Africa primed to take advantage of the Internet opportunit

TUNIS, TUNISIA: There has been robust growth in Internet access and usage over the past few years and Africa is now primed to take advantage of the social and economic opportunities that the Internet can bring to people across the continent. This was the focus of an address delivere to delegates at the Africa Internet Summit (AIS) being held in Tunisia by Kathy Brown, Presiden & CEO of the Internet Society.

Kathy Brown

In her speech, delivered to AIS participants in Tunis, Brown highlighted the progress made in recent years bring improved Internet access and availability to more people in Africa, noting how this growth provides a strong foundation for stimulating opportunity through an enabling environment defined by inclusion, innovation and entrepreneurship.

"Africa's recent economic growth rates and growing entrepreneurial spirit are combining to create a climat of opportunity," said Brown. "Advances in Internet infrastructure and the meteoric rise of the mobile Interne have already transformed the African technology landscape. I believe that Africa's Internet is now at a tipp point, poised for further positive change and expansion as the continent looks forward with confidence to t future."

She added, however, that there are still barriers which must be overcome in order to capture the full economic and social promise of the Internet. While connectivity is on the rise and available bandwidth in Africa has increased significantly, challenges for the African Internet business ecosystem still include fact such as the cost of broadband, online fraud, lack of local content and fragmented markets.

"Africa is now the frontier for the next wave of Internet progress," continued Brown. "While there is huge potential for Africa to continue building an Internet that will best serve its needs and its people, it is critical that true collaboration across Africa's technical community, a culture of innovation and a spirit of entrepreneurship form part of this process. The Internet Society stands with Africa to continue the great momentum underway to overcome challenges and enable the economic and social possibilities that only a truly open, trusted Internet can deliver."