President Paul Kagame urged African countries on Wednesday to invest in artificial intelligence infrastructure, skills and governance, saying the continent must become a creator of technology rather than remain only a consumer of innovations developed elsewhere.

Speaking at the AI for Good Global Summit in Geneva, Kagame said artificial intelligence could transform economies, improve public services and create new opportunities, but warned that countries needed to act quickly to avoid being left behind.

“Technology should be a force for good, and we have a responsibility to use it only for positive purposes,” Kagame said.

The summit, organized by the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) and hosted in partnership with Switzerland, has brought together heads of state, technology executives, researchers and policymakers to discuss how AI can support development while addressing concerns around governance, safety and access.

Kagame said Africa’s growing population gives the continent a major opportunity to shape the future of the global digital economy. By 2050, Africa is expected to have the world’s largest working-age population, creating a large pool of potential innovators and technology users.

“Africa is no longer satisfied to be a passive consumer of technology,” Kagame said. “We want to build and deploy that technology at scale as well.”

The Rwandan leader outlined three priorities for ensuring AI delivers benefits broadly: expanding digital infrastructure, investing in education and skills, and creating governance systems that promote accountability and public trust.

“Talent exists everywhere but the opportunity to use it does not,” Kagame said, calling for universities and training institutions to adapt their programs to meet the demands of emerging technologies.

He also urged governments and the private sector to work together to expand access to computing power, reliable energy and internet connectivity, which he described as essential foundations for AI development.



Kagame highlighted Rwanda’s use of AI in healthcare through its Health Intelligence Center, which uses real-time data analysis to support disease monitoring and improve decision-making.

Global AI Cooperation

During the summit, Kagame joined Salesforce Chief Executive Marc Benioff and ITU Secretary-General Doreen Bogdan-Martin in launching the International Commission on AI Development and Use, a global initiative aimed at promoting responsible AI development.

The commission brings together more than 40 leaders from governments, businesses and international organizations to address challenges linked to AI adoption, including unequal access, infrastructure gaps and public trust.
Benioff said AI had demonstrated significant potential to drive economic growth but stressed that maintaining public confidence would be critical to realizing its benefits.

The commission will also focus on expanding connectivity, particularly among the more than 2.2 billion people worldwide who remain without internet access, many of them in developing countries.

Kagame said global cooperation would be necessary to ensure AI benefits reach all regions.

“We must be intentional about designing, funding and governing AI so that it can reach its full potential,” he said.

The AI for Good Global Summit runs from July 7 to 10 in Geneva under the theme “Unlocking AI’s Full Potential for Humanity.”