

Surge in demand for mobile connectivity

A surge in mergers and acquisitions and investment is predicted in the African mobile and broadband sector, as telecommunications operators are seeking scale.



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African mobile telecoms operators, infrastructure owners and service providers are ramping up investment and targeting acquisitions across the region to meet the surge in demand for connectivity, a leading telecom transaction adviser said.

“The African TMT vista remains extraordinarily vibrant. Fundamental demand is not in doubt, and neither is exponential growth in demand. This is reflected by telecommunications operators seeking economies of scale. This holds across the mobile sector, the towers sector and the broadband connectivity sector,” said Enda Hardiman, managing partner, Hardiman Telecommunications.

Hardiman will host the Telecom Leadership Panel at [TMT Finance Africa 2017](#) on May 24, in London, which will discuss strategies for regional growth, and includes: Thomas Chalumeau, strategy managing director MEA, Orange; Stephen Van Coller, VP: digital services, data analytics and business development, MTN Group; David Eurin, group CSO, Liquid Telecom; and Julian Adkins, CFO Africa, Millicom.

“In mobile, transnational groups are consolidating operations,” Hardiman commented. “This holds across countries and regions. It also holds in the case of potential acquisition of single-play LTE operators. New commercial strategies

emphasise social media, entertainment and finance. 'Basic' connectivity no longer suffices. Investment continues apace."

"In towers, critical mass achieved by transactions to date is now being consolidated. Further transactions, including major liquidity events, are in prospect. Significant impetus is lent to the sector, together with corresponding capital requirements, by developments in fibre connectivity, power, and, not least, the burgeoning IoT sector," he said.

Hardiman added: "In broadband connectivity, the capacity of international submarine landing points is being extended inland. Major initiatives are under way, following African trade routes. Spurs are continually added to transnational and transcontinental terrestrial backbones, enhancing both mobile and fixed line connectivity. Satellite has experienced a resurgence in serving demand in outlying regions. These initiatives are capital intensive, engaging equity, debt and project finance."

TMT Finance Africa 2017 will be taking place in London on May 24 and is the most important annual meeting for African telecom, media and tech investment, gathering the leading senior executives (CEOs, CFOs, CSOs), Investment Bankers, Investors and Professional Advisers.

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