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Celebrating 20 years as Africa's premier
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GTR 20 YEARS AFRICA 2026 CAPE TOWN

6 big topics in 2026



Attendees by sector in 2025



GTR returns to Cape Town on March 12-13 for GTR Africa 2026, celebrating 20 years as the primary annual gathering for Africa's leading companies and their trade financing partners.

Following record-breaking attendance of over 700 delegates in 2025, GTR Africa is firmly established as the premier forum for Africa's trade, supply chain, infrastructure, and commodity finance sectors.

Featuring a highly focused and thought-provoking discussion agenda incorporating unmatched opportunities to network with numerous industry leaders, this flagship event will once again bring the market together to share expertise, build partnerships, and shape the future of African trade.

"Success in business simply relies on connections, what a great platform to unlock massive connection not just in trade but overall business environment! simply amazing!"

K C Somanje, National Bank of Malawi

CTICC 2 (Cape Town International Convention Centre)
Cape Town, South Africa

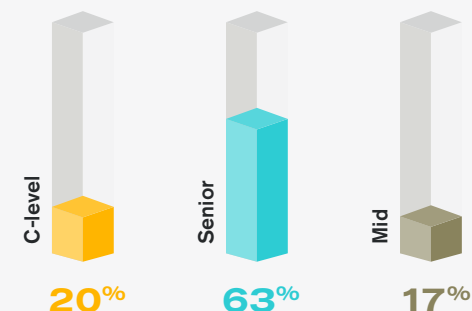
March 12-13, 2026

Vital statistics in 2025

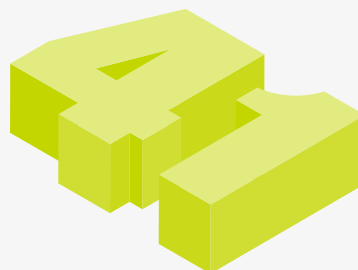


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Job titles represented in 2025



Countries represented in 2025



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Day One: Thursday 12 March Morning Plenary & Stream A

09.00-09.10

Chair's opening remarks

Nastassia Arendse, Business Anchor, South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC)

09.15-09.45

Keynote address: Building Africa's future on foundations of financial sovereignty and institutional strength

Africa's sustainable development depends on mobilising its own capital, deepening financial integration, and building institutions capable of withstanding global shocks. Misperceptions of African risk across foreign financial markets are not born out by global data: Shifting that perception is essential to unlocking Africa's access to capital on equitable terms. This opening address will highlight the role of African institutions in promoting the strategic mobilisation of Africa's capital, and the key initiatives seeking to build financial resilience across the continent.

09.45-10.15

The global CFO perspective: Capitalising on the South-South opportunity

Drawing on two decades of leadership in financial strategy, risk management and capital markets across the GCC, Africa and South Asia, this thought-provoking keynote speech will offer perspectives on some of the key issues impacting companies seeking to uncover emerging trade opportunities in a new socioeconomic landscape. Headline themes will include:

- Assessing the opportunity for transformational South-South trade growth
- Managing risk and building resilience within global supply chains
- Sustainable finance and ESG integration in trade and infrastructure
- Innovative trade & working capital solutions for emerging markets

Riyas Ahmed, Chief Financial Officer, Eram Group

10.15-11.05 Networking break

Stream A: Trade, supply chain & working capital: Building out the toolbox

Chair: Nastassia Arendse, Business Anchor, South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC)

11.05-11.50

Growing pains: Making supply chain finance work for Africa

Supply chain finance (SCF) has the potential to transform the financing of pan-African trade value chains, while the impact of US tariffs has reframed supplier financing as a critical means of sustaining fragile suppliers in sectors such as automotive, and the livelihoods they support. Notwithstanding a range of commercial and regulatory pressures mounting on the SCF sector, banks have been driving growth of the product into existing and new markets, but the question remains: what more can be done to enable SCF to realise its full potential in driving economic growth? This session will review the progress made to date with deployment of SCF solutions, highlight the challenges experienced in expanding into new African markets, and consider how these can be overcome:

- Highlighting barriers to expansion into new African markets, from data privacy regulations to local expertise and risk management
- To what extent is investment in SCF tech key to unlocking the full potential of payables financing? Which benefits and challenges have been experienced by those utilising existing solutions?
- How closely is pricing of unsecured SCF risk aligned with lenders' cost of capital? What are the potential implications for banks and corporates and how can price discovery practices be matured?
- Making it work: Is appropriate capital treatment the primary challenge? What can be done by African and global actors to achieve this? What are the potential benefits to lenders and corporates?

Moderator: Mark Badmus, Head of International Business, Global Trade & Bilateral Finance, Sunbath Global Concepts

Kevin Holmes, Product Development Portfolio Head, Rand Merchant Bank (RMB)

Niron Rampersad, Divisional Executive, Trade, Nedbank

Alex Fenech, Co-Founder & COO, Finverity

Marcelo Moulin, Director, Head of Trade & Working Capital Sales, Middle East & Africa, Citi

11.50-12.30

Sustainable trade and supply chain finance: Moving beyond the price incentive

Sustainable trade and supply chain finance poses a significant opportunity to access deep pools of ESG-focused investment that can play a critical role in boosting trade and economic growth across the continent. South Africa has emerged as a pioneer in this space, but industry leaders have begun to question what can be done to meaningfully influence the ESG practices of African suppliers beyond what can sometimes be construed as a price-incentivised tick-box exercise.

This discussion will review the success factors and key learnings gained from deployment of sustainability-linked supply chain finance to date, considering challenges ranging from data and reporting practicalities to the need to develop globally recognised financing frameworks and social sustainability definitions, exploring the opportunity for financing providers to leverage a wider set of client offerings to incentivise deeper behavioural change amongst suppliers and ensure that ESG benefit reaches beyond anchor buyers.

Moderator: Michelle Knowles, Managing Executive; Head of Trade & Working Capital (Pan Africa), Absa Corporate & Investment Bank

Natalie van Graan, Product Management, Trade & Working Capital, Southern Africa, Standard Chartered Bank

Susanne Kavelaar, Global Head Trade Advisory, Hub Lead Southern & Eastern Africa, Trade & Supply Chain Finance, International Finance Corporation (IFC)

Tod Burwell, President & Chief Executive Officer, Baft

12.30-13.15

Navigating risk and opportunity: A new playbook for African export diversification

Following a period of escalating tariffs and geopolitical volatility, African exporters have entered 2026 in a highly uncertain operating environment. The move away from the US towards the Middle East, BRICS, Asia, and Europe offers huge potential growth, but diversification is hard; a new financing playbook is required.

With a focus on practical financing guidance, this panel will assess the challenge engendered by export diversification, from rerouting, higher costs and political risks to the need for increased bank intermediation. Further discussion will focus on the various financing tools and players that can help drive diversification initiatives, covering themes including:

- Profiling the inter-regional and intra-Africa export markets offering diversification opportunities; assessing the challenges encountered by exporters entering new geographies
- Mitigating payment risk: To what extent is the prevailing geopolitical environment driving demand for documentary tools such as export LCs and guarantees?
- Boosting liquidity for exporters: Assessing the benefits and limitations of various working capital facilities, from vanilla working capital to structured trade and pre-export financing
- Enhancing bankability: Highlighting the role of risk distribution and trade credit insurance in enhancing exporters' financing options

Moderator: Musa Hlanti, Executive Head, Trade Sales, TPS, SA, Standard Bank

Anand Jha, Managing Director, Trade Finance & Lending, Deutsche Bank India

Tosin Olatunji, Group Head, Corporate Operations; Deputy General Manager, Access Bank

Mwaya Siwale, Associate Executive, Trade Finance, Trade & Development Bank (TDB)

13.15-14.20 Lunch

Day One: Thursday 12 March Morning **Stream B**

Stream B: Bridging Africa's infrastructure financing gap

Chair: Nick Oliver, Managing Director, Globespan Infrastructure

11.05-11.45

From bidding to bankability: Building out new infrastructure financing capabilities

- Major infrastructure contractors and EPCs face unique challenges in Africa, from securing competitive financing packages and increasingly weighty due diligence requirements to managing political and commercial risks throughout project lifecycles. This discussion will explore evolving financing requirements and challenges ranging both project financing and short-term working capital, highlighting the innovative financing and risk management techniques being deployed in response. Topics include:
- Social infrastructure and industrial investment: Which geographical markets and industry sectors are driving project investments? What is the outlook for 2026?
- Improving bankability: The role of contractors and specialised development financing in early-stage project preparation
- How contractors can leverage ECA support to win competitive bids and manage the interplay between multiple ECAs on single projects
- To what extent has environmental and social (E/S) due diligence become a drag on project viability? What does appropriate E/S categorisation look like in an African context?
- Enhancing development finance participation: Which challenges are involved with incorporating DFI support, particularly first-loss capital? What can be done by project sponsors and banks to help package these transactions?

Moderator: Nick Oliver, Managing Director, Globespan Infrastructure

Sekete Mokgehele, Co-Head, Africa Infrastructure Finance, Nedbank

Michael Rasch, Director, Export Credit Agency (ECA) Relations & Business Development, Alliad

11.45-12.30

Export credit financing: Accessing emerging opportunities in an evolving market

Updates to the OECD Arrangement on Officially Supported Export Credits, the ongoing development of blended ECA financing models and the emergence of ECA solutions focused on shorter term liquidity provision are opening new avenues for the delivery of export credit financing into African infrastructure. However, increasingly demanding due diligence processes on ECA-backed deals pose a significant drag on pressurised project timelines, while transactions in 2025 indicated a stronger focus on developed economies. This panel will explore the key developments driving deal activity, and the challenges encountered by ECAs and their partners on the continent. Topics include:

- From global geopolitics to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs): Exploring the motivations and opportunities driving ECA activity and collaboration across Africa
- Highlighting new ways ECAs are working with suppliers and buyers, from the emergence of untied ECA financings to blended financing models incorporating ECA support
- To what extent has the impact of the updated OECD consensus been lessened by the increasingly policy-driven nature of ECA activity? Are longer tenors needed and what of the associated risks?
- How can African borrowers capitalise on ECA support for infrastructure development in SDG-aligned sectors? To what extent can and should environmental and social (E/S) processes be streamlined?

Jørn Fredsgaard Sørensen, Head of Country & Bank Risk, EIFO

Florian Witt, Chair, ICC Banking Commission; Managing Director, Head of International & Corporate Banking, ODDO BHF

Jan Rekiel, Deputy Head of Strategic Clients, KUKE

Irene Visser, Head of Strategy & International Relations, Atradius Dutch State Business

12.30-13.15

Debt, development finance and domestic capital: A blended approach to infrastructure financing

While recent sovereign bond issuance demonstrates an improved African sovereign debt outlook, the volume of infrastructure financing required on the continent remains beyond the capacity of government balance sheets. The focus of the global and domestic banks supporting African projects is diverging while export credit agency (ECA) volumes on the continent remain concentrated on a familiar cohort of contractors, EPCs and borrowers, however the emphasis on using African money for African infrastructure development is growing. This discussion will explore the key opportunities and challenges driving project financing activity and availability, and the innovations required to bridge the infrastructure financing gap with a blend of international and domestic financing sources. Topics include:

- Affordability: Assessing the debt sustainability outlook, the impact of higher-for-longer interest rates and rising project costs
- To what extent are global banks increasingly focused on developed economies? Is African infrastructure now the domain of its regional FIs?
- Are ECA premiums still aligned with the risk they take on African deals? How can financing availability be broadened beyond the "usual suspects" that dominate Africa's export finance market?
- From bonds and DFI credit guarantees to public and private sector risk off-takers: Exploring the benefits of a portfolio approach to meeting infrastructure financing needs
- Domestic capital and local currency: Which infrastructure financing success stories can be replicated in other markets? Which challenges need to be overcome to maximise the role of African capital?

Moderator: Gabriel Buck, Managing Director, GKB Ventures

Sibeom Gim, Chief Representative, Johannesburg Representative Office, Ksure

Sujithav Sarangi, Executive Director, Development & Agency Finance, Standard Chartered

13.15-14.20 Lunch

"The event was collaborative and insightful, diversified approach with all the speakers, rich in knowledge as well."

T Mathebula, PepsiCo

"As ever the delegates, speakers and organisations are superb. You are dealing with the right people to get things done. The schedule is not overwhelming and leaves plenty of time for networking whilst enjoying the engaging panels. My favourite conference of the year."

J Aylward, Vallis Group

"Many great discussions from innovative speakers looking to make a positive impact in the trade finance space in Africa."

C McKenzie, Advance Global Capital

Day One: Thursday 12 March Afternoon **Stream A** & **Stream B**

Stream A

14.20-15.05

Driving African trade growth through African banks, funds and capital: New mindset required?

That the US\$2.5tn global trade finance gap has reportedly stabilised in 2025 will offer small comfort to sub-Saharan Africa, one of the globe's most acutely affected regions. While new industry-wide advocacy initiatives are reinvigorating efforts to enable the flow of traditional trade liquidity into emerging markets, soaring compliance and onboarding costs for trade banks indicate that alternative capital sources and financing structures will be required in tandem if we're to avoid a lost generation of trade growth.

The African trade finance ecosystem's unique characteristics both pose challenges and open opportunities for new ways of financing trade, but what action is required to realise tangible, timely progress? This discussion will explore:

- How an evolving global financial landscape is reframing the proposition for private credit investment in African trade finance
- The challenges posed by the granularity of African SME trade finance and the opportunity to utilise existing financing infrastructure in new ways to unlock SME trade liquidity
- The evolution from vanilla trade refinancings to structured LCs and beyond: What's next for African FI trade financing flows?
- The transformational potential of African institutional capital: How are trade funds, non-bank FIS and development financing institutions working to unlock opportunities?

George Wilson, Chief Executive Officer, ARM Africa Trade Finance Fund

Anne-Marie Woolley, Chief Executive Officer, Africa Global Trade Finance

Ian Henderson, Chief Investment Officer, Alteia

Umulinga Karangwa, Chief Investment Officer, Executive Director, ESATAL, TDB Group

15.05-15.45

Regenerative farming: Exploring the role of sustainable finance in driving adoption

Industrial farming practices come at an unsustainable environmental cost, one that is increasingly becoming prohibitive for offtakers and consumers. As ESG regulations have a growing impact on access to key global supply chains, regenerative farming – a set of agricultural solutions and practices that work in balance with nature and focus on the health of ecosystems and soils – is becoming a business imperative.

Welcoming a host of experts actively working towards the establishment and financing of regenerative farming practices on the continent, this panel will explore the challenges faced, and the role that finance can play in driving adoption. Topics include:

- The environmental costs of industrial farming, the risks this poses to farmers themselves, and how regenerative practices can reverse adverse impacts
- Key challenges to adoption, from lack of awareness and understanding amongst farmers to the initial cost of infrastructure, equipment and reduced yield
- To what extent are regenerative practices becoming a business imperative for farmers in light of sustainability regulations such as CSDDD and CBAM?
- Assessing green washing risk: How do large corporates ensure effective reporting on the practices of the farmers in their supply chain?
- With African farmers already facing difficulties in accessing finance, what collaboration between investors, development and commercial financiers is necessary to drive adoption?

Moderator: Zhann Meyer, Head, Agricultural Commodities, Nedbank

Jan Scheurleer, Senior Relationship Manager, TCF Africa, Rabobank

Teresa le Roux, Senior Investment Officer, FMO

Wendy Engel, Sustainable Finance Coordinator, South Africa Sustainable Finance Coalition

15.45-16.05 Networking break

Stream B

14.20-15.45

Financing Africa's infrastructure pipeline

Africa's sovereign borrowers and state-owned enterprises (SOEs) have weathered a raft of macroeconomic, financing and debt sustainability challenges in recent years. However, optimism is growing around the opportunity for project sponsors, EPCs, banks and private financiers, insurers and export credit agencies (ECAs) to step up their participation in the infrastructure project pipeline.

Inviting presentations from representatives of the key bodies responsible for delivering infrastructure modernisation, including ministries of finance, debt management offices, state-owned enterprises (SOEs) and municipalities, this special workshop will provide a collegiate and interactive forum designed to both disseminate information around forthcoming investment opportunities and financing requirements to participating project financing experts (banks, investors, export credit agencies, insurers), and offer the opportunity for constructive discussion between presenters and attendees on the financing strategies, sources and techniques that can facilitate infrastructure modernisation across the region.

15.45-16.05 Networking break

“GTR Cape Town is a must on the trade finance calendar, insights, networking, great people – ticks all the boxes.”

L Hammond, Dealflow

“It was a truly constructive event, and I left feeling a real sense of ‘mission accomplished’! A fantastic conference — thank you so much for the invitation. I’m already looking forward to GTR Africa 2026!”

R Katovsky, GasOilInc Trade Desk

“The event was collaborative and insightful, diversified approach with all the speakers, rich in knowledge as well.”

T Mathebula, PepsiCo

Day One: Thursday 12 March Afternoon Plenary

16.05-16.45

Meeting critical compliance challenges in an increasingly fractured sanctions landscape

Sanctions compliance was once relatively simple, with a focus on Office for Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) screening and those entities sitting within a blacklist clearly off limits. Today, both the UK and EU are implementing sanctions independently, with the UK now also seeking to independently enforce these measures. The US continues to sanction via OFAC, with the US government's Stop Harboring Iranian Petroleum (SHIP) Act and quasi-sanctions further from the US Department of Defence adding further complication. Compliance leaders amongst both corporates and their financiers are now tasked with keeping up with constantly evolving sanctions risks in real time.

This focused conversation will explore the challenges and implications of the move from one centralised sanctioning authority to multiple authorities with parallel tracks, debating the impact on corporate compliance policy, and highlighting the industries and geographies at heightened risk. Further discussion will analyse the deployment of Artificial Intelligence – both to enhance sanctions screening and as a means of increasingly sophisticated sanctions evasion – assessing the benefits and limitations of large language models in limiting sanctions risk exposure.

Mergan Naidoo, Head of Trade Finance, RMB

Ravi Amin, Director, Trade Compliance Expert, S&P Global Market Intelligence

16.45-17.30

True, false, or 'it's complicated': An honest assessment of the trade digitalisation opportunity

Despite leaps forward in the development of legal frameworks for trade digitisation in key jurisdictions globally, true trade digitalisation has yet to take root. African markets present unique challenges to those seeking to drive trade finance digitalisation, requiring Africa-centric digital strategies and solutions; it is far from a foregone conclusion that the tools and initiatives gaining traction in the global trade finance market will take root on the continent.

Designed to foster debate around the nature of the digital trade opportunity in Africa, this discussion will invite expert participants to respond to a selection of frank statements: True, false, or complicated? Propositions for debate include:

- "Fully digitalising Africa's trade ecosystem is unrealistic in the near term: we need to focus on individual, isolated digital trade use cases rather than systemic transformation"
- "Africa should not pursue continent-wide digital trade finance regulation, as this risks stifling innovation and local experimentation"

- "Legislative advances around electronic transferable records will be of limited practical value to African entities until their domestic regulators operationalise them"
- "African countries should actively embrace cryptocurrency and stablecoins for cross-border trade finance to bypass correspondent banking challenges and FX constraints"
- The growing use of AI and data-driven tools in trade finance risks leaving behind many African banks, due to gaps in data, skills and systems
- Without urgent investment in skills and data, Africa's digital trade push will widen – not narrow – the trade finance gap

Moderator: Shannon Manders, Editorial Director, GTR Magazine

John Molanda, Managing Director, Trade & Working Capital Product, Pan Africa, Absa Corporate & Investment Bank

Tsheko Mabuela, Head of Operations, Mr Price Money

Gary Cutress, Sales Director, Surecom

17.30

Chair's closing remarks

Followed by evening networking reception

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"GTR Africa was incredibly insightful, bringing together experts from all over Africa and the rest of the world. The discussions and ideas, along with the networking created a great platform for innovation within the African market."

J McDonalds, South African Association of Freight Forwarders (SAAFF)

"I congratulate the GTR team once again on a well-organized and attended GTR Africa. The event offered opportunities to connect with new clients and reconnect with old ones in a bid to strengthen business relations."

N Matenda, Afreximbank

Day Two: Friday 13 March

09.00-09.10

Chair's opening remarks

09.10-09.40

Interview: Laying foundations for the sustainable future of African trade finance

Growing recognition of the role that can be played by trade finance in promoting the transition to a more sustainable global economy poses risk and opportunity. The potential to unlock ESG-focused capital that can narrow the trade finance gap is tempered by a global sustainability agenda that has traditionally focused on environmental rather than social considerations; one that is misaligned with the realities of true positive impact on the African continent. While African traders and financiers are tasked with meeting today's immediate financing challenges, the need to actively engage global stakeholders on the formative issue of sustainable trade and finance has become an imperative.

This thought-provoking interview will assess the extent to which the African trade finance gap can be narrowed through fresh thinking on the use of traditional trade financing tools, further exploring the need for Africa's trade finance industry to push for globally accepted sustainability definitions and standards that promote, rather than prejudice, the financing of trade in developing economies.

Arnaud Levasseur, Executive Vice-President, Global Trade Solutions, MCB

09.40-10.25

Angola: Driving a transforming economy with international trade growth

Angola represents both immense potential and significant complexity: Ongoing debt restructuring efforts combined with supporting fiscal reforms have progressed alongside plans to attract foreign direct investment and diversify the economy, while the Lobito Corridor project is indicative of prospects for enhanced regional trade and economic growth. However, oil price fluctuations in 2025 again highlighted the persistent debt challenges impacting public finances. This panel of market experts will seek to clarify a complicated picture of risk and reward, exploring themes including:

- How has Angola's debt restructuring affected country risk ratings and trade finance pricing? What are the realistic prospects for further debt reduction?
- Beyond oil and gas: Are economic diversification initiatives creating tangible non-oil trade growth? Which sectors are driving demand for trade finance?
- Lobito Corridor and Southern African Development Community: To what extent are the project and enhanced FTA expected to benefit the region's real economy beyond extractive industries?
- Which success factors have driven strong export credit finance market appetite for Angolan infrastructure in recent years? What of the project pipeline?
- How can the international trade finance sector further support Angola's economic transformation? How are financiers approaching political, commercial and FX risks and risk management?

Moderator: Inal Henry, Independent Advisor

Matthew Shires, Head of Structured Finance, Quantum Solutions

Ricardo Ferreira, Country Managing Director, Angola, Access Bank

Alice Azevedo, Deputy Director, Head of International Division, Banco de Fomento Angola (BFA)

10.25-11.05 Networking break

11.05-11.55

Strategic and symbiotic: How Africa-GCC partnerships are transforming the trade and investment outlook

Trade and investment between Sub-Saharan Africa and the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) has seen unprecedented growth in recent years. New flows are supporting the economic diversification strategies of key GCC economies while offering African markets export opportunities and trade financing sources alongside the delivery of critical infrastructure investment. A symbiotic partnership has developed, but can more be done to improve access to trade finance for African businesses? Welcoming some of the key players participating in these trade, investment and financing flows, this discussion will cover:

- Geopolitical realignment: Highlighting the growing role of Gulf states in African economic partnerships and their inclusion in the BRICS bloc
- Infrastructure investment and future pipeline: How port and shipping investments in Africa are consolidating the GCC's position as a primary trade partner
- Export opportunities: The domestic economic trends driving evolving GCC import demand across soft and hard commodities sectors
- Examining the growth of trade and export credit financing supporting these flows: Which success stories can be cited, and can more be done to improve access to trade finance for African businesses?

Raja Al Mazrouei, Chief Executive, Etihad Credit Insurance (ECI)

Motasim Iqbal, Regional Head, Corporate Sales, Africa & Middle East, Standard Chartered Bank

Karen Matsiko, Founder & Chief Executive Officer, Pivotedge Advisory & Consultancy Group

11.55-12.45

Trade finance 2030: Near-future predictions for the continent's trade finance market

In just over a year since the beginning of the end of the global rules-based order a number of likelihoods have become clear: The new global economy will be multipolar, the 'Middle Powers' will fill the void left by an insular United States, that the AfCFTA combined with Africa's natural resources and critical minerals will provide a generational opportunity for economic growth and diversification, and global financial and sustainability regulations will continue to drag on African trade and trade finance. How will this complex web of challenge and opportunity impact trade, investment and financing flows?

Casting an eye to the African trade finance market's near future, this group of expert practitioners will share their predictions on the state of trade in 2030, considering trends including:

- Trade finance demand: Anticipated growth markets and trade corridors
- Expectations for the AfCFTA and local currency settlement
- The digitisation environment: Global legislative developments and Africa-centric solutions
- Bank retrenchment, new market entrants and trade finance product development
- Stablecoins, tokenisation, new payment rails and alternative payment clearing

Martin Azenga, Executive & Regional Head, Trade, Core Markets, CIB Africa Regions, Stanbic Bank

12.45

Chair's closing remarks

Followed by networking lunch

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