Addis Ababa, Ethiopia has been selected as the location for the 17th annual IAD Summit. IAD 2019 acknowledges the fact that Africa is a diverse continent of nations at different stages of ICT maturity. ICT maturity rankings are a measurement for how well a country is progressing and a benchmark for how they are performing alongside their neighbours.

There are many widely accepted benefits to improving ICT maturity rankings, from attracting international investment through to the social and economic benefits to a country. In 2019 Extensia have developed a National Agenda Acceleration Series (NAAS). This is a programme designed to move beyond the 'talking shop' style of event that has become prevalent in Africa and presents a year-long engagement to accelerate national ICT maturity. We will work with the key stake-holders in-country to strengthen weak points and accelerate Digital Transformation. IAD 2019 will support this agenda by addressing the core pillars of Broadband, Universal Service, Quality of Service, Security and a Digital Future. IAD 2019 will assess best practices, future visions and practical solutions in these areas whilst identifying areas of regional collaboration that will support these important national imperatives.

The ITU Report on measuring the ICT Development Index indicates the following comparative statements on Africa's ICT Maturity rankings:

	Africa	World
IDI Value	2.64	5.11
Fixed Telephone subscriptions	1%	13.57%
Mobile Telephone Subscriptions	74.6%	101.53%
Individuals using the internet	19.9%	45.91%
Fixed Broadband subscriptions	0.4%	12.39%
Mobile Broadband subscriptions	22.9%	52.23%

While these statistics highlight a need for continental development, the national statistics tell a story which enables individual nations to develop a roadmap focusing on their individual objectives and priorities while addressing their vulnerabilities.

IAD 2019 will be attended by Policy Makers, Regulators, Service Providers and Major End Users from across Africa along with carefully selected solution providers, investors and consultants who can address the challenges and support the development of National Agendas with Infrastructure, Value Added Services, Strategy Guidance, Investment and Business partnership.

We are pleased to return to Ethiopia for the fourth time of hosting the IAD Summit in 2019. This is an exciting time of growth and development in Ethiopia with Market Liberalisation, Digital Transformation and the renewed vision for the development of a world class ICT Park. The change in leadership across government and Ethio Telecom and the creation of a new ICT Ministry (Ministry of Innovation and Technology) has re-invigorated the sector presenting valuable opportunities for international enterprises to enter the Ethiopian market and explore the many valuable business opportunities. We hope you can join us.