
AFRICAN DRONE FORUM 2020 AND LAKE KIVU CHALLENGE

Kigali, Rwanda, February 7, 2020: The African Drone Forum (ADF) 2020 was officially opened by His Excellency Paul Kagame, President of the Republic of Rwanda on February 5, 2020. The ADF was organized in collaboration with the Government of Rwanda, World Bank Group and partners including UK AID and the World Economic Forum. The event explored what a future unbound by surface infrastructure could look like, how drone technology can promote development and increase access to essential services and opportunities for the African continent.

Showcasing leading drone innovations, ADF 2020 aimed to facilitate a path towards harmonized airspace regulation that can foster a commercially viable Unmanned Aircraft System (UAS or drone) market in Africa. Consisting of a Symposium, an Expo, a series of Flying Competitions, and a drone business challenge, an estimated 800 participants from 50 countries attended the African Drone Forum Symposium and Expo on February 5-7, 2020.

On February 4, high-level representatives from the Government of Rwanda, ADF partner organizations, and African regulators attending the forum, visited Karongi on the shores of Lake Kivu, where Mukarutesi Vestine, Mayor of Karongi district officially launched the Lake Kivu Challenge.

One of the highlights of the 2020 African Drone Forum, the Lake Kivu Challenge still going on in Karongi consists of three (3) flying competitions inspired by real world African use cases: Emergency Delivery, Sample Pick-up, and Find and Assess. Ten (10) drone teams from around the globe, including Rwanda, participate in this Challenge, which is the first of its kind in the continent. The LKC flying competitions will take place on February 8-15, following the ADF Symposium.

The ADF Expo and Lake Kivu Challenge showcase cutting-edge technology including Vertical Take Off and Landing (VTOL) aircraft, Unmanned Traffic Management (UTM) hardware/software, and Beyond Visual Line of Site (BVLOS) drone delivery operations.

As part of the ADF Symposium, thought leaders in the drone and innovation space discussed how to accelerate a drone ecosystem; the relevance of droneports and drone infrastructure services in Africa; the experience and lessons drawn from global case studies; as well as the opportunities that are emerging with the Fourth Industrial Revolution.

“Rwanda is committed to fostering innovation and entrepreneurship, as a key pillar for transforming our country and our continent, both socially and economically, said His Excellency Paul Kagame, President of the Republic of Rwanda.

“Why limit ourselves to just using drones? We can also design and manufacture drones in Africa, as demonstrated by examples at this forum. This allows the technology to be tailored to our specific needs, and to help create new industries that generate employment and prosperity”.

“Drones can be a key enabler to future economic growth, poverty reduction and shared prosperity in Africa. They have the potential to create new business models and transform industries like agriculture, mining, e-commerce and health, saving lives by making medicines and vaccines reach the most isolated communities. The African Drone Forum aims to transform the lower skies of Africa into a resource for sustainable mobility, promising efficiency, innovation and opening new opportunities for the population. For this reason the World Bank is helping countries develop their potential and several of our projects already rely on drones for issues including [managing flood risk](#) to [post disaster needs assessments](#),” said **Makhtar Diop, World Bank Vice President for Infrastructure**. “The African Drone Forum will help countries leapfrog into the digital economy and develop skills for 21st century jobs in Africa. We are excited to see how the African Drone Forum is bringing together local and international stakeholders to accelerate Africa’s technology revolution, creating growth and development opportunities,” Diop continued.

The African Drone Forum follows the October 2018 Lake Victoria Challenge Trial and Symposium, held in Mwanza, Tanzania and is supported by a network of partner organisations that include:

- The Government of Rwanda: <http://www.gov.rw/home/>
- The World Bank, Africa: <https://www.worldbank.org/en/region/afr>
- UK AID: <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-international-development>
- The World Economic Forum: <https://www.weforum.org/>
- Danida: <https://um.dk/>
- MOLIT: <http://www.molit.go.kr/>
- Korean Green Growth Trust Fund: www.wbgkgtf.org
- The World Food Programme: <https://www.wfp.org/>
- UNICEF: <https://www.unicef.org/>
- africanDRONE: <https://africandrone.org/>
- Tanzania Flying Labs: <https://flyinglabs.org/tanzania/>

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