

INFORMATION & COMMUNICATION DIRECTORATE

Media Advisory

Date: 21 May 2025

Venue: Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

INVITATION TO REPRESENTATIVES OF THE MEDIA

11th AUCIL FORUM

Theme: “International Law, WTO Reform and Implementation of the AfCFTA”

What: The African Union Commission on International Law (AUCIL) invites you to attend the 11th Forum under the timely theme: *“International Law, WTO Reform and Implementation of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA)”*.

When: 22-23 May 2025

Time: 9H00am

Where: Small Conference Room 2 (NCC building), African Union Headquarters, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

Objectives:

1. This year's Forum comes at a defining moment for Africa's economic integration and global trade engagement, as the AfCFTA enters its operational phase and WTO reform gains momentum on the international stage. As the AfCFTA's legal architecture evolves, most notably with the adoption of the Protocol on Women and Youth in Trade, the Forum will serve as a vital platform for legal minds across the continent and beyond to reflect on the strategic alignment between Africa's continental ambitions and the multilateral trading system. It will examine how international law can anchor Africa's proposals in ongoing WTO reform processes, while ensuring the AfCFTA's implementation remains both robust and inclusive.
2. Positioned between the 13th and 14th WTO Ministerial Conferences, the Forum invites AU Member States, legal scholars, trade negotiators, policymakers, and international law experts to interrogate core issues such as trade dispute settlement, special and differential treatment, coherence between WTO and AfCFTA regimes, and the protection of human rights and traditional knowledge in trade.
3. As the only annual Pan-African platform focused on international legal discourse, the AUCIL Forum offers a rare opportunity to shape the continent's voice in global trade governance, at a time when the world is watching and change is on the table.

Participants:

The 11th AUCIL Forum is open to all researchers and practitioners of international law and related fields, the 11th forum is particularly aimed at:

- i. Senior officials of the AU and its organs, including the AfCFTA.
- ii. Senior Officials of AU Member States in charge of national trade policy and negotiations, representing the Ministries in charge of trade, development, planning and Foreign Affairs.
- iii. Senior Officials of Regional Economic Communities (RECs).
- iv. National and international lawyers and judges interested in issues relating to trade and free trade.
- v. Researchers, academics and students from universities and research centers based on the Continent or in the diaspora working on themes related to the Forum's theme.

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