



Leitner Center
for International Law and Justice
AT FORDHAM LAW SCHOOL, NEW YORK CITY



OPEN FOR BUSINESS: THE AfCFTA, AFRICA TRADE AND INNOVATION CONFERENCE

***INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON THE FUTURE OF AFRICAN TRADE AND
THE AfCTA***

16th & 17th May, 2024

**A project of the UPSA Law School, Accra, Ghana in collaboration with the Leitner Center
at Fordham Law School, New York, USA.**

The sponsoring organizations of the *OPEN FOR BUSINESS: THE AfCFTA, AFRICA TRADE AND INNOVATION CONFERENCE* (the “Conference”) invite submissions and participant nominations for a collaborative exchange and discussion at a two-day hybrid conference to take place on May 16 and 17, 2024. The conference working language will be English and will include paper presentations on topics detailed below. It will also include working group discussions with a broad range of stakeholders, including, for example, business leaders, members of the judiciary, and representatives of non-governmental organizations, law reform agencies, policy makers, and other interested persons on topics related to African trade law.

The Conference is principally intended to gather principal actors and thinkers in the field of international trade and the emergent AfCFTA with a focus on generating papers and conclusions that can foster evolutionary pathways for the AfCFTA. More specifically, the conference is, *inter alia*, driven by the following objectives:

1. To provide a critical, neutral and independent platform for discussion of the new trade pact under the AfCFTA and trade in Africa;
2. To undertake a situational review of the adoption and implementation of the AfCFTA since 2021;
3. To provide a nuanced consideration of other variables of trade including the environment; climate change; labor and human rights;
4. To enable a consideration of concrete proposals for early reform to address obstacles to the implementation of the AfCFTA regime; and

5. To serve as an advocacy platform for the AfCFTA and help heighten public and international awareness of the AfCFTA and its nascent evolution.

CALL FOR PAPERS

Papers will be selected for presentation at the Conference by a Steering Committee comprised of members from the sponsoring organization. All proposals should include a project/paper description and the applicant's *curriculum vitae*. Proposals should be in English with project descriptions not to exceed 1000 words. As the publication of selected papers is contemplated, submissions should describe work that has not been previously published elsewhere. The publication is contingent on authors producing a final paper of publishable quality.

Possible topics for consideration:

1. **The AfCFTA: Overview**
2. **Trade in Goods**
3. **Trade in Services**
4. **Trade and IP**
5. **Implementation Issues**
6. **Trade, Environment & Climate Change**
7. **Labor Rights**
8. **Trade & Human Rights**
9. **Banking and Financial Systems and Trade**
10. **Corruption as an Obstacle to Trade**
11. **Agriculture Policy and Subsidies**
12. **Technology, Innovation and Trade**
13. **Free Movement within Africa**
14. **Global Economic and Structural Imbalances and their Impact on Trade**

Submission Deadline is March 15, 2024.

Proposals should be submitted by email to submissions@upsaafricanlawconferences.org.

Papers will be accepted on a rolling basis and within two weeks of submission of their proposal.

CALL FOR NOMINATIONS

The sponsoring organizations invite nominations who may be interested in attending the Conference to participate in the working group discussions and discussion of papers. Persons may self-nominate or nominate others with expertise in the Conference topics.

Nominations should include:

- The title and address of the person or organization nominated.
- An explanation of the reasons for the nomination (500-word limit) including:

- What is the person or organization's role? What is the basis for the person or organization's expertise in this area?
- Why, specifically, do you believe this person or organization should be included in the conference?
- What areas or issues would the person or organization be most interested in discussing?
- Submitter information: Your name, mailing address, phone number, and email address.

Nomination deadline is March 15, 2024. Nominations should be submitted by email to submissions@upsaafricanlawconferences.org.

Nominated persons and organizations who are accepted to participate will be notified on a rolling basis.