



Arab Republic of Egypt
Ministry of Communications
and Information Technology

**Remarks of HE Dr. Amr Talaat Minister of Communications and Information
Technology of Egypt at the BRICS Future Network Innovation Forum**

6 August 2019, Shenzhen

**Your Excellency Mr. Miao Wei, Minister of Industry and Information Technology
of the People's Republic of China,**

Honorable Ministers of ICTs of BRICS and EMDCs,

and fellow participants in the BRICS Future Network Innovation Forum,

Allow me to pay respect for the kind invitation extended from the Government of China to take part in this dynamic and progressive **Forum**. I would also like to express my appreciation for the warm reception and hospitality the Egyptian delegation received.

Networks of the future have accorded high importance in our local discussions and have been placed at high priority within our strategies and plans. No doubt the development is swift, vast and requires immediate and focused attention.

Building on the outcome of the 4th BRICS Communication Ministers Meeting in Durban, and its genuine call for further investment in future network research, digital transformation and ICT development at large; and witnessing the speed of the advancement of the next-generation networks, I believe we unanimously agree that technological research, policies, IPRs, cybersecurity, and standardization are top priority.

Egypt highly values the forward approach of the BRICS coalition in discussing and deliberating the future networks and hopes to be an active contributor to the vision and action of this dynamic group. Sincere admiration for the effort exerted in this regard. The BRICS Institute of Future Networks is a true testament. Our countries have been eagerly responsive to create conducive environments for their citizens to benefit from the Fourth Industrial Revolution, paving the way for appropriate legislation to take effect and societies to be actively engaged.

Distinguished participants,

The journey of Egypt's ambitious economic reform program has been exceptionally unique. For such a program to succeed, it was coupled with an all-inclusive strategy that has at its heart a bouquet of national mega projects-led by the Government-to spearhead the different sectors of the economy. Investors, as well as citizens, have started to enjoy the fruits of such progressive and bold initiatives. A growth rate of 5.6% was achieved in the year 2018-19.

The Ministry of Communications & Information Technology is leading a world-class program to develop the technological infrastructure necessary for the future. Concurrently, an aggressive plan is currently under implementation to promote the value of the knowledge-based economy within the business community and create a solid base of skilled human resource in the sciences and technologies of the future. Notably, the ICT sector growth rate reached 16% in the year 2018-19 while its contribution to the GDP reached 4%.

The MCIT is championing the mega project for the country's digital transformation. The intended transformation is due to happen with heavy investments in local innovation and by generating value-add. Naturally, coupled with the Digital Transformation Strategy is a state-level governance framework. And at the heart of the Strategy lies the financial inclusion program which highly capitalizes on the digital and physical assets of the ICT sector.

I take this opportunity to announce that just a few days ago, Egypt launched its first digital city.

Allow me to focus on the infrastructure advancement program which puts the 4th Industrial Revolution at the forefront of its vision. The rollout of fibre networks is high priority. In conjunction with fibre, rises an innovative approach to reuse copper networks to provide fibre-like services. Concurrently, we are re-planning our spectrum assets in preparation for the rollout of 5G and beyond technologies.

We forecast that 5G fused with other advanced technologies will be highly utilised in private networks with applications in industrial IoT, enterprise networking, critical communications, media, and government priority sectors such as health and education.

Building on such potential, we are currently capitalizing on valuable assets such as Egypt's geographic location, 13 marine cables passing through our waters, state-of-the-art data center facilities and the development of the needed technical expertise. This endeavor, will not only satisfy local market needs, but will surely generate attractive possibilities for neighboring countries.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Our Government has set ambitious developmental and technological targets, and MCIT realizes that AI, through the implementation of a national strategy, is to be mainstreamed in the various projects to achieve such ambition. Honing talent by increasing the efficiency of the technical trainings offered by the government is the starting point. Of similar importance comes applied research. Priority focus research areas, where global collaborations are currently being forged, are in healthcare services, agriculture, manufacturing, and managing smart cities.

Proudly our 'Knowledge City', currently under construction in Egypt's New Capital, will be home to new initiatives of collaborative research between academic institutions as well as research & innovation centers specialized in the fusion of progressive technologies.

As a nation, we have also taken solid steps to lay the foundation for the digital environment legislations. Our vision and philosophy behind any regulations needed are to protect our citizens from cyber risks, privacy leakage, encourage FDI and support conducive emerging technologies.

Egypt recently issued the Anti-Cybercrimes Law, which is compliant with the Budapest Convention on Cybercrime and the Arab Convention on Cybercrime. And currently, the proposed draft of the Data Protection draft law is waiting for the Parliament's approval. The law is consistent and quite similar to the European Regulation for the Protection of Personal Data (GDPR). Currently, a new draft law is under development to regulate electronic transactions, and develop regulatory frameworks for a number of new technologies such as artificial intelligence and blockchain.

Ladies & Gentlemen,

After convening for 20 years in Geneva, the World Radiocommunication Conference of this year will take place in Sharm El Sheikh, the magnificent resort that lies on the Red Sea. More than 3500 participants will meet from 22nd October-28th November. I invite you to be part of the policy development process for advanced technologies on which communication and services depend.

I am aware a special session within the Forum agenda is dedicated to this important conference later in the day.

With no doubt, our visions meet. Sincerely, leaders in this room have pledged to embrace the 4th industrial revolution in full force to accelerate sustainable growth in the digital age. And since our economies are highly complementary, we need to capitalize on our existing partnerships and develop them further. We commend the BRICS-Africa collaboration in advancing green technologies across all sectors of the economy and are eager to contribute our share.

Capitalizing on our chairmanship of the African Union, and the developmental initiatives we pledged to our people and our continent, we promise homegrown innovation derived from the existing and future needs of the communities we serve. We honestly dream that responsible, digital technology enables harmonized progression and overall development.

Allow me to refer to a key message extended by our President HE Abdel Fattah El Sisi to the audience of the BRICS Summit, September 2017, where he expressed hope that BRICS nations will soon develop a mechanism for dialogue with developing countries. He stressed that such a dialogue will spearhead novel and unique contributions, which in return will drive forward development efforts and yield to stronger partnerships.

Therefore, distinguished participants,

On the road to building our inclusive economies, we aspire that BRICS & EMDCs would jointly activate a strong and effective platform for dialogue. This dialogue should aim to mobilize economic and industrial endeavors as well as spur developmental initiatives in digital technologies and future networks. With the technologies we genuinely develop, we owe our societies, and similarly, our future generations, a fairer, just, and an enabling environment.

Once more, we congratulate China for orchestrating a distinguished forum and addressing such an important topic.