

Atef Helmy

Former Minister of Communications and Information Technology, Egypt



Eng. Atef Helmy has more than 40 years of solid experience in business and in communications and information technology. In his career, he has held numerous executive management positions in two of the top Fortune 100 multinationals – NCR/ AT&T and Oracle – in the United States of America, Europe, Middle East and Africa. He has also contributed to the development of the companies in Egypt and MEA through chairing the Chamber of Communications and Information Technology, an organization of the American Chamber of Commerce, and numerous positions as a Board Member and Board of Trustees in many organizations, institutions, academic and research centers and NGOs.

In January 2013, Eng. Atef Helmy assumed responsibility as Egypt's Minister of Communications and Information Technology, where he chaired the Boards of the National Telecommunications Regulatory Authority (NTRA), the Information Technology Industry Development Agency (ITIDA) and the National Telecommunication Institute (NTI). He also chaired the Board of Trustees of the Information Technology Institute (ITI), the Technology Innovation and Entrepreneurship Center (TIEC) and oversaw the institutional development of Egypt Post.

Eng. Atef Helmy was responsible for Egypt's transformation in the global digital economy, as envisioned in the National ICT Strategy 2013-2020. In recognition of his efforts and leadership, he was asked to chair the World Summit for Information Societies (WSIS+10) High Level Event in Geneva in June 2014, and was awarded the Golden Medallion from the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) for his active role.

Status of the Digital Economy in the Arab World: The Way Forward – Developing the right DE Strategy

Digital Economy is the fastest, most economic, most efficient and most secure way to achieve the socio-economic development in the Arab World as it has positive impact on economic growth, employment, social welfare, competition and government services. That is why Digital Economy is at the top of the agenda of most of the Arab Countries (e.g. 2021 UAE Digital Technology plan, Saudi Arabia 2030 vision, Egypt 2030 vision). However Arab Countries are in different stages of implementing the Digital Economy (Beginner Group, Promising Group and Achiever Group). In order to achieve the promise to the citizens of Arab World for a better future, it is imperative to develop the right modular and multi-dimensional Digital Economy Strategy. This Digital Economy Strategy should cover the following dimensions:

- Geographic: the Beginner Region, the Promising Region and the Achiever Region
- Tools: Applications, Devices and Infrastructure
- Stakeholders: Governments, Business and Individuals

and the following layers: Foundation, Innovation, Sectors/Industries and Stakeholders.