines written for us by others. We come to help write them,” Hon. Odria said.

He said Uganda approaches artificial intelligence not with anxiety, but with a clear national development plan. He highlighted Uganda's ambition to grow its economy tenfold to USD 500 billion by 2040, driven by agro-industrialisation, tourism, minerals, and science, technology and innovation.

Hon. Odria noted that artificial intelligence has a direct role to play in this transformation, particularly in sectors that are central to Uganda's economy and public service delivery, including agriculture, tourism, minerals, health and education.

He further pointed to Uganda's Digital Transformation Roadmap as a foundation for building the country's digital future through infrastructure, services, data protection, skilling and innovation.

However, Uganda cautioned that the promise of AI will remain unequal unless the global community addresses the major divides in compute capacity, data and skills. Hon. Odria observed that Africa holds less than one per cent of the world's AI compute capacity, noting that ambitious development plans cannot be achieved on such limited access to global technological capability.

“A tenfold-growth ambition cannot run on one per cent of the world's capability,” he said.

Uganda therefore called for concrete cooperation with developing countries on compute access, capacity-building and financing, stressing that such cooperation should be built on partnership rather than dependency.

On safe, secure and trustworthy AI, Uganda urged support for interoperable, standards-based approaches that avoid fragmented systems. Hon. Odria said this was essential to ensure that innovations developed in countries such as Uganda can be recognised and trusted beyond national borders.

Uganda also emphasized that transparency, accountability and human oversight must remain central to AI governance. Hon. Odria said these safeguards must protect every

person equally, including communities whose languages, cultures and data are still underrepresented in the development of AI systems.

The Minister welcomed the first report of the Independent International Scientific Panel on AI and noted Uganda's readiness to contribute actively to future thematic work under the Global Dialogue. He further encouraged the Panel to draw fully on the expertise, research and data of the Global South.

Uganda reaffirmed that AI governance must be shaped at every level, nationally, regionally, continentally and globally, with developing countries present not only as beneficiaries but also as co-authors of the emerging international framework.

“Govern this technology with us, not for us. That is how a rule made in Geneva earns trust in Kampala, and how a solution built in Kampala is recognised in Geneva,” Hon. Odria said.

On behalf of His Excellency the President, Uganda pledged its full and constructive engagement in the Global Dialogue on AI Governance.

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