



Strengthening Africa's Geopolitical Agency and Trade Resilience in a Multipolar World

A Joint Conference of the African Economic Conference 2026, Annual Meeting of the Global Network of Chief Economist of Development and Finance Institutions; and the African Network of Chief Economists

Radisson Blue Hotels, Abidjan Cote d'Ivoire

9-11 July 2026

Co-hosted by the African Development Bank Group (AfDB), United Nations Development Program (UNDP) and the OECD

INTRODUCTION

- 1.0 The African Development Bank (AfDB) launched the **African Economic Conference (AEC)** in 2006 as a platform for intellectual exchange, policy dialogue, and collaboration on Africa's development issues and priorities between the policy and academic communities. The theme of the AEC 2026: ***“Strengthening Africa’s Geopolitical Agency and Trade Resilience in a Multi-polar World”***, provides a unique opportunity for frank dialogue on how African can strengthen its own agency in a rapidly evolving global economy.
- 1.1 Twinned with the AEC 2026, the African Development Bank Group will host the annual in-person meeting of the Global Network of Chief Economists of International Development Agencies and Finance Institutions, in partnership with the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) - the Secretariat for the Chief Economists Network. Established in 2020 and coordinated by the OECD, the Network of Chief Economists of International Development Agencies and Finance Institutions convene Chief Economists from bilateral and multilateral development finance institutions for timely dialogue, debate and agenda setting on macro and micro economic policies, methods, research, and data. The Annual Meetings of the Network of Chief Economists serve as a trusted forum for candid, Chatham House Rule-based discussions on emerging global economic challenges, innovative development finance, and evidence-based policy solutions.
- 1.2 In addition, the AfDB plans to launch the African Chief Economists Network (ACE-Network) on the sidelines of the AEC 2025. Convened by the African Development Bank Group, the ACE-Network will include the Chief Economists and/or Vice-President responsible for economic policy management in Africa's Multi-lateral Development Banks, Africa's Development Finance Institutions, and National Development Banks; Chief Economist of the World Bank's Africa region, Chief Economists of UNECA, Chief Economists of UNDP's Regional Bureau for Africa, Chief Economic Advisers of African Heads of States and Governments, Deputy Governors of Africa's Central Banks / National Treasuries responsible for economic development planning and policy; African Union's Commissioner for Economic Development, Tourism, Trade, Industry, Mining (ETTİM), Executive Directors of Leading African Think Tanks on economic research and policy, and Chief Economists of Africa's Regional Economic Communities (the RECs), and a select number of leading African Economists, Deans of Faculties of Economics in leading African Universities, and Economists who have served as former Ministers of Finance, Central Bank Governors or Chief Economists of African Multi-lateral Development Banks in African Countries. Membership shall be by invitation only. By fostering collaboration, peer learning, and joint policy reflection among Africa's Chief Economists, the ACE-Network will help harmonize economic advisory services, promote innovation in policy design, and elevate Africa's collective voice and sovereignty in global economic discourse.
- 1.3 The African Development Bank will also host the graduation ceremony for the second cohort of the Public Finance Management Academy for Africa (PFMA) and the first cohort of the Macroeconomic Policy Management Academy for Africa (MEMA), featuring 435 officials from over 36 countries across the continent to be certified as experts in public finance management and macroeconomic policy management practice. These officials, nominated by their countries, have undertaken an over 18-month structured training program offered by the African Development Bank Group and Partners.

Combined AEC, ACE and GCEN Agenda: Time listed in GMT

<u>09:30–10:30</u>	<i>Plenary Session: Opening Ceremony</i> Master of Ceremony: • Mr. Solomon Mugeru, Director, Communications Department, African Development Bank Opening Video Welcome Address • Mr. Souleymane Diarrassouba, Minister of Planning and Development and Governor for the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire Opening Remarks • Dr. Sidi Ould Tah, President, African Development Bank Group (AfDB) • Mr. Alexander de Croo, Administrator, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) • Mr. Mathias Cormann, Secretary-General of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) • Mr. Claver Gatete, Under Secretary General and Executive Secretary, United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA). Official Opening • H.E. Robert Beugré Mambé, Prime Minister of Côte d'Ivoire Rapporteurs: • AfDB • UNDP
<u>11:00–12:30</u>	<i>Press Conference – Press Room and Health Break</i> <i>Plenary Session: High-Level Dialogue 1: Strengthening Africa's Financial Agency in a Multipolar World – Highlights from AEO 2026</i> Moderator: • Ms. Ahunna Eziakonwa, Assistant Secretary-General, Director Regional Bureau for Africa, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Keynote Speaker: • Prof. Kevin Chika Urama, Chief Economist and Vice President for Economic Governance and Knowledge Management, African Development Bank Group (AfDB) Panellists • Prof. Carlos Lopes, Honorary Professor, Nelson Mandela School of Public Governance, University of Cape Town.

	• Prof. James A. Robinson, University Professor at the Harris School of Public Policy of the University of Chicago and Director, Pearson Institute for the Study and Resolution of Global Conflicts. • Dr. Frannie Léautier, Partner and CEO, SouthBridge Investments Group • Prof. Jeffrey David Sachs, University Professor and Director of the Center for Sustainable Development, Columbia University, United States of America • H.E. Dr. Rania A. Al-Mashat, United Nations Under-Secretary-General and Executive Secretary of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA). • Mr. Didier Acoutey, Senior Advisor to the President for the Private Sector, African Development Bank Group (AfDB) • Mr. Gilbert Gnany, Chief Economic Advisor to the Prime Minister, Office of the Prime Minister, Republic of Mauritius • Dr. Fasua Tope, Special Adviser to the President on Economic Affairs, Office of the Vice President, Federal Republic of Nigeria • Dr. Kenneth Creamer, Deputy Chairperson of the Presidential Economic Advisory Council (PEAC), Presidency of South Africa, Republic of South Africa Rapporteurs • AfDB • UNDP
<u>12:30–14:00</u>	<i>Lunch Break</i>
<u>14:00–15:30</u>	<i>Plenary Session: High-Level Dialogue 2: Harnessing the Trade, Investment and Economic Productivity Nexus in a Fragmented World</i> • Moderator: Dr. Joy Kategekwa, Director, Regional Integration Coordination Office, African Development Bank Group (AfDB) Keynote Speaker: • Dr. Ngozi Okonjo-Iwuala, Director General, World Trade Organisation, Geneva, Switzerland Panellists • Dr. Indermit Gill, Chief Economist and Senior Vice President for Development Economics, World Bank Group. • H.E. Wamkele Mene, Secretary General of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) • Dr. Yemi Kale, Group Chief Economist & MD, Research, African Export-Import Bank (Afreximbank) • Ms. Anastasia Nesvetailova, Head of the Macroeconomic and Development Policies Branch, UN Trade and Development (UNCTAD)

	• H.E Chileshe Kapwepwe, Secretary General, Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) • Mrs. Damtien L. Tchintchibidja, Vice President, Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Commission • Dr. Thomas Melonio, Chief Economist and Executive Director of Innovation, Strategy and Research, Agence Française de Développement (AFD). • Melanie Raymond, Acting Chief Economist, Global Affairs Canada. • Dr. Makrelov Konstantin, Chief Economist and Head of the Economic Research Department, South African Reserve Bank, Republic of South Africa Rapporteurs • AfDB • UNDP
<u>15:30–16:00</u>	<i>Coffee Break</i>
<u>16:00–17:30</u>	<i>Plenary Session: High-Level Dialogue 3: Deepening Domestic Capital Markets in Africa</i> Moderator: • Dr. Raymond Gilpin, Chief Economist & Head, Strategy, United Nations Development Programme - Regional Bureau for Africa Panellists: • Mr. Edoh Kossi Amenounve, CEO BRVM – Regional Stock Exchange West Africa • Ms. Oulimata Ndiaye Diasse, Managing Director, UMOA-Titres (WAEMU Regional Government Securities Agency) • Mr. Stanislas Zeze, CEO Bloomfield Investment (CI) • Mr. Pierre Célestin Rwabukumba, CEO, Rwanda Stock Exchange • Dr. Corneille Karekezi, CEO, African Reinsurance Corporation (Africa Re) • Prof. Dennis Novy, Chief Economist, United Kingdom Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO) • Dr. Hannan Morsy, Deputy Executive Secretary and Chief Economist, United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) • Dr. Zeph Nhleko, Chief Economist and General Executive: Strategy and Sustainability Development Bank of Southern Africa (DBSA), Republic of South Africa • Prof. Augustus Nuwagaba, Deputy Governor, Bank of Uganda, Republic of Uganda • Mr. Max Wengawenga, Economic Advisor to the President, Office of the President, Republic of Malawi

	Rapporteur: • AfDB • UNDP
<u>18:30–20:00</u>	Dinner – Hosted by the African Development Bank Group

AFRICAN ECONOMIC CONFERENCE 2026

Day 2

10 July 2026

<u>8:30–09:00</u>	<i>Recap on Day 1</i> Moderator: Dr. Eric Ogunleye , Director, AfDB
<u>9:00–10:00</u>	<i>Plenary Session: High-Level Dialogue 4: Harnessing Africa's Human Capital for Inclusive Development: The Role of African Youths and the Diaspora</i> Moderator: • Mrs. Mavis Owusu-Gyamfi, President and CEO of the African Center for Economic Transformation (ACET) Panellists: • Mr. Bening Ahmed Wiisichong, Secretary General of the Pan-African Youth Union Organisation (PYU). • Mr. Ben Aziz Konate, President, Côte d'Ivoire Federation of Young Entrepreneurs. • Ms. Almaz Negash, Founder and Executive Director, African Diaspora Network (ADN) • Ms. Namatai Kwekweza, Regional Director, Welead Africa • H.E. Dr. Erieka Bennett, Founder and Head of Mission of the (AU) African Diaspora Forum • Tetsuya Harada, Chief Representative for Europe and Head of France office of Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), Japan) • Ms. Blerta Cela, Resident Representative, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Cote d'Ivoire • H.E. Mrs. Francisca Tatchouop Belobe, Commissioner ETTIM, African Union Commission (AUC) • Dr. Hassan Hosow, Head of the National Economic Council and Presidential Economic Advisor, Office of the President, Federal Republic of Somalia

	• Dr. Ali Yassin Sheikh Ali, Deputy Governor, Central Bank of Somalia (CBS), Federal Republic of Somalia Rapporteurs : • AfDB • UNDP	
<u>10:00–12:30</u>	<i>Parallel Session: Closed meeting of the Global Network of Chief Economists of Development and Finance Institutions (restricted session)</i> • Program to be provided by OECD	<i>Parallel Session: AEC Young Professional Research Presentation</i> Moderator: Dr. Anthomy Simpasa, AfDB Presentation: TBC • Paper 1 ○ Discussant 1 • Paper 2 ○ Discussant 2 • Paper 3 ○ Discussant 3 • Paper 4 ○ Discussant 4 • Q&A Rapporteurs: • AfDB • UNDP
<u>12:30–14:00</u>	<i>Lunch Break</i>	
<u>14:00–15:30</u>	<i>Parallel Session: Closed meeting of the Global Network of Chief Economists of Development and Finance Institutions (restricted session)</i> Program to be provided by OECD	<i>Parallel Session: AEC Young Professional Research Presentation</i> Moderator: El Hadji, UNDP • Presentation: TBC • Paper 5 ○ Discussant 5 • Paper 6 ○ Discussant 6 • Paper 7 ○ Discussant 7 • Paper 8 ○ Discussant 8 • Paper 9

		○ Discussant 9 • Q&A Rapporteurs • AfDB • UNDP
<u>15:30 – 16:00</u>	<i>Health Break – Tea Coffee</i>	
<u>16:00–17:30</u>	<i>Plenary High-Level Dialogue 5: Global Uncertainty, Macroeconomic Stability and Development Financing in Africa</i> Moderator: Pierre Nguimkeu, Director - Africa Growth Initiative, Brookings Institution, USA Round Table Discussion: • Prof. Albert Park, Chief Economist, Asian Development Bank (ADB) • Dr. Areef Suleman, Group Chief Economist, Islamic Development Banks (IsDB) • Ms. Rita Babihuga-Nsanze, Director & Chief Economist and Head of Research and Strategy, Africa Finance Corporation (AFC) • Prof. Kevin Urama, Chief Economist and Vice President for Economic Governance and Knowledge Management, African Development Bank Group (AfDB) • Dr. Raymond Gilpin, Chief Economist & Head, Strategy, United Nations Development Programme - Regional Bureau for Africa • Ms. Soeli Santos, Deputy Governor, Central Bank of Cabo Verde (BCV), Republic of Cabo Verde • Mr. Cedrick Montetcho, Chief Business Development, Arab Bank for Economic Development in Africa (BADEA) • Dr. Arif Mamun, Acting Chief Economist, Millennium Challenge Corporation, United States of America • Dr. Francis Chipimo, Deputy Governor, Operations, Bank of Zambia, Republic of Zambia • Mr. Hien Sansan, Director General of the Economy, Ministry of Economy, Planning and Development, Côte d'Ivoire. Rapporteurs • AfDB • UNDP	
<u>19:00-21:00</u>	<i>Networking Event</i>	

AFRICAN ECONOMIC CONFERENCE 2026

Day 3

11 July 2026

08:30–10:00	<i>Closed meeting of the African Network of Chief Economists of Development and finance institutions (restricted session)</i> Moderator: Prof. Kevin Chika Urama, Chief Economist and Vice President for Economic Governance and Knowledge Management, African Development Bank Group (AfDB). • Dr. Zeph Nhleko, Chief Economist and General Executive: Strategy and Sustainability, Development Bank of Southern Africa (DBSA), Republic of South Africa • Dr. Chukwuka Onyekwena, Executive Director, Centre for the Study of the Economies of Africa (CSEA), Federal Republic of Nigeria • Dr. Mavis Owusu-Gyamfi, President and Chief Executive Officer, African Center for Economic Transformation (ACET), Republic of Ghana • Ms. Judith NABAASA, Acting Chief Economist, Government of Rwanda, Republic of Rwanda • Dr. Hassan Hosow, Head of the National Economic Council and Presidential Economic Advisor, Office of the President, Federal Republic of Somalia	Round Table Discussion on the Impacts of the Middle East Crisis on African Economies. • Moderator: H.E. Mrs. Francisca Tatchouop Belobe, Commissioner ETTIM, African Union Commission (AUC) Panellists: • Dr. Hanan Morsy, Deputy Executive Secretary & Chief Economist, United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) • Dr. Raymond Gilpin, Chief Economist & Head, Strategy, United Nations Development Programme - Regional Bureau for Africa • Mr. Benard Paul Mono, Acting Director General, East African Development Bank (EADB) • Dr. Yemi Kale, Group Chief Economist & MD, Research, African Export-Import Bank (Afreximbank) • Dr. Zeph Nhleko, Chief Economist & GE: Strategy & Sustainability, Development Bank of Southern Africa (DBSA) • Dr. Rita Babihuga-Nsanze, Director & Chief Economist and Head of Research and Strategy, Africa Finance Corporation (AFC)
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	• Mr. Patricio Neto, Director of Cabinet for Economic Studies and Foreign Relations, Ministry of Finance, Republic of Angola • Dr. Bernie Zaaruka, Economic Advisor to the Minister of Finance, Ministry of Finance, Republic of Namibia • Mr. Gilbert Gnany, Chief Economic Advisor to the Prime Minister, Office of the Prime Minister, Republic of Mauritius • Mr. Max Wengawenga, Economic Advisor to the President, Office of the President, Republic of Malawi • Dr. Fasua Tope, Special Adviser to the President on Economic Affairs, Office of the Vice President, Federal Republic of Nigeria • Mr. Gilbert Poumangue, Economic Advisor to the Prime Minister, Office of the Prime Minister, Central African Republic • Mr. Hien Sansan, Director General of Economy, Ministry of Economy, Planning and Development, Republic of Côte d'Ivoire • Dr. Kenneth Creamer, Deputy Chairperson of the Presidential Economic Advisory Council (PEAC), Presidency of South Africa, Republic of South Africa • Dr. Ali Yassin Sheikh Ali, Deputy Governor, Central Bank of Somalia (CBS), Federal Republic of Somalia • Mr. Thierry Kalisa Mihigo, Chief Economist and Senior	• Mr. Alain Tchibozo, Chief Economist, West African Development Bank (BOAD) • Mr. MacDonald S. GOANUE, Director of Research and Strategic Planning ECOWAS Bank for Investment and Development (EBID) • Dr. Andrew Dabalen, Chief Economist, Africa Region, World Bank Group • Dr. Roberta Gatti, Chief Economist, Middle East, North Africa, Afghanistan & Pakistan (MENAAP), World Bank Group • Dr. Areef Suleman, Group Chief Economist, Islamic Development Banks (IsDB) • Ms. Blerta Cela, Resident Representative, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Cote d'Ivoire • Dr. Marcellin Ndong Ntah, Lead Economist for West Africa, African Development Bank Group (AfDB). Rapporteurs: AfDB UNDP
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	Technical Advisor, National Bank of Rwanda (BNR), Republic of Rwanda • Dr. Francis Chipimo, Deputy Governor, Operations, Bank of Zambia, Republic of Zambia • Mr. Yakubu Kassim, Managing Partner, Verbena Financial Services and Advisory Limited, Federal Republic of Nigeria • Dr. Makrelov Konstantin, Chief Economist and Head of the Economic Research Department, South African Reserve Bank, Republic of South Africa • Dr. Zalk Nimrod, Chief Research Officer: Climate and Economic Development, Nelson Mandela School of Public Governance, University of Cape Town, Republic of South Africa • Prof. Augustus Nuwagaba, Deputy Governor, Bank of Uganda, Republic of Uganda • Ms. Soeli Santos, Deputy Governor, Central Bank of Cabo Verde (BCV), Republic of Cabo Verde	
<u>10:00–10:30</u>	<i>Plenary Session: Launch of Africa Chief Economists Network (ACE- Network)</i> Moderator: Prof. Kevin Chika Urama, Chief Economist and Vice President for Economic Governance and Knowledge Management, African Development Bank Group (AfDB) Speakers: • Dr. Sidi Ould Tah, President, African Development Bank Group (AfDB) • Ms. Ahunna Eziakonwa, Assistant Secretary-General, Director Regional Bureau for Africa, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) • Mr. Claver Gatete, Under Secretary General and Executive Secretary, United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) Rapporteurs: • AfDB • UNDP	

<u>10:30–11:00</u>	<i>Health Break</i>
<u>11:00–13:00</u>	<i>Closing Ceremony by Heads of AEC, GCN and ACEN Partner Institutions</i> Moderator: Dr. Raymon Gilpin, Chief Economist & Head, Strategy, United Nations Development Programme - Regional Bureau for Africa Speakers: • Dr. Sidi Ould Tah, President, African Development Bank Group (AfDB) • Mr. Alexander de Croo, Administrator, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) • Mr. Mathias Cormann, Secretary-General of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) • Mr. Claver Gatete, Under Secretary General and Executive Secretary, United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) Rapporteurs: • AfDB • UNDP
<u>13:00–14:00</u>	<i>Lunch Break</i>
<u>14:00 – 18:00</u>	<i>PFMA Graduation (Program to be provided)</i> Moderator: Dr. Eric Ogunleye, Director, African development Institute, AfDB
<u>19:00 – 21:00</u>	<i>Final Closing Dinner – Hosted by the African Development Bank Group & UNDP</i>