

Conference on “Digital Trade in Africa: Implications for Inclusion and Human Rights”

31 May – 1 June 2018

Conference Room 3, United Nations Conference Centre
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

PROVISIONAL AGENDA

The conference is organized in thematic sessions, each dedicated to a selected topic to allow for in-depth discussion based on different experiences shared by participants. Each session will kick off with a diverse expert panel discussion and conclude with an interactive open-floor discussion. Active participation from all attendees is encouraged. A more detailed agenda including information on the panelists will be shared at least two weeks prior to the conference.

DAY 1 – 31 May 2018

8:30 - 9:00	Registration of Participants
9:00 – 10:00	Opening session Chair: Stephen Karingi, Director of Capacity Development Division and Officer in Charge of Regional Integration and Trade Division, United Nations Economic Commission for Africa Introductory remarks <ul style="list-style-type: none">• David Luke, Coordinator of the African Trade Policy Centre, United Nations Economic Commission for Africa• Nwanneakolam Vwede-Obaho, Resident Representative, United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights• Hubert René Schillinger, Director, Friedrich Ebert Stiftung Geneva Office Opening dialogue <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Vera Songwe, Executive Secretary, United Nations Economic Commission for Africa• Carlos Lopes, Visiting Professor, University of Cape Town• H.E. Amani Abou-Zeid, Commissioner for Infrastructure and Energy, African Union Commission (TBC)

<p>10:00 – 11:00</p>	<p>Session 1: Digital futures: new challenges and opportunities</p> <p>The speed, breadth and uncertainty that characterize the digital age call for better anticipating the possible futures to make well-informed decisions and support the fulfillment of human rights in Africa. The session will provide a space for participants to share their views about possible future digital scenarios and their implications for human rights and Africa’s development through trade and the transformation of agriculture, industry and services on the continent.</p> <p>Chair: Kasirim Nwuke, Chief of New Technologies and Innovation Section, Special Initiatives Division, United Nations Economic Commission for Africa</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Duncan Cass-Beggs, Counsellor for Strategic Foresight, Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development • Gabriella Razzano, Executive Director, Open Democracy Advice Centre • Mbanan Mku, Program Manager, Public and Private Development Centre
<p>11:00 – 11:30</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Tea Break</p>
<p>11:30 – 13:00</p>	<p>Session 2: Human rights in an age of digital revolution</p> <p>Applying the human rights framework is a legal obligation for all African countries. The human rights framework offers important tools for focusing attention on the possible impacts of economic policies on vulnerable groups, and is particularly important today, as the world witnesses rising skepticism towards globalization. It will be necessary to take active steps to ensure that the gains from the digital revolution are equitably shared both globally, and between and within African countries. This session will provide an introduction to the human rights landscape in Africa and how the human rights framework can be applied to assessing the distributional implications of the digital economy.</p> <p>Chair: Solomon Ayele Dersso, Commissioner, African Commission on Human and Peoples’ Rights</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Edetaen Ojo, Executive Director, Media Rights Agenda • Meskerem Geset Techane, UN Special Rapporteur • Ololade Shyllon, Project Manager for Democracy and Transparency, University of Pretoria
<p>13:00 – 14:00</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Lunch Break</p>

<p>14:00 – 15:30</p>	<p>Session 3: Digital trade landscape in Africa I: trends in business and policy</p> <p>Africa currently lags behind the rest of the world in terms of digital development – often referred to as the “digital divide”. Digital trade offers an opportunity for Africa to catch up, but if this opportunity is not harnessed effectively, also risks leaving the continent even further behind. This session will discuss the trends in the digital business and policy landscape in Africa and identify its key stakeholders to give an overview of digital development in Africa.</p> <p>Chair: Mor Talla, Vice President, African Alliance on E-commerce</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jamie Macleod, Trade Policy Fellow, African Trade Policy Centre, United Nations Economic Commission for Africa • Legborsi Nuka, Head of Legal, Trade Policy and Advocacy, National Association of Nigerian Traders • Shamel Azmeh, Visiting Fellow, London School of Economics and Political Science
<p>15:30 – 17:00</p>	<p>Session 4: Digital trade landscape in Africa II: special focus on informal, micro, small and medium enterprises in digital trade</p> <p>Some observers worry that Africa’s nascent digital economy would be threatened by more advanced competitors in the developed world. Others see there to be symbiosis: the platforms and solutions offered by more established digital businesses abroad can help Africa’s MSMEs flourish and better access world markets. This session will focus on the opportunities and competitive challenges for MSMEs in the digital era in Africa, including farm based organizations operating in the agricultural sector.</p> <p>Chair: James Mwangi, Executive Director, Dalberg Group</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Roy Ombatti, CEO, African Born 3D Printing • Azuka Ogo, Technical Advisor, Cargo Defence Fund • Jenny Rafanomezana, CEO, TruTrade Limited
<p>17:30</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">RECEPTION / END of DAY 1</p>

DAY 2 – 1 June 2018

08:30 – 10:00	<p>Session 5: Digital trade and the right to work</p> <p>Digital trade offers new opportunities for job creation, though these tend to be higher-skilled jobs. At the same time, new business models of digital trade embody much automation, threatening to hollow-out lower and mid-level jobs and potentially make it more difficult for African countries to follow the traditional labour-intensive pathway to industrialization. This session will discuss the risks and opportunities that digital trade poses for unemployment and inequality in Africa, and identify what complementary policies will be needed to guarantee the fulfillment of the rights to work and an adequate standard of living. The potential of e-commerce to impact on the size of the informal economy will also be explored.</p> <p>Chair: Ms. Bineswaree (Aruna) Bolaky, Economic Affairs Officer, United Nations Conference on Trade and Development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• George Okutho, Director, International Labour Organisation for Ethiopia, Somalia, Djibouti, South Sudan and Sudan• Georgios Altintzis, Trade Policy Officer, International Trade Union Confederation• Karishma Banga, Principal Research Fellow, Overseas Development Institute
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10:00 – 11:30	<p>Session 6: Digital trade and gender equality</p> <p>A gender digital divide exists as part of the digital divide. E-commerce has the potential to support women’s empowerment through enhancing female access to markets and overcoming traditional gender barriers to trade such as physical distance, male-dominated networks, access to finance and domestic responsibilities. This session will discuss what actions are needed to close the gender digital divide and enhance women’s access to digital trade opportunities.</p> <p>Chair: Kiranne Guddoy, Senior Programme Officer for Development and Competitiveness, International Centre for Trade and Sustainable Development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Baratang Miya, Founder and CEO, Girlhype Coders • Nandini Chami, Deputy Director, IT for Change • Hilda Awomolo, Head of Digital Content, She Leads Africa
11:30– 12:00	Tea Break
12:00 – 13:30	<p>Session 7: Digital trade and youth</p> <p>Africa has the youngest population in the world. A shortage of growing opportunities for the youth has contributed to high youth unemployment in the region. Although automation threatens to hollow out labour intensive jobs, the digital economy also offers the potential to create new productive jobs for the youth, who are typically quicker at adapting to new technologies and developing new digital solutions. This session will discuss what actions are needed to ensure that Africa’s youth are well placed to take advantage of new digital trade opportunities and to confront inequalities, social exclusion, job insecurity and discrimination.</p> <p>Chair: Yvonne Matuturu, Programme Specialist, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aya Chebbi, Chair, Afrika Youth Movement • Godwin Benson, Co-founder and CEO, Tuteria • William Edem Senyo, Co-Founder & CEO, Impact Hub Accra
13:30 – 14:30	Lunch Break

<p>14:30 – 16:00</p>	<p>Session 8: Global, regional and national governance of digital trade</p> <p>The growth of digital trade has led to proposals for rules at the WTO to discipline the use policies that can affect digital trade, and to provide for a more facilitative policy framework. At the national level, new digital trade business models are challenging and sometimes circumventing traditional means of regulating competition, labour rights, tax obligations and public safety interests. On the other hand, bypassing such regulations can benefit consumers and workers when those that existed distorted markets. The session will discuss options for such rules and regulations at the WTO, under the African continental free trade area (AfCFTA) and at the domestic level, and how these rules interact with human rights.</p> <p>Chair: Jean Bertrand Azapmo, Regional Trade Advisor, African Union Commission</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vahini Naidu, Counsellor, South African Permanent Mission to the WTO • Ibrahima Nour Eddine Diagne, Managing Director, GAINDE 2000 • Martina Ferracane, Research Associate, European Centre for International Political Economy
<p>16:00 – 17:00</p>	<p>Session 9: Way forward – integrating human rights into African e-commerce</p> <p>This wrap-up session will take stock of the ideas that have emerged from the previous sessions’ discussion and pave the way forward for the ECA-FES-OHCHR joint research programme on digital trade and human rights. Participants are encouraged to make active contributions and share recommendations for areas of focus for the triangular research.</p> <p>Chair: David Luke, Coordinator of the African Trade Police Centre, United Nations Economic Commission for Africa</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summary presentation by Susan Matthews, Human Rights Officer, United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights • Interactive discussion

17:00 - 17:30	Closing session Closing remarks <ul style="list-style-type: none">• David Luke, Coordinator of the African Trade Policy Centre, United Nations Economic Commission for Africa• Nwanneakolam Vwede-Obaho, Resident Representative, United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights• Hubert René Schillinger, Director, Friedrich Ebert Stiftung Geneva Office
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