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ACALAN Congratulates AI Singapore on the Launch of SEA-LION v5, Hailing Open-Source Regional AI as a Blueprint for Linguistic Inclusion

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The African Academy of Languages (ACALAN), the specialized institution of the African Union mandated to promote and empower African languages, extends its warm congratulations to AI Singapore (AISG) on the official release of **SEA-LION v5**, its most expansive open-source multilingual model family to date. Built on leading open foundations, the release represents a milestone for linguistic diversity and digital sovereignty in the Global South. ACALAN particularly applauds the introduction of **SEA-Cast**, **SEA-Gull**, and **SEA-HELM (Audio)** for customizable speech-to-text pipelines, glossary retrieval, and evaluating voice pipelines in regional languages.

Across the Global South, speakers of non-dominant and indigenous languages continue to face structural barriers in the digital economy due to a lack of culturally and linguistically adapted artificial intelligence tools. By prioritizing open-weight models, localized speech-to-text pipelines, and robust evaluation benchmarks tailored to Southeast Asian languages, AI Singapore offers a scalable, community-centered pathway to bridge the digital language divide.

ACALAN views this milestone as a vital blueprint for linguistic inclusion and digital sovereignty – demonstrating how regionally grounded AI research can empower local communities rather than leaving them behind. This approach closely aligns with the African Union's **Agenda 2063** and creates strong opportunities for South-South knowledge sharing and technical collaboration between Asian and African language technology ecosystems.

"AI Singapore's launch of SEA-LION v5 is an inspiring benchmark for what intentional, regionally grounded AI development can achieve. Their focus on open-source speech translation pipelines and culturally adapted evaluation frameworks directly mirrors Africa's

own priorities under the African Union’s Agenda 2063. As we advance the digital empowerment of cross-border African languages, initiatives like SEA-LION v5 reinforce the vital need for South-South collaboration in building inclusive, sovereign language technologies." - **Prof. Dr. Vicensia Shule**, Acting Executive Secretary, African Academy of Languages (ACALAN)

ACALAN remains committed to advancing sovereign, inclusive AI technologies and digital media resources for African languages across the continent.

About ACALAN

The African Academy of Languages (ACALAN) is the African Union's language agency. ACALAN works with partners across the continent and beyond to promote African languages so they can be used alongside international languages in all areas of life.

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