Africa Law & Tech News

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Map country labels: TUNISIA, MOROCCO, ALGERIA, LIBYA, WESTERN SAHARA, EGYPT, MAURITANIA, MALI, NIGER, CHAD, SUDAN, CAPE VERDE, SENEGAL, GAMBIA, GUINEA BISSAU, GUINEA, BURKINA FASO, BENIN, NIGERIA, ERITREA, DJIBOUTI, SIERRA LEONE, LIBERIA, IVORY COAST, GHANA, TOGO, CAMEROON, CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC, SOUTH SUDAN, ETHIOPIA, SOMALIA, EQUATORIAL GUINEA, SAO TOME & PRINCIPE, GABON, CONGO, CONGO DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC, UGANDA, KENYA, RWANDA, BURUNDI, TANZANIA, SEYCHELLES, ANGOLA, COMOROS, MALAWI, MOZAMBIQUE, ZAMBIA, ZIMBABWE, NAMIBIA, BOSTWANA, MADAGASKAR, MAURITIUS, SOUTH AFRICA, SWAZILAND, LESOTHO
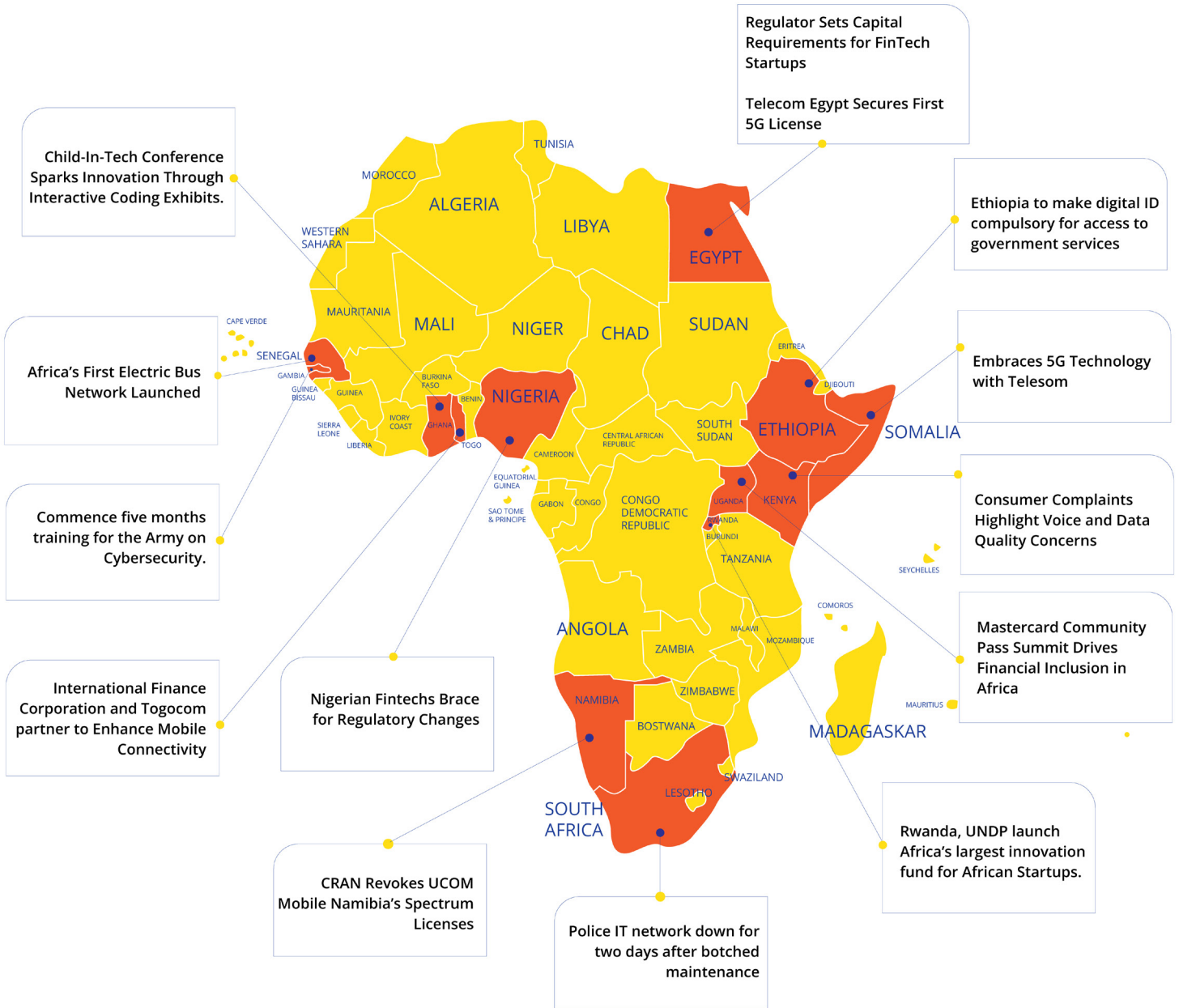
KENYA

Consumer Complaints Highlight Voice and Data Quality Concerns

In Q3 2023, the Communications Authority of Kenya faced a significant backlog, as three-quarters of consumer complaints regarding mobile network providers' service quality remained unresolved. The CA received 20 complaints related to poor voice and data service, managing to resolve only 5. The overall complaints, spanning various breaches by telecom service providers, totaled 156, encompassing issues such as fraudulent calls, inaccurate billing, and service delays. Notably, in the year ending June 2022, Safaricom demonstrated the highest compliance rate at 95%, Airtel Kenya at 78.6%, and Telkom Kenya at 71.4%. The CA resolved 119 out of the 156 complaints it received, leading to a score of 76.2%.

RWANDA

Rwanda, UNDP launch Africa's largest innovation fund for African Startups.

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and Rwanda, alongside seven other African nations, launched Timbukto, an initiative aiming to invest $1 billion over a decade in 1000 tech startups across Africa. The Timbuktoo Africa Innovation Fund, with a commitment of $350 million in risk-tolerant capital, seeks to attract an additional $650 million from private investors. Targeting pre-seed, seed, and pre-Series A investments on an equity basis, the fund will focus on specific sectors in different African hubs: tourism and hospitality in Casablanca, edtech in Dakar, fintech in Lagos, agritech in Accra, creatives in Cape Town, health tech in Kigali, and trade, logistics, and e-commerce in Cairo. Local universities will collaborate to support tech ventures under the initiative.

UGANDA

Mastercard Community Pass Summit Drives Financial Inclusion in Africa

Mastercard's second annual Community Pass Customer Summit in Kampala, Uganda, brought together over 90 public and private sector partners and featured 20+ thought leaders dedicated to enhancing digital and financial inclusion across Africa. The summit showcased cutting-edge technologies and financial solutions targeting underserved communities in agriculture, health, micro-commerce, and education. Interactive panel discussions explored the impact of digital technology on service delivery and economic growth in remote areas, addressing themes such as credit access, last mile delivery, entrepreneurship enablement, and innovative financing for sustainable outcomes.

SOMALIA

Embraces 5G Technology with Telesom

Telesom, in partnership with Somaliland, has launched 5G and Fixed Wireless Access (FWA) in the capital city of Hargeisa and 12 other urban towns. Telesom's subscribers can now access 5G mobile data bundles on compatible phones, heralding a new era in communication, work, and digital experiences in the country.

ETHOPIA

Ethiopia to make digital ID compulsory for access to government services

Yohade Zemichael, Executive Director of Ethiopia's National ID Program, announced the requirement for Ethiopians to present a digital ID when accessing government services. Part of the government's initiative to digitize all services, less than four million people have enrolled in the digital ID, Fayda, with a target of 90 million citizens by 2028 (initially 2025). While enrollment is not mandatory, the Digital ID Proclamation allows government and private entities to deny services without ID. Fayda is already compulsory for civil servants and students, with collaborative efforts involving UN agencies and banks to accelerate adoption, particularly among children and displaced persons.

EGYPT

Telecom Egypt Secures First 5G License

The National Telecommunications Regulatory Authority (NTRA) has granted Telecom Egypt the inaugural license for installing and operating fifth-generation (5G) mobile networks, at a cost of USD 150 million. Valid for 15 years, this move by Telecom Egypt aligns with global technology trends, aiming to expedite Egypt's digitalization and advance various industries. The deployment of 5G technology promises lower latency, higher capacity, and increased bandwidth, enhancing overall customer experiences and facilitating improved efficiency for businesses through seamless connectivity and data analysis.

Regulator Sets Capital Requirements for FinTech Startups

The Financial Regulatory Authority (FRA) enacted Resolution No. 268 of 2023, establishing a minimum capital requirement of EGP 15 million for FinTech startups engaging in non-banking financing activities. The resolution aims to ensure the financial stability of these companies and their capacity to deliver services effectively. Startups are granted a two-year period, beginning with EGP 15 million, to meet licensing requirements and subsequently adjust capital as needed for specific non-banking financing activities. Additionally, companies must initiate their non-banking financing activities within two months of license issuance.

NAMIBIA

CRAN Revokes UCOM Mobile Namibia's Spectrum Licenses

The Communications Regulatory Authority of Namibia (CRAN) has revoked the spectrum licenses of UCOM Mobile Namibia (formerly MTN Business Namibia) due to the company's failure to settle license fees totaling over 19.3 million Namibian dollars (US$1 million).

SOUTH AFRICA

Police IT network down for two days after botched maintenance

The South African Police Service (SAPS) experienced a two-day outage in its IT network on Tuesday and Wednesday due to a failed maintenance attempt. The disruption followed changes to the configuration of the firewall, executed outside a change-controlled environment and protocol. The misconfiguration impeded communication between domain controllers and exchange servers, leading to the extended network outages.

GHANA

Child-In-Tech Conference Sparks Innovation Through Interactive Coding Exhibits.

Themed "Promoting Financial Technology for Economic Growth," the Child-In-Tech Conference gathered students aged 17 and below from various Ghanaian regions. Sponsored by Taptap Send and GIFEC, the event aimed to educate and immerse young minds in financial technology. Recognizing children's role in digital payments, the conference filled a knowledge gap and emphasized the impact of fintech on economic growth. Exhibitions from IoT Hub Africa, Applied Technology Institute, Kids at Home, and Leti Arts demystified coding, fostering curiosity and creativity. Structured sessions included expert speakers, career exploration, and hands-on training with emerging technologies, fostering a future generation of tech innovators.

SENEGAL

Africa's First Electric Bus Network Launched

Senegal launched sub-Saharan Africa's first all-electric Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) network in the capital of Dakar. The Dakar BRT project, spanning 18.3 km with 23 bus stations and three hub transfer stations, was constructed by China Road and Bridge Corporation. The electric buses are supplied by China Railway Rolling Stock Corporation.

GAMBIA

Commence five months training for the Army on Cybersecurity.

The Gambia Cyber Security Alliance (GCSA) has initiated a five-month intensive training program for The Gambia Armed Forces focused on cybersecurity. The training aims to enhance the Armed Forces' capacity in cybersecurity and other defensive cyber methods.

TOGO

International Finance Corporation and Togocom partner to Enhance Mobile Connectivity

The International Finance Corporation (IFC) has invested with the goal of assisting Togocom in expanding 4G coverage and fiber networks. This investment aligns with Togo's Digital Transformation Strategy, aiming to achieve widespread connectivity and internet access. The strategy's objective is to reach 95% population coverage and provide internet connectivity for key facilities by the year 2025.

NIGERIA

Nigerian Fintechs Brace for Regulatory Changes

Nigerian fintech executives are anticipating a regulatory overhaul from the central bank to address persistent fraud issues. The central bank governor, Yemi Cardoso, announced plans in November to review licenses for financial institutions, particularly in the technology-driven payment services sector. The new approach signals an end to the previous leniency enjoyed by startups in launching products before regulatory scrutiny. While details of the requirements are undisclosed, fintech operators are preparing for tighter controls. The sector has seen a surge in fraud, rising 277% in the first half of 2023, costing deposit-taking institutions 9.7 billion naira.