

**Press Release**  
**African Association of International Law**  
**General Conference, Libreville, Gabon**  
**29-30 August 2015**

On 29-30 August 2015, the General Conference of the African Association of International Law (the “Association”) met at the Stade de l’Amitié Sino-Gabonaise in Libreville, Gabon, hosted by and in conjunction with the 4<sup>th</sup> [New York Forum Africa](#) (NYFA). The theme of the meeting was “International Economic Law and Development in Africa: Challenges and Opportunities”.

The General Conference was hosted by the Executive Committee of the Association, represented by Dr. Olufemi Elias (Secretary-General of the Association), Dr. Jumoke Oduwole, Professor Narcisse Mouelle Kombi and Dr. Djacoba Liva Tehindrazanarivelo (Vice-Presidents of the Association) and Ms. Adejoke Babington-Ashaye (Director of Programmes). The meeting was attended by senior members of the African judiciary and international tribunals, academics in African and other universities, and scholars and practitioners from Africa and the rest of the world. Also present were representatives of the African Foundation for International Law, the African Institute of International Law, the African Union, the African Society of International Law, the European Society of International Law, the American Society of International Law and civil society groups.

The proceedings were opened by the Association’s inaugural Georges Abi-Saab Lecture, which was delivered by Dr. Edward Kwakwa, a Patron of the Association and the Legal Counsel of the World Intellectual Property Organization. The lecture was entitled “Using the Opportunities Presented by the “Rising Africa” Narrative to Further Consolidate International Law and Economic Development in Africa.” The several papers delivered by the participants addressed issues related to international economic law and development in Africa, including foreign investment in Africa, Africa and the judicial and arbitral settlement of disputes, international criminal law and development and international trade. The closing remarks were delivered by Professor Mpazi Sinjela, Executive Dean, Faculty of Law, University of Zambia, and member of the African Foundation for International Law.

The Association also hosted a panel in the [NYFA](#), which took place in parallel with the conference. The panel discussed the topic “Creating a New Legal Framework for Africa”, based on the premise that a clear, effective and transparent legal framework is essential for the ongoing development of Africa’s finance sector, as well as the empowerment of its financial regulators. The Association was represented on the panel by Mr Stephen Karangizi, Director of the African Legal Support Facility, and Professor Vincent Nmehielle, Legal Counsel and Director of

Legal Affairs at the African Union Commission. The AAIL also participated in the NYFA's Right to Work Taskforce which was convened in association with the London School of Economics. The AAIL was represented by Mr. Akinola Akintola, Ms. Romy Klimke and Dr. Didier Prince-Agbodjan.

The General Conference also met to discuss institutional matters. The Secretary-General delivered a report on the activities of the Association since its last meeting in Maputo, Mozambique. Among the other issues discussed were the next conference of the Association in view of its 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2016, a call for the nomination of new members of the Executive Committee and other administrative and organisational matters.

The General Conference also discussed the relationship between the Association and the African Society of International Law. The Conference noted that Africa was the only continent with two separate bodies of this kind and questioned the need for the existence of two bodies operating in parallel. The Conference considered that that it would be preferable to create a single but stronger platform for international law discourse in Africa. The General Conference resolved to work towards achieving this objective.

The Secretary General informed members that the Republics of Cameroun and Zambia had both indicated an interest in hosting the next meeting of the General Conference. The Secretary-General expressed the Association's gratitude for the offers. The Executive Committee is inclined to accept the invitation of the African Union (AU) to host the conference in view of the AAIL 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2016. Accordingly, the next conference of the Association is likely to hold at the headquarters of the AU in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia in 2016 to celebrate this important milestone.

Further information regarding the Libreville Conference is available at [www.aail-aadi.org](http://www.aail-aadi.org).

See also [www.ny-forum-africa.com/en/home#!prettyPhoto](http://www.ny-forum-africa.com/en/home#!prettyPhoto)