AEC
AFRICAN
ECONOMIC
CONFERENCE
CONFÉRENCE ÉCONOMIQUE AFRICAINE

AFRICAN ECONOMIC CONFERENCE 2026

10-12 July 2026
Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire.

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

#2026AEC

AGENDA

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

INTRODUCTION

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 Africa can strengthen its own agency in a rapidly evolving global economy.

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 convenes 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.

In addition, the AfDB plans to launch the African Chief Economists Network (ACE-Network) on the sidelines of the AEC 2026. 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 State and Government, 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 (ETTIM), 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.

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 AfDB and Partners (see Annex 2).

PRE - AFRICAN ECONOMIC CONFERENCE 2026 TECHNICAL MEETINGS

10 July 2026

09:00–10:00	**Technical Session: High-Level Dialogue 1: Harnessing Africa's Human Capital for Inclusive Development: The Role of African Youths and the Diaspora** **Venue: Auditorium** **Moderator:** • **Dr. 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 CEO, African Diaspora Network (ADN) • **Ms. Namatai Kwekweza,** Regional Director, Welead Africa	
10:00–10:30	Health Break – Tea / Coffee Outside Auditorium	
10:30–13:00	**Parallel Session: Closed meeting of the Global Network of Chief Economists of Development and Finance Institutions (restricted session)** **Venue: SMCC Room 02E01-02-03** **Detailed Program provided in Annex 1.** • **Dr. Melanie Raymond**, Chief Economist, Global Affairs Canada (GAC) • **Dr. Alexander Plekhanov**, Director, Transition Impact and Global Economics, European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD)	***Parallel Session: Technical Research Presentation by Young Professional*** **Venue: Auditorium** **Moderator: Dr. Eugene Bempong Nyantakyi**, Division Manager, Macroeconomics Policy, Forecasting and Research Department, African Development Bank Group (AfDB) **Presentation:** **Paper 1**: Building Macroeconomic Resilience in CEMAC: Strategic Policy Responses to Geopolitical Uncertainty in a Multipolar World, by **Dr. Arnold Joselyn Foko,** Researcher and Associate Researcher, Laboratoire de Recherche en Economie

	• **Dr. Barbara Marchitto**, Head of Country and Financial Sector, European Investment Bank (EIB) • **Dr. Christoph Weiss**, Principal Advisor, European Investment Bank (EIB) • **Mr. Cheikh Ahmed Diop**, Lead Economist, Islamic Development Bank (IsDB) • **Mr. Wolfgang Krieger**, Economist, DEG – German Investment and Development Company • **Dr. Areef Suleman**, Group Chief Economist, Islamic Development Bank (IsDB) • **Dr. Tetsuya Harada**, Chief Representative for Europe and Head of France Office, Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) • **Mr. Alexis Rwabizambuga**, Senior Advisor, Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (Norad) • **Ms. Maren Elise Bachke**, Policy Director, Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs • **Ms. Eleanor Carey**, Policy Analyst, Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) • **Dr. Falilou Fall**, Deputy Head of Division, Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Economics Department • **Ms. Ida McDonnell**, Head of Development Research, Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Development Co-operation Directorate • **Ms. Amelia Pape**, Advisor, Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), Office of the Chair of the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) • **H.E. Mr. Carsten Staur**, Chair of the Development Assistance Committee (DAC), Organisation for Economic	Appliquée, University of Dschang, CEREG, University of Yaoundé II *Discussant:* **Ms. Djimrangar Larebeye Maryline**, Student-Researcher, University of Ebolowa, Cameroon **Paper 2 :** Effets des politiques macroprudentielles sur la stabilité financière dans les pays en développement : la qualité des institutions est-elle importante ? By **Mr. Kora Soura,** PhD Student in Economics, Université Thomas Sankara, Burkina Faso *Discussant:* **Mr. Valentin Sawadogo,** PhD Student in Economics, Université Thomas Sankara, Burkina Faso **Paper 3:** Economic Resilience in Africa: The role of Women's Empowerment, by **Ms. Djimrangar Larebeye Maryline,** Student-Researcher, University of Ebolowa, Cameroon *Discussant:* **Dr. Linguere M. Mbaye**, Division Manager, Country Economics Department, African Development Bank Group (AfDB) **Paper 4:** Linking Access to Energy and the Informal Economy: Insights from African Countries, by **Dr. Hervé Nenghem Takam,** Postdoctoral Research Fellow, University of Dschang, Cameroon *Discussant:* **Dr. Isaac Ketu,** Postdoctoral Research Fellow, African Climate and Development Initiative, University of Cape Town, South Africa **Paper 5:** Productive Capacity and Regional Value Chains of the Automotive Sector in Southern Africa, by **Dr. Sodiq Arogundade,** Research Fellow, School of Economics, University of Johannesburg, South Africa *Discussant*: **Dr. Eugene Bempong Nyantakyi**, Division Manager, Macroeconomics Policy, Forecasting and Research Department, African Development Bank Group (AfDB) **Paper 6:** FinTech Development and Financial Stability in Sub-Saharan Africa: Nonlinear Impacts of Capital Flight and Remittances, by

	Co-operation and Development (OECD) • **Dr. Hanan Morsy**, Deputy Executive Secretary and Chief Economist, United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) • **Ms. Pilar Garrido**, Director, Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Development Co-operation Directorate • **Dr. Thomas Melonio**, Chief Economist, Agence Française de Développement (AFD) • **Prof. Dennis Novy**, Chief Economist, United Kingdom Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) • **Mr. Alexis Raichoudhury**, Chief of Staff and Head of Strategic Projects and Capability, United Kingdom Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) • **Dr. Arif Mamun**, Chief Economist, Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC) • **Prof. Kevin Chika Urama**, Vice President and Chief Economist, African Development Bank Group (AfDB)	**Dr. Aurelien Kamdem Yeyouomo,** Research Fellow, Geneva Graduate Institute *Discussants:* **Dr. Arnold Joselyn Foko,** Researcher and Associate Researcher, Laboratoire de Recherche en Economie Appliquée, University of Dschang, CEREG, University of Yaoundé II **Q&A**
13:00–14:00	Lunch Break - CCIA Restaurant	
14:00–15:30	**Parallel Session: Closed meeting of the Global Network of Chief Economists of Development and Finance Institutions (restricted session)** **Venue: SMCC Room 02E01-02-03** **Detailed Program provided in Annex 1.** • **Dr. Melanie Raymond**, Chief Economist, Global Affairs Canada (GAC)	***Technical Research Presentation by Young Professional*** **Venue: Auditorium** **Moderator: Dr. El Hadji Fall,** Strategic Advisor, Regional Bureau for Africa, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) **Paper 7 :** Effets de la qualité des institutions sur la transformation structurelle en Afrique subsaharienne : le rôle du capital humain, by **Mr. Valentin Sawadogo,** PhD Student in

	• **Dr. Alexander Plekhanov**, Director, Transition Impact and Global Economics, European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) • **Dr. Barbara Marchitto**, Head of Country and Financial Sector, European Investment Bank (EIB) • **Dr. Christoph Weiss**, Principal Advisor, European Investment Bank (EIB) • **Mr. Cheikh Ahmed Diop**, Lead Economist, Islamic Development Bank (IsDB) • **Mr. Wolfgang Krieger**, Economist, DEG – German Investment and Development Company • **Dr. Areef Suleman**, Group Chief Economist, Islamic Development Bank (IsDB) • **Dr. Tetsuya Harada**, Chief Representative for Europe and Head of France Office, Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) • **Mr. Alexis Rwabizambuga**, Senior Advisor, Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (Norad) • **Ms. Maren Elise Bachke**, Policy Director, Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs • **Ms. Eleanor Carey**, Policy Analyst, Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) • **Dr. Falilou Fall**, Deputy Head of Division, Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Economics Department • **Ms. Ida McDonnell**, Head of Development Research, Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Development Co-operation Directorate • **Ms. Amelia Pape**, Advisor, Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), Office of the Chair of the	Economics, Université Thomas Sankara, Burkina Faso *Discussant:* **Ms. Carina Sugden**, Lead Governance Officer, Governance and Economic Reforms Department, African Development Bank Group (AfDB) **Paper 8:** Unlocking digital innovation: E-government and its relevance for African natural resource management, by **Dr**. **Isaac Ketu,** Postdoctoral Research Fellow, African Climate and Development Initiative, University of Cape Town, South Africa *Discussant:* **Dr. Seedwell Hove**, Division Manager, African Development Institute, African Development Bank Group (AfDB) **Paper 9:** Foreign Aid and Structural Change, by **Ass. Prof. Calum Hamilton,** University of Wageningen and University of Groningen, Netherlands *Discussant:* **Dr. Paul Mpuga**, Division Manager, Macroeconomic Policy Forecasting and Research Department, African Development Bank Group (AfDB) **Paper 10:** Institutionally Adjusted Debt Sustainability and Economic Sovereignty in a Multipolar Africa: Evidence from a Hybrid Yield Curve Framework, by **Dr. Florent Kanga Gbongue,** Lecturer-Researcher in Economics, Université Félix Houphouët-Boigny, Côte d'Ivoire *Discussants:* **Mr. Kora Soura,** PhD Student in Economics, Université Thomas Sankara, Burkina Faso **Q&A**

	Development Assistance Committee (DAC) • **H.E. Mr. Carsten Staur**, Chair of the Development Assistance Committee (DAC), Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) • **Dr. Hanan Morsy**, Deputy Executive Secretary and Chief Economist, United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) • **Ms. Pilar Garrido**, Director, Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Development Co-operation Directorate • **Dr. Thomas Melonio**, Chief Economist, Agence Française de Développement (AFD) • **Prof. Dennis Novy**, Chief Economist, United Kingdom Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) • **Mr. Alexis Raichoudhury**, Chief of Staff and Head of Strategic Projects and Capability, United Kingdom Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) • **Dr. Arif Mamun**, Chief Economist, Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC) • **Prof. Kevin Chika Urama**, Vice President and Chief Economist, African Development Bank Group (AfDB)	
15:30 – 16:00	*Health Break – Tea / Coffee*	
16:00–17:30	**Technical Session 2: High-Level Dialogue: Global Uncertainty, Macroeconomic Stability and Development Financing in Africa** **Venue: Auditorium** **Moderator:** • **Dr. Raymond Gilpin,** Chief Economist & Head of Strategy, Research and Analysis Team, Regional Bureau for Africa, United Nations Development Programme	

	Conversation Starter: • **H.E. Mr. Carsten Staur,** Chair of the Development Assistance Committee (DAC), Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) **Round Table Discussion:** • **Dr. Areef Suleman,** Group Chief Economist, Islamic Development Bank (IsDB) • **Mr. Thomas Claes,** Representative of the Friedrich-Ebert-Foundation (FES) in Côte d'Ivoire • **Dr. Arif Mamun,** Chief Economist, Millennium Challenge Corporation, United States of America • **Mr. Hien Sansan,** Director General of the Economy, Ministry of Economy, Planning and Development, Côte d'Ivoire • **Dr. Babatunde Samson Omotosho,** Statistics Department, African Development Bank Group (AfDB)
19:00–21:00	Welcome Reception/Cocktail: Hosted by the AfDB and UNDP: CCIA Restaurant

AFRICAN ECONOMIC CONFERENCE 2026 MAIN PROGRAM

11 July 2026

09:00–10:00	**Plenary Session: Opening Ceremony** **Venue: Auditorium** **Master of Ceremony:** • **Mr. Solomon Mugera,** Director, Communication and External Relations Department, African Development Bank Group **Opening Video** **Welcome Remarks:** • **Dr. Sidi Ould Tah**, President, African Development Bank Group (AfDB) **Statements:** • **Ms. Ahunna Eziakonwa,** Assistant Secretary-General, Director Regional Bureau for Africa, 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), to be represented by **Dr. Hanan Morsy,** Deputy Executive Secretary and Chief Economist, United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) • **Ms. María del Pilar Garrido Gonzalo,** Director for Development Co-operation, OECD • **Mr. Souleymane Diarrassouba,** Minister of Planning and Development and AfDB Governor for the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire **Opening Address:** • **The Government of the Republic of Côte d'Ivoir**e, to be represented by **Mr. Souleymane Diarrassouba,** Minister of Planning and Development and AfDB Governor for the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire
10:00 – 10:30	Press Conference – Press Room and Health Break Venue: CCIA 01E03 Health Break – Tea / Coffee Outside Auditorium
10:30–12:00	**Plenary Session: High-Level Dialogue 1: Strengthening Africa's Financial Agency in a Multipolar World** **Venue: Auditorium** **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) **Conversation Starter:** • **Prof. Jeffrey David Sachs,** University Professor and Director of the Center for Sustainable Development, Columbia University, United States of America **Panellists:** • **Dr. Fasua Tope**, Special Adviser to the President on Economic Affairs, Office of the Vice President, Federal Republic of Nigeria • **Dr. Kenneth Creamer,** Member of the Presidential Economic Advisory Council (PEAC), Presidency of South Africa, Republic of South Africa • **Mr. Didier Acouetey,** Senior Advisor to the President for the Private Sector, African Development Bank Group (AfDB) • **Dr. Mavis Owusu-Gyamfi**, President and Chief Executive Officer, African Center for Economic Transformation (ACET), Republic of Ghana

12:00–13:30	**Plenary Session: High-Level Dialogue 2: Harnessing the Trade, Investment and Economic Productivity Nexus in a Fragmented World** **Venue: Auditorium** **Moderator:** • **Dr. Joy Kategekwa**, Director, Regional Integration Coordination Office, African Development Bank Group (AfDB) **Keynote Speaker:** • **Prof. Dennis Novy**, Chief Economist, United Kingdom Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO) **Panellists:** • **Dr. Hassan Mahmud,** Chief Economist, Dangote Group, Nigeria • **Dr. Tetsuya Harada**, Chief Representative for Europe and Head of France office of Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), Japan • **Dr. Melanie Raymond**, Chief Economist, Global Affairs Canada • **Dr. Konstantin Makrelov**, Chief Economist and Head of the Economic Research Department, South African Reserve Bank, Republic of South Africa • **Ms. Anastasia Nesvetailova**, Head of the Macroeconomic and Development Policies Branch, UN Trade and Development (UNCTAD)
13:30–14:30	Lunch Break – CCIA Restaurant
14:30–15:30	**Plenary Session: High-Level Dialogue 3: Deepening Domestic Capital Markets in Africa** **Venue: Auditorium** **Moderator:** • **Dr. El Hadji Fall,** Strategic Advisor, Regional Bureau for Africa, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) **Panellists:** • **Dr Marius Achi,** Director, Bloomfield Intelligence (CI) • **Dr. Thomas Melonio,** Chief Economist and Executive Director of Innovation, Strategy and Research, Agence Française de Développement (AFD) • **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. Philippe Brizoua,** Director of Market Development and Project Management BRVM – Regional Stock Exchange (West Africa)

15:30–16:00	Health Break – Tea / Coffee Outside Auditorium
16:00-17:00	***Round Table Discussion on the Impacts of the Middle East Crisis on African Economies.*** **Venue: CCIA 02S06 - 07 - 08** **Moderator:** • **Dr. Raymond Gilpin,** Chief Economist & Head of Strategy, Research and Analysis Team, Regional Bureau for Africa, United Nations Development Programme **Panellists:** • **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. Areef Suleman,** Group Chief Economist, Islamic Development Bank (IsDB) • **Ms. Blerta Cela,** Resident Representative, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Côte d'Ivoire • **Dr. Marcellin Ndong Ntah,** Lead Economist for West Africa, African Development Bank Group (AfDB) • **Dr. Hassan Hosow**, Chairman of the National Economic Council and Chief Economic Advisor to the President, Federal Republic of Somalia • **Dr. Bello, Abdoul Salam,** Lead-Advisor, Policy and Operations, African Development Bank Group.
17:00-18:30	**Closed meeting of the African Network of Chief Economists of Development and Finance institutions (restricted session)** • **Venue: SMCC Room 02E01-02-03** • **Moderator: Prof. Kevin Chika Urama,** Chief Economist and Vice President for Economic Governance and Knowledge Management, African Development Bank Group (AfDB) • **Mr. Lehlomela Mohapi**, Deputy Governor, Central Bank of Lesotho, Kingdom of Lesotho • **Prof. Eric Osei-Assibey,** Chief Economist, Development Bank Ghana, Republic of Ghana • **Dr. Hassan Mahmud,** Chief Economist, Dangote Group, Nigeria • **Dr. Zeph Nhleko**, Chief Economist and General Executive, Strategy and Sustainability, Development Bank of Southern Africa (DBSA), Republic of South Africa • **Dr. Konstantin Makrelov**, Chief Economist and Head of the Economic Research Department, South African Reserve Bank, Republic of South Africa • **Dr. Chukwuka Onyekwena**, Executive Director, Centre for the Study of the Economies of Africa (CSEA), Federal Republic of Nigeria

	• **Prof. Ahmadou Aly Mbaye,** Executive Director, Institut Africain de Développement Durable (IADD), Republic of Senegal • **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**, Chairman of the National Economic Council and Chief Economic Advisor to the President, Federal Republic of Somalia • **Dr. Bernie Zaaruka**, Economic Advisor to the Minister of Finance, Ministry of Finance, Republic of Namibia • **Dr. Fasua Tope**, Special Adviser to the President on Economic Affairs, Office of the Vice President, Federal Republic of Nigeria • **Mr. Gilbert Poumangue**, Minister-Counsellor in Charge of Relations with Development Finance Institutions, Office of the President, Central African Republic • **Mr. Hien Sansan**, Director General of Economy, Ministry of Economy, Planning and Development, Republic of Côte d'Ivoire • **Dr. Abbi Kedir,** Acting Executive Director, African Economic Research Consortium (AERC) • **Prof. Bartholomew Armah,** Chief Economist, African Union Development Agency – New Partnership for Africa's Development (AUDA-NEPAD), South Africa • **Mr. Welcome Akouala,** Special Adviser to the Prime Minister for Economic and Financial Affairs and Relations with International Financial Institutions, Republic of Congo • **Mr. Anumu Edem Ketoglo,** Economic Advisor to the President of the Council of the Republic, Presidency of the Council of the Republic of Togo, Republic of Togo • **H.E. Mr. Rafael Tung Nsue Biligo,** President of the National Council for Economic and Social Development • **Mr. José-Ramsés Esono,** Officer, National Council for Economic and Social Development • **Mr. Yakubu Kassim**, Managing Partner, Verbena Financial Services and Advisory Limited, Federal Republic of Nigeria • **Mr. Alain SIRI,** Executive Director, Centre for the Analysis of Economic and Social Policies (CAPES) • **Mr. Der Rogatien PODA,** Deputy Governor, Central Bank of West African States (BCEAO) • **Mr. Alimamy Bangura,** Chief Economist, Ministry of Finance, Republic of Sierra Leone • **Dr. Andrew Dabalen,** Chief Economist, Africa Region, World Bank Group • **Mr. Patricio Neto**, Director of Cabinet for Economic Studies and Foreign Relations, Ministry of Finance, Republic of Angola • **Dr. Kenneth Creamer**, Member of the Presidential Economic Advisory Council (PEAC), Presidency of South Africa, Republic of South Africa • **Mr. Thierry Kalisa Mihigo**, Chief Economist and Senior Technical Advisor, National Bank of Rwanda (BNR), Republic of Rwanda

	• **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. Jeanine Niyukuri,** Director General of National Planning, Office of the Prime Minister, Republic of Burundi • **Dr. Hervé Assah,** Special Advisor to The President, Head of the Economy, Finance, Presidency of The Republic of Congo, Republic of Congo • **Mr. Touray Sheriff,** Director, Research and Statistics, West African Monetary Institute • **Dr. Pamela Nakamba,** Economic Advisor to the President, Government of the Republic of Zambia • **Prof. Pierre Nguimkeu, Director -** Africa Growth Initiative, Brookings Institution, USA
19:00–21:00	Networking Event – Novotel Hotel

AFRICAN ECONOMIC CONFERENCE 2026 — 12 July 2026

10:00–10:30	***Plenary Session: Launch of African Chief Economists Network (ACE-Network)*** **Venue: Auditorium** **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) • **Mr. Claver Gatete,** Under Secretary General and Executive Secretary, United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), to be represented by, **Dr. Hanan Morsy,** Deputy Executive Secretary and Chief Economist, United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) • **Ms. Ahunna Eziakonwa,** Assistant Secretary-General, Director Regional Bureau for Africa, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)
10:30–11:00	Health Break Outside Auditorium

11:00–12:00	**Closing Ceremony** **Venue: Auditorium** **Master of Ceremony:** • **Mr. Solomon Mugera,** Director, Communication and External Relations Department, African Development Bank Group (AfDB) **Remarks:** • **Ms. Ahunna Eziakonwa,** Assistant Secretary-General, Director Regional Bureau for Africa, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) • **Ms. Ida McDONNELL,** Head of Development Research Unit, Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development **(**OECD) **Closing Statement:** • **Dr. Sidi Ould Tah**, President, African Development Bank Group (AfDB)
12:00 – 14:00	Closing Lunch– Hosted by the African Development Bank Group & UNDP CCIA Restaurant

Annex 1: Draft agenda of the 13th meeting of the Network of Chief Economists of International Development Agencies and Finance Institutions under the theme *"The role of evidence and challenging assumptions: Rethinking International Co-operation for a Resilient Africa".*

13th meeting of the Network of Chief Economists of International Development Agencies and Finance Institutions

The role of evidence and challenging assumptions: Rethinking International Co-operation for a Resilient Africa

Draft Agenda
10 July 2026

Meeting times	***Location:* SMCC Board Room, African Development Bank Headquarters**
10:30 – 10:45	**Welcome** Kevin Urama (AfDB) and Pilar Garrido (OECD) **Introductions** All (Tour de Table in person and online)
10:45 – 12:00	**Technical session 1: Beyond first-best: Why fiscal (subsidy) reforms fail and what makes them stick** *The economic case against regressive subsidies is largely known; the open question is why reforms repeatedly stall or reverse, what distinguishes those that succeed, and how the politics are managed. This session examines the empirical record of subsidy reform from African and comparative experience. It asks whether the binding constraint is political economy rather than economic design – why reforms succeed or fail? It also reviews the evidence on how, and whether, international development co-operation and finance has helped reforms endure, made them more progressive, mitigated the effects on the poorest, and strengthened fiscal sustainability.* **Suggested session lead**: IMF (TBC) **Moderator**: Pilar Garrido, OECD **Discussants to be confirmed**: Kevin Urama (AfDB), Maren Elise Bachke (NORAD), Federico Bonaglia (OECD Development Centre), Albert Park (ADB), Arif Mamun (MCC) **Invited expert:** Christopher Hoy, *McKenzie Research Fellow University of Melbourne/ Invited researcher J-PAL, and Economist, The World Bank.* Presenting: Public Preferences for Economic Reforms Are Shaped More by Design Than Cost **Tour de table**
12:00 – 13:00	**Technical session 2: Debt, Risk Premia and Cost of Capital: Addressing Africa's Capital Constraint** *This session examines the structural factors behind Africa's high cost of capital and constrained access to affordable financing. It asks how much of the cost gaps between*

	Africa, Asia and the OECD is explained by genuine fundamentals - debt dynamics, currency and liquidity risk, institutional and legal quality - and how much by information gaps, rating methodology, and perception. More critically, it asks which interventions have demonstrably moved the cost of capital, and at what cost. The aim is to stress-test the evidence and reach a shared, evidence-based diagnosis that can guide where international co-operation can add value and where it cannot. **Suggested session lead & moderator**: Kevin Urama, AfDB **Discussants to be confirmed**: Alexander Plekhanov (EBRD), Hanan Morsy (UNECA), Thomas Melonio (AFD), Areef Suleman (IsDB) **Invited expert:** Anouar Hassoune, Managing Director, GCR Ratings (TBC) **Tour de table**
13:00 – 14:00	Lunch Break
14:00 – 15:15	**Technical session 3: Trade, economic security, and industrial policy: Does the evidence support the renewed focus?** *This session tests the case that combining economic-security, trade and industrial-policy will accelerate Africa's transformation. Economists have long debated whether industrial policy delivers, and "economic security" risks re-introducing protectionism that lowers welfare. It interrogates the evidence: what African and comparative regional experience shows about what works; the potential gains from regional integration and AfCFTA implementation at a time of geo-economic fragmentation; whether the economic-security framing will serve resilience; and the empirical case for trade and development partnerships, concessional investments, and capacity support for trade facilitation, infrastructure, and policy implementation.* **Suggested session lead & moderator**: Dennis Novy (UK FCDO) **Discussants to be confirmed**: Patrick Ndzana Olomo (AU); Melanie Raymond (Global Affairs Canada), Tetsuya Harada (JICA), Wolfgang Krieger (DEG Invest), Falilou Fall (OECD Economics Directorate) **Tour de table** **Reflections**: Chair of OECD Development Assistance Committee
15:15 – 15:30	**Wrap up:** Pilar Garrido (OECD) & Kevin Urama (AfDB)

Annex 2: PFMA and MEMA Graduation Ceremony Programme, 14 July 2026, CCIA, Abidjan.

PFMA AND MEMA GRADUATION CEREMONY
14 July 2026

08:00 – 12:00	**PFMA and MEMA Graduation** **Moderator:** • **Mr. Solomon Mugera,** Director, Communication and External Relations Department, African Development Bank Group **Welcoming Remarks:** • **Dr. Eric K. Ogunleye**, Director, African Development Institute, African Development Bank Group (AfDB) **Goodwill remarks by institutional partners:** • **United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)** • **World Bank Group** • **International Monetary Fund (IMF)** • **African Tax Administration Forum (ATAF)** • **West African Institute for Financial and Economic Management (WAIFEM)** • **Macroeconomic and Financial Management Institute of Eastern and Southern Africa (MEFMI)** **Keynote Graduation Speech :** • **Prof. Kevin C. Urama,** Chief Economist and Vice President, Economic Governance and Knowledge Management, African Development Bank Group (AfDB) **Certificate Award Ceremony:** Presentation of Certificates to the 2nd Cohort of the PFMA Executive Training Series, and the 1st Cohort of the MEMA Executive Training Series. **Awards to Best Graduands:** • **Prof. Kevin C. Urama,** Chief Economist and Vice President, Economic Governance and Knowledge Management, African Development Bank Group (AfDB) • **Dr. Eric Ogunleye, Director**, African Development Institute, African Development Bank Group (AfDB) **Valedictory Speeches by the PFMA and MEMA Graduates:** Selected Graduands from North, East, Central, South, and West Africa. **Next Steps:** • **Mr. Chidiebere Ibe,** Chief Capacity Development Officer, Policy Management Division, African Development Institute, African Development Bank Group (AfDB)

	Closing Remarks: • **Dr. Seedwell Hove,** Manager, Policy Management Division, African Development Institute, African Development Bank Group (AfDB)
12:00 – 14:00	Closing Lunch