

Fifty-seventh session of the Economic Commission for Africa Conference of African Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development



 United Nations
Economic Commission for Africa

I. Overview

The fifty-seventh session of the Economic Commission for Africa will consist of the preparatory meeting of the Committee of Experts of the Conference of African Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, followed by the ministerial segment of the Conference. In addition to considering the statutory matters of the Commission, the Conference serves as one of the premier forums for dialogue and the exchange of views among African ministers responsible for finance, planning and economic development and governors of central banks on issues pertinent to the continent's development agenda.

II. Theme

The theme of the fifty-seventh session of the Commission will be "Advancing the implementation of the Agreement Establishing the African Continental Free Trade Area: proposing transformative strategic actions".

At its fifty-seventh session, the Commission will assess the progress made regarding the implementation of the Agreement since its entry into force in 2019 and the commencement of trading under the rules of the Agreement in January 2021. Participants are expected to examine the institutional frameworks, complementary measures and initiatives that African countries should put in place in order to accelerate the implementation of the Agreement, while also ensuring that trade promotes the continent's drive towards industrialization and diversification.

During the session, the Commission will also assess the socioeconomic, energy-related and climate-related implications of the implementation of the Agreement for African economies and societies and will identify important challenges, opportunities and strategic pathways to be addressed by States Parties in order to fully realize the Agreement's potential.

Seasoned and high-level experts from within and outside Africa will engage on these and related issues, leading to outcomes and decisions that will have transformative implications for the implementation of the Agreement and, by extension, the broader African development agenda.

III. Date and venue

The fifty-seventh session of the Commission will be held in Addis Ababa from Wednesday, 12 March to Tuesday, 18 March 2025.

IV. Format

A. Committee of Experts (12–14 March)

The Committee of Experts will hold a three-day preparatory technical meeting to consider the theme of the session, review the state of economic and social development in Africa and consider progress towards regional integration. The Committee will also consider statutory issues relating to the work of the Commission and make recommendations, as appropriate, for consideration by the African ministers of finance, planning and economic development during the ministerial segment.

B. Side events (15 and 16 March)

On the margins of the Conference, there will be a number of side events devoted to important development issues of relevance to the theme of the session.

C. Ministerial segment (17 and 18 March)

The ministerial segment will include a high-level policy dialogue on the theme of the session, the annual Adebayo Adedeji lecture and round-table discussions on a series of sub-themes. The theme for the 2025 Adedeji lecture, which will be delivered by a leading African entrepreneur, is “The private sector and the accelerated implementation of the Agreement Establishing the African Continental Free Trade Area: what can and should be done differently?”. The ministerial segment is designed to be interactive and thought-provoking. Contributions from seasoned and high-level panellists will be used to guide the discussions, which will be centred on the recent research findings that are summarized in the issues paper.

D. Knowledge fair

The Conference will also include a knowledge fair/expo, which will showcase the work of ECA and that of other United Nations entities in Africa, highlighting impactful success stories and opportunities for future collaboration.

V. Participation

As this is a statutory meeting of the Commission, all members of the Commission are called upon to participate. In addition, the participants may include representatives of other African government bodies, entities

of the United Nations system, regional economic communities, pan-African financial institutions, African academic and research institutions, development partners and other intergovernmental organizations. Invitations will also be extended to partners and stakeholders in the private sector.

VI. Bureau

The Bureau represents the five African subregions. It comprises a Chair, three Vice-Chairs and a Rapporteur. Bureau members are elected at the commencement of the first meeting of each session, normally on the basis of rotation by subregion. The Chair or a Vice-Chair acting as Chair will participate in the session solely in that capacity and not as the representative of the government delegation that is accredited to the Conference.

The Bureau of the fifty-sixth session is as follows:

- Chair: Zimbabwe (Southern Africa)
- First Vice-Chair: Egypt (North Africa)
- Second Vice-Chair: Vacant (Central Africa)
- Third Vice-Chair: Côte d'Ivoire (West Africa)
- Rapporteur: Uganda (East Africa)

The proposed composition of the Bureau to be elected at the fifty-seventh session is as follows:

- Chair: (North Africa)
- First Vice-Chair: (Central Africa)
- Second Vice-Chair: (West Africa)
- Third Vice-Chair: (East Africa)
- Rapporteur: (Southern Africa)