

PRESS RELEASE

Official Launch of ASPEX - Sofitel Ivoire Abidjan / Thursday, April 30, 2026



ASPEX 2026 : Abidjan officially launches Africa's largest continental space business platform

There are evenings that transcend the boundaries of an event and become defining historical moments. **On Thursday, April 30, 2026, the Sofitel Hôtel Ivoire in Abidjan** did not simply host a launch ceremony ; it became the anchoring point of a continental ambition : the Africa Space Expo (ASPEX 2026), positioned as the leading continental gathering for the African space business ecosystem.

Scheduled from **September 24 to 26, 2026 at the Parc des Expositions d'Abidjan, ASPEX** is jointly spearheaded by the African

Union, through the African Space Agency (AfSA), and the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire. Held under the theme : **"African Space in Action : Structuring, Deciding and Deploying for the Sustainable Socioeconomic Development of the Continent,"** this strategic initiative marks a major milestone in the structuring of Africa's space market and in the continent's ambition to make space science and technologies a concrete driver of sovereignty, innovation, and sustainable economic development.

The official launch ceremony brought together members of the Ivorian Government, representatives of international institutions, diplomats, industry leaders, researchers, investors, and strategic partners from across Africa and beyond.

HIGH-LEVEL PERSONALITIES IN ATTENDANCE

- The Representative of Mr. Téné Birahima OUATTARA, Vice Prime Minister and Minister of Defense;
- Mr. Djibril OUATTARA, Minister of Digital Transition and Digital Innovation;
- Prof. Adama DIAWARA, Minister of Higher Education and Scientific Research ;
- Mr. Souleymane DIARRASSOUBA, Minister of Planning and Development ;
- H.E. Dr. Tidiane OUATTARA, Chairman of the Council of the African Space Agency (AfSA).

Throughout the institutional addresses, one shared conviction clearly emerged : Africa is entering a new phase in its technological, economic, and strategic history.



Building a new generation of African space talent

Prof. Adama DIAWARA, Minister of Higher Education and Scientific Research, first placed human capital at the very heart of this continental ambition. He notably highlighted the structuring role of the Côte d'Ivoire **Space Agency (ASCI)**, which is expected to become a major driver for training, research, and scientific innovation.

The vision put forward is clear : **to foster a true African space generation capable of leading the continent's future scientific, technological, and industrial programs.**

Space technologies already at the heart of everyday life

Extending this vision through a highly practical perspective, **Mr. Djibril OUATTARA, Minister of Digital Transition and Digital Innovation**, emphasized that space technologies are already deeply embedded in the daily lives of African populations : weather forecasting, GPS navigation, mobile services, connectivity, cartography, and territorial data management.

The Minister stressed the strategic importance for African States to master satellite data, particularly in areas such as precision agriculture, food security, climate management, bridging the digital divide, and improving connectivity in rural areas.





An African platform designed for the global space business ecosystem

Addressing the audience during the inaugural ceremony, **H.E. Dr. Tidiane OUATTARA, Chairman of the Council of the African Space Agency (AfSA)**, firmly stated that Africa can no longer remain a spectator of the global transformations driven by space technologies.

For the head of the continent's space institution, ASPEX is intended to become Africa's platform for strategic alliances, investment, innovation, and industrial partnerships in the space sector a space where political ambition, scientific expertise, and economic opportunity converge to generate concrete projects, contracts, and industrial value chains across the continent.

“Space is not a luxury. It is a necessity.”

H.E. Dr. Tidiane
OUATTARA, Chairman of
the Council of AfSA

The objective is unambiguous :

enabling Africa to capture a significant share of an African space market estimated at over

30 billion dollars

at a time when the global space economy already exceeds

600 billion dollars

and continues to experience accelerated growth.



An immersive experience between technology, culture, and diplomacy

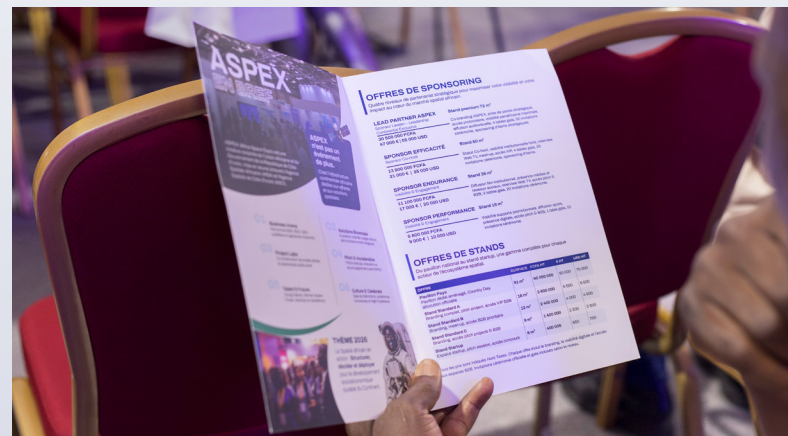
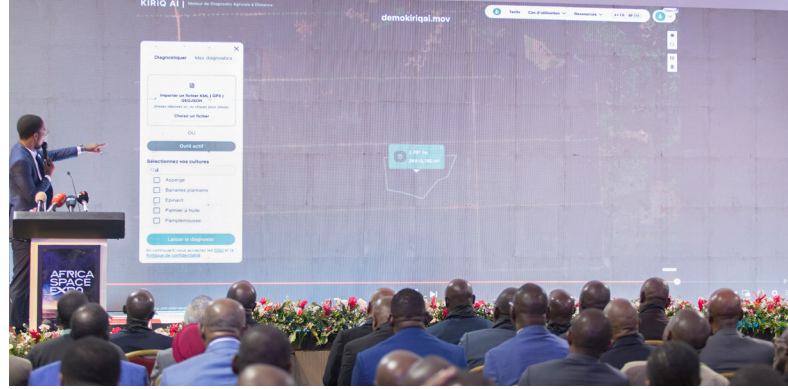
Beyond the institutional addresses, the ceremony offered an immersive journey into the concrete applications of space technologies through several demonstrations focusing notably on:

TECHNOLOGICAL DEMONSTRATIONS

- Satellite image interpretation
- Cartography and urban planning
- Navigation and positioning systems
- Satellite telecommunications
- Astronomy and exploration
- Economic perspectives of the African space market.

A deeply moving artistic interlude, driven by a powerful slam performance accompanied by the rich sounds of the kora and an immersive vocal creation, reminded the audience with both emotion and intensity that space is no longer a distant abstraction, but a strategic tool now inseparable from issues of sovereignty, sustainable development, and the transformation of African nations.

In this spirit, **Côte d'Ivoire Tourism** is supporting the initiative to make ASPEX a true national showcase experience, blending organizational excellence, Ivorian hospitality, culture, gastronomy, and the Ivorian art of living.



Abidjan, the future center of gravity of African space



With the **United States of America and the Kingdom of Morocco** announced as guest countries of honor, ASPEX 2026 is already affirming its international positioning and its ambition to become a major diplomatic, economic, and technological hub.

Built around several strategic formats Solutions Showcase, Business Arena, Project Labs, Pitch & Acceleration, Talent & Future, INSPIREX, and ASPEX Night Experience

the event aims to sustainably structure opportunities within Africa's space sector around a strong signature :

Structure
Decide
Deploy.

A Business Close Meeting Executive,

SCHEDULED FROM

September 28 to 30, 2026,

will extend discussions with the aim of accelerating the implementation of strategic partnerships with the Ivorian Government and international institutional stakeholders.

The appointment is now set.

In September 2026, the eyes of the world will turn toward Abidjan, where Africa will affirm its space ambition and its trajectory for the future.