

**GOOD WILL MESSAGE BY THE
EXECUTIVE VICE-CHAIRMAN (EVC),
NIGERIAN COMMUNICATIONS
COMMISSION (NCC)**

AT

**THE 2025 BUSINESS JOURNAL
ANNUAL LECTURE ORGANIZED BY
THE BUSINESS JOURNAL MEDIA
GROUP**

ON

**FRIDAY, DECEMBER 12, 2025, AT THE
ORIENTAL HOTEL, LAGOS.**

**Theme: “AI & Digital Economy:
Projecting the Future of Economic
Growth in Nigeria”**

PROTOCOLS

It is a privilege to share a goodwill message on a theme that captures the inflection point of our time: Artificial Intelligence and the Digital Economy as engines of Nigeria's future growth (*AI & Digital Economy: Projecting the Future of Economic Growth in Nigeria*).

Around the world, AI is already reshaping productivity, services, and inclusion. For Nigeria, the opportunities of AI are profound: whether it is in the fields of agriculture, healthcare, the creative industry, logistics and education. The economic opportunities in new jobs, new businesses, enhanced productivity and new value chains cannot be overemphasized.

However, these vast potentials are hinged on the availability of the right environment for AI to thrive. I am talking about a resilient connectivity infrastructure, a vibrant ecosystem and ethical governance for its appropriate use.

As Nigeria's telecoms regulator, our mandate is to create an enabling environment for AI to thrive, by way of regulations and guidelines to foster the ubiquitous delivery of quality telecommunication services across the country.

Broadband is the backbone of AI. It is quality connectivity that makes the innovative potentials of AI possible.

The capacity to collect, process, and deliver insights at scale—whether in hospitals, farms, businesses, classrooms, or factories—depends on robust broadband that is accessible, affordable, and reliable.

How then are we ensuring that the broadband that enables AI is accessible, affordable, and reliable?

At the start of this year, the Commission, in line with our economic regulatory mandate, approved tariff adjustments that are both cost-reflective and competitively aligned with market realities. This strategic intervention has strengthened investor confidence and stimulated healthy competition across the telecommunications sector. As a direct result, operators have committed more than One Billion Dollars—over One Trillion Naira—in fresh investments. These resources are now driving network upgrades, infrastructure modernization, and wider national coverage. In just seven months, operators and tower companies have deployed more than 2,900 additional capacity and coverage sites nationwide, significantly improving network strength and service availability.

In July, the Commission also launched the 2025 Corporate Governance Guidelines for the Telecommunications Industry—our most comprehensive governance framework yet. These Guidelines strengthen transparency, accountability, and resilience across the sector. They reinforce balanced board structures, enhance internal controls, and promote rigorous risk management, while addressing contemporary challenges such as

cybersecurity, climate-related risks, and operational inefficiencies. You will agree with me that stronger governance leads to stronger operators, and stronger operators deliver better services to Nigerians.

The Presidential Order on Critical National Information Infrastructure (CNII), which was signed in June 2024 by President Bola Ahmed Tinubu GCFR remains another pillar of our enabling environment. By providing legal protection for telecommunications infrastructure, the Order helps curb vandalism, theft, and disruptions, ensuring continuous service availability. Without resilient infrastructure, neither AI nor the digital economy can thrive; this Order ensures that both stand on solid ground.

We also recognise that the high cost of Right of Way (RoW) at the sub-national level has long hindered broadband rollout. Despite the Nigerian Governors' Forum's resolution pegging RoW at N145 per linear metre, many states continue to charge prohibitive rates. Through sustained advocacy, the Commission has secured full RoW waivers in five states, bringing the total number today to eleven. We will continue these engagements until broadband expansion becomes economically viable across all regions.

If you have keenly followed the activities of the telecommunications industry in the past couple of years, you would have observed that transparency is now a central feature of our regulatory approach. Our Major Outage Reporting Portal—which is publicly available on our website—provides near-real-time information on major service disruptions nationwide. Operators must now notify consumers of planned or unplanned outages, their causes, affected areas, restoration timelines, and provide proportional compensation when disruptions exceed 24 hours.

Similarly, our partnership with Ookla, a global leader in network performance intelligence, further reinforces this commitment to transparency. Together, we have recently published the first quarterly Industry Performance Reports, benchmarking Quality of Service and Quality of Experience across regions and operators. These reports provide insights into urban–rural speed disparities, network capacity, 5G opportunities, and device performance.

We have also launched the Nigerian National Coverage Maps, which enable consumers to visualise coverage, speeds, and service availability nationwide. It empowers them to make informed decisions, while giving operators the data needed to optimise performance.

Additionally, our Draft Internet Code of Practice—an update to the 2019 version—introduces modern safeguards for today's digital ecosystem, including open internet access, cybersecurity, child online safety, anti-spam protections, and governance standards for online platforms and Internet Access Service Providers. These safeguards form the policy foundation for the safe adoption of AI in Nigeria. They strengthen trust, accountability, and openness which are key ingredients for a thriving digital economy.

As we look to the future, we can be confident that Nigeria is taking the right steps. With resilient infrastructure, clear and transparent regulation, and sustained protection of telecom assets, we can ensure that broadband is not only accessible and affordable, but also transformative. This is how we build a digital economy that is inclusive, secure, and forward-looking; one where AI and innovation become catalysts for national prosperity.

To the organisers of today's convening, and to all stakeholders driving Nigeria's digital journey, we extend our appreciation. Let us continue building—network by network, rule by rule, skill by skill—towards a future where digital innovation uplifts every community.

Thank you.

Dr Aminu Maida
EVC/CEO
Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC)