



## Press Release

# Building bridges to and within Africa: DE-CIX, 'Internet pour tous' and UNITED S.A. announce that Africa Congo Internet Exchange (ACIX) is live

Kinshasa (Democratic Republic of Congo), Frankfurt (Germany), 23 May 2023. [DE-CIX](#), the world's leading Internet Exchange (IX) operator and home to the largest carrier and data center neutral interconnection ecosystem globally, together with the NGO '[Internet pour tous](#)' and [UNITED S.A.](#), an Internet connectivity and web hosting provider based in Kinshasa (Democratic Republic of Congo – DRC), today announce that ACIX (the Africa Congo Internet Exchange) is live. The neutral IX will be hosted by UNITED and managed by 'Internet pour tous' (Internet for all), which was established in 2021 with, among others, the goal of providing free connectivity to every educational institution in the DRC. Launched in a ceremony yesterday, ACIX is in the process of onboarding the first eleven networks. With plans underway to interconnect networks from all countries bordering on the DRC, ACIX is set to become Africa's first regional interconnection hub. ACIX enjoys direct connectivity to Lisbon, enabling connected networks to access DE-CIX's vibrant cloud and interconnection ecosystem in Southern Europe. The new IX will be operated by DE-CIX on behalf of 'Internet pour tous', as part of the [DE-CIX-as-a-Service \(DaaS\) program](#). The DaaS program includes a set of services – such as installation, maintenance, provisioning, marketing and sales support – designed for data center operators or other third parties to create their own Internet Exchange and interconnection platform fully operated by DE-CIX.

“Boosted by a large population and a promising digital ecosystem, the DRC's and in particular Kinshasa's Internet usage is booming, with growth of close to 30% year-on-year. However, the market is still underserved due to the high price of Internet connectivity and the lack of advanced interconnection services,” explains Mohamad H. Ibrahim from UNITED. “With ACIX, networks can exchange data locally and build a local ecosystem. Previously, for networks in East and West Africa to exchange data, the data needed to travel all the way down to South Africa and back up again. Having already worked with DE-CIX, we know their professionalism and the

improvement in data speeds resulting from connecting to them. Bringing together DE-CIX's expertise in building IXs with UNITED's experience in all types of connectivity in the African environment is a winning combination for the betterment of the Internet in the DRC and across Africa."

"DE-CIX is proud to support 'Internet pour tous' and UNITED in the operation of ACIX, which is set to become an African crossroads for intra and inter-continental traffic flows," says Ivo Ivanov, CEO of DE-CIX. "With Southern Europe building a bridge for international content and applications being delivered to Africa, ACIX will also create digital opportunities for Africa by aggregating African networks currently fragmented across neighboring countries. This will allow the DRC to unleash the potential of its emerging digital economy by providing better performance and user experience of clouds, content and applications, and affordable and high-quality Internet access for enterprises and people."

### **ACIX powered by DE-CIX is building bridges to and within Africa**

Kinshasa, one of the most populous cities in Africa, is strategically located between the two most densely populated regions of the African continent. Forming an interconnection bridge between the neighboring countries from the Atlantic on the west to the Indian Ocean on the east, ACIX will create a connectivity corridor across equatorial Africa, with Kinshasa as the hub where networks can exchange data and house content at a significantly reduced latency (reaction time) to users.

Acting as a gateway to Africa, DE-CIX Southern Europe comprises of six Internet Exchanges, and plays home to the largest neutral interconnection ecosystem in Southern Europe, bringing diverse international networks close to the pathways serving the African continent. With direct connectivity to Lisbon and DE-CIX Southern Europe, ACIX will offer a more resilient and diversified connectivity to international networks and content in the region.

#### **About 'Internet pour tous'**

The NGO 'Internet pour tous' was established in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) in 2021 to support the government's Plan National du Numérique 'Horizon 2025'. The mission includes, amongst others, reducing the cost of Internet connectivity, improving the quality and availability of connectivity, and providing free connectivity to thousands of schools in the DRC. 'Internet pour tous' manages the neutral Internet Exchange ACIX, operated by the global IX operator DE-CIX, with the intention of creating a regional hub for connectivity within central Africa.

#### **About DE-CIX**

DE-CIX (German Commercial Internet Exchange) is the world's leading operator of Internet Exchanges (IXs). DE-CIX offers its interconnection services in more than 40 metro-markets in Europe, Africa, North America, the Middle East, and Asia. Accessible from data centers in over 600 cities world-wide, DE-CIX interconnects thousands of network operators (carriers), Internet service providers (ISPs), content providers and enterprise networks from more than 100 countries, and offers peering, cloud, and interconnection services. DE-CIX in Frankfurt, Germany, is one of the largest Internet Exchanges in the world, with a data volume of almost 34 Exabytes per year (as of 2022)

and close to 1100 connected networks. More than 200 colleagues from over 30 different nations form the foundation of the DE-CIX success story in Germany and around the world. Since the beginning of the commercial Internet, DE-CIX has had a decisive influence – in a range of leading global bodies, such as the Internet Engineering Task Force (IETF) – on co-defining guiding principles for the Internet of the present and the future. As the operator of critical IT infrastructure, DE-CIX bears a great responsibility for the seamless, fast, and secure data exchange between people, enterprises, and organizations at its locations around the globe.

Further information at [www.de-cix.net](http://www.de-cix.net)

#### **About UNITED**

Established in 2018, UNITED bundles experience in satellite connectivity, optical fiber, IP transit, RF planning, interference mitigation, dynamic bandwidth management, network security, VPN, electrical hybrid solutions and many other solutions adapted to the environment of Africa. One key priority of the company is always to find a flexible way to optimise pricing to continuously offer more bandwidth for every network upgrade and continuous technical improvements. Further information at <https://united.cd>

#### **Media Contact DE-CIX:**

Judith Ellis, Elisabeth Marcard, Viola Schreiber & Carsten Titt – Global Public Relations – Telephone: +49 (0)69 1730902 130 – Email: [media@de-cix.net](mailto:media@de-cix.net)