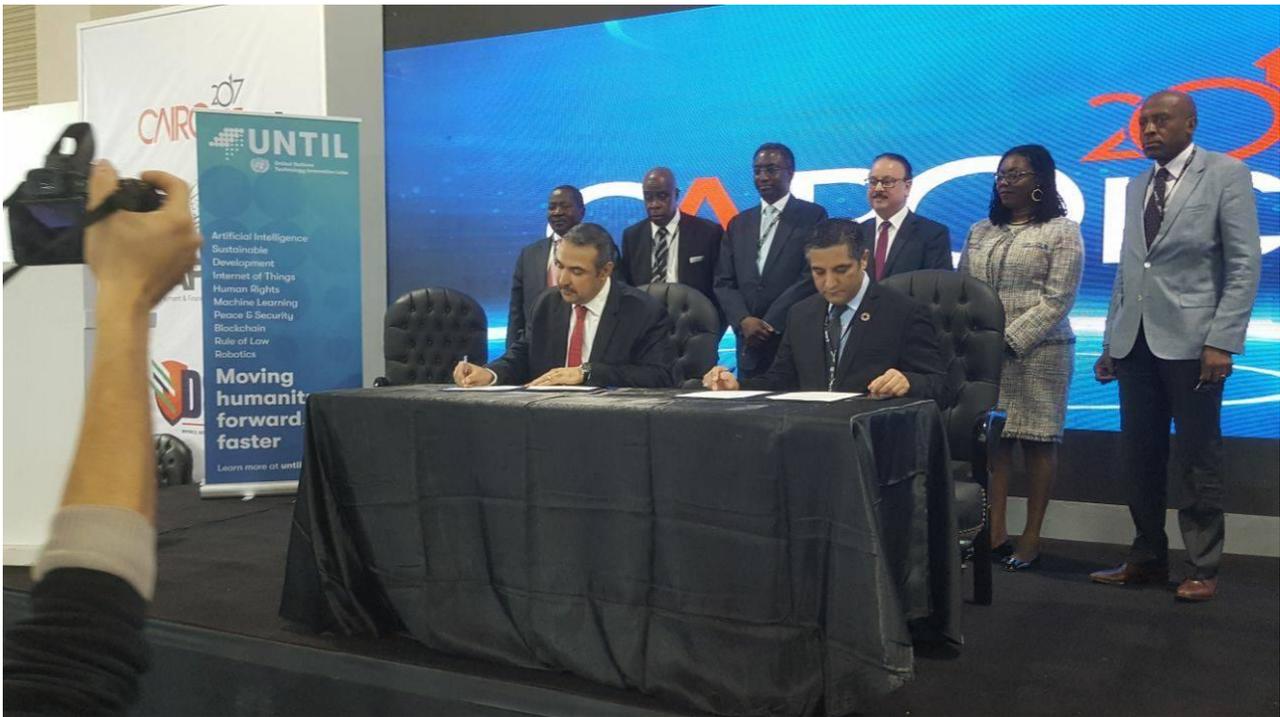


UN Launches Regional Technology Innovation Lab in Egypt

Egypt, Cairo– December 4, 2017



The Egyptian Minister of Communications and Information Technology Yasser Elkady has witnessed the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the Ministry of Communications and Information Technology (MCIT) and the United Nations (UN), to launch UN African Technology Innovation Lab (UNTIL) in Egypt.

The MoU was signed by the ICT Minister's Advisor for Training and Technological Innovation Hossam Osman and the UN Resident Coordinator in Egypt Richard Dictus, on the sidelines of the second day of the 21st Cairo ICT, held under the auspices of Egypt's President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi, on December 3-6, at Egypt Convention Center, in New Cairo.

Richard Dictus, UNDP Resident Representative in Cairo, said that Egypt has always been a key regional player in the area of information and communication technology (ICT) and innovation, committed to the growth and sustainability of the telecom sector in a manner that reduces exclusion, vulnerabilities and gender disparities.

Dictus added that the progress made in the Egyptian ICT sector under the leadership of Minister Yasser El Kady and the guidance and support of President El Sisi has been exemplary witnessing the launch of the 4G and the introduction of the first integrated telecom provider to the market, and bringing multiple economic benefits to the most populous Arab country.

The Minister of Communications and Information Technology Eng. Yasser Al-Qadi said that Egypt is taking firm steps towards activating a national strategy based on technology innovation and entrepreneurship, and aiming at being an influential producer and developer of technology and electronics.

Egypt is witnessing the development of smart villages and technology parks beyond Cairo, reaching previously untapped territory and unraveled youth potential.

The government full fledged support is embodied in its commitment to IT and ICT-driven innovation, entrepreneurship through strong youth capacity building initiatives such as the Next Technology Leaders initiative that aims to build capacity of young calibers on the latest information, communications, and electronics technologies.

Egypt is positioning itself as a global competitor in the sourcing world. This year, the Egyptian ICT sector has emerged and performed outstandingly driving the country's economic growth with an exceptional annual growth rate of 12.5%, an export volume of USD 1.87 billion per year, 90,000 direct offshoring jobs and 3.2% contribution to the country's GDP.

The launch of this lab comes within the framework of the UN plan to deploy a global network of technology innovation labs across the world. Egypt was selected to be the headquarters of the UNTIL of Africa due to the great development made in Egypt in the field of ICT and entrepreneurship.

The UNTIL in Egypt will be housed at Egypt's Technology Innovation and Entrepreneurship Center (TIEC), which is located in Smart Village; the country's flagship technology business park on the outskirts of Cairo.

The Lab is designed with the intent to train, host and implement technology innovations and to develop innovative technology solutions that address global challenges, and to help Egypt progress

towards achieving its Sustainable Development Strategy and the global Sustainable Development Goals, and serve the UN Member States.

The Egyptian Lab will be focusing on a number of fields and thematic areas related to the education of People with Disabilities (PwDs), prevention of epidemics, medical tourism and waste management for protecting the environment and rationalizing water consumption in agriculture.

All solutions will be developed using open source software and open data where Egypt will cooperate with the entities of the labs established around the world in order to achieve integration and confront challenges through exchanging experiences and tools.

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