

NEC/XON Summit 2017: Making Africa smarter and safer



By [Ilse van den Berg](#)

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The NEC/XON ICT Summit 2017 kicked off on Monday, 6 November 2017 at the Lord Charles Hotel in Somerset West. Keynote speakers included the likes of Carel Coetzee, CEO of XON and Hironobu Kurosaki, president and CEO of NEC Europe, among others.

Coetzee welcomed delegates to the sixth annual event, which was also a celebration of XON's 21st birthday. He gave a quick overview of the company and its history as well as its secret to success which, among other things, include a strong focus on long-term customer relationships, making a real effort to understand its customers' business, and its culture. He says that as a systems integrator, XON's biggest asset is its people.



Preparing delegates for the jam-packed day ahead, Coetzee touched on the theme of the day, 'Getting physical with cyber', as he zoomed in on the topic of smart cities. "I believe we need safe cities before smart cities," he said.

"What excites me is not the fact that we can offer world-class cyber and or physical security solutions, but our focus. There is a very interesting spot where the cyber world and the physical world meets and at this point, there's no one on this continent playing in that space. So today we want to share a lot with you on what we can achieve in this interesting space," he said.

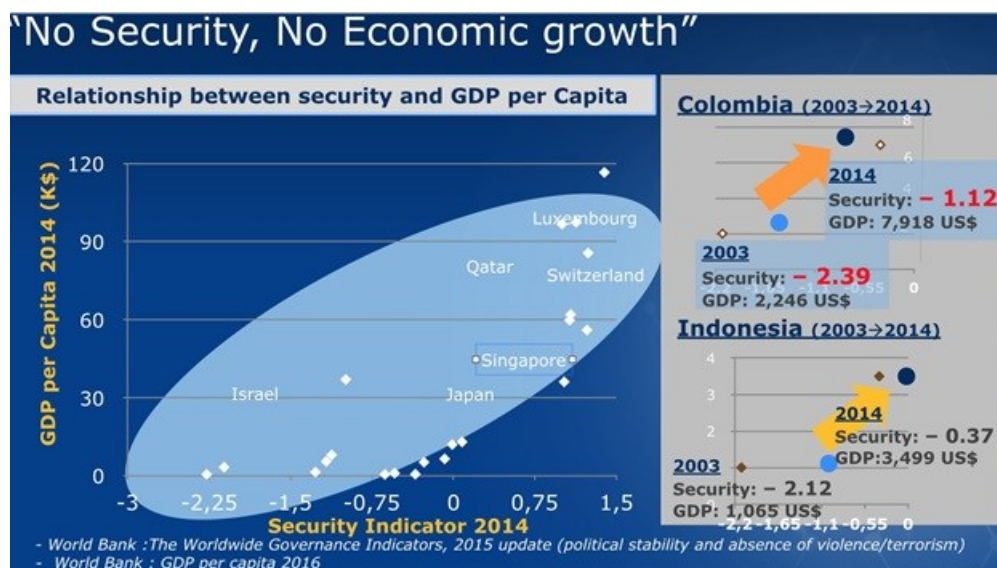
Kurosaki took the stage after Coetzee with his presentation titled 'NEC and XON will make Africa smarter and safer'.

No security, no economic growth

He elaborated on the cybersecurity threat challenges in sub-Saharan Africa and says that if there is no security, there is no economic growth. He cited Colombia and Indonesia as two examples - pointing out that between 2003-2014, as security went up, so did the GDP.



He expanded on NEC's ICT-based social and infrastructure solutions which range from sea to space, and how the company has been doing business in Africa for 53 years - having supplied solutions to 53 out of the 54 countries thus far.



According to Kurosaki, NEC's biometrics solutions - fingerprint and facial recognition identification - is number one globally when you take in to account accuracy, speed, and reliability. It supplied South Africa with the national ID system which uses fingerprint identification, and Nigeria with its state ID system which uses fingerprint identification as well as facial recognition. In fact, the company helps governments around the world to process more than 850 million unique identities (i.e. 10% of the world's population).

Aerobridge CCTV

He explained how useful biometrics solutions are - especially in airports. As an example, he used NEC's Aerobridge (housed in movable gate ramps which connect gates to planes and allows passengers to enter and exit planes indoors).

As the passengers walk to passport control, the AeroBridge's CCTV solution captures 30-40 photos per person, performs accurate face matching, identifies asylum seekers by flight and origin, stores data for extended periods of time, assures 100% detection of all faces, and has achieved 90% + verification rates. So if, for example, there is a terrorist on the plane, security will know immediately, even before the person reaches passport control.

He says that NEC has already supplied this solution to many airports around the world.



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From monitoring the behaviour of persons involved in system operations to protecting data flow and processing, integrated surveillance of real-world and cyber system operations, Kurosaki says NEC's advanced technologies underpins total security.

ABOUT ILSE VAN DEN BERG

Ilse is a freelance journalist and editor with a passion for people & their stories (check out Passing Stories). She is also the editor of Go & Travel, a platform connecting all the stakeholders in the travel & tourism industry. You can check out her work here and here. Contact Ilse through her website here.

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