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TAKUKA 2026

CONFERENCE

AFRICA DECIDES:

Sovereignty, Innovation & the Future of Dispute Resolution

**ULTIMATE
PROGRAMME
GUIDE**





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Kenya Branch

TAKUKA 2026

CONFERENCE

Diamond Leisure Lodge, Diani, Kenya | 5th to 9th
October 2026

**"Africa Decides: Sovereignty, Innovation and the
Future of Dispute Resolution"**

ULTIMATE PROGRAMME GUIDE

Sessions, Rationale, Coverage and Proposed
Panelist Profiles

Programme Committee | AfAA and CIArb Kenya |
June 2026

**ULTIMATE
PROGRAMME
GUIDE**

CONFERENCE OVERVIEW >

The Takuka Conference 2026, will take place at Diamond Leisure Lodge, Diani, Kenya from 5 to 9 October 2026. TAKUKA - from the Swahili kutakuka - means to rise with intention, to elevate and to ascend. It is both a conference name and a statement: Africa's call to rise and speak with one voice on the future of dispute resolution.

The conference runs across five days. Monday is the pre-conference day, hosting two full-day concurrent events, hosting the AfAA/SOAS Training and the inaugural Young AfAA x CIARB Kenya YMG Conference. Tuesday through Thursday constitute the joint AfAA/CIARB Kenya main programme, with each day carrying a distinct theme within the golden thread of the overarching conference narrative. The joint programme closes formally on Thursday with the adoption of the Conference Declaration. Friday is CIARB Kenya's standalone contribution, running two concurrent streams.

The programme is designed around a single golden thread: Prologue - Diagnosis - Tools - Consensus - Application and Roots. Each day answers a question raised by the day before. The conference tells one story across five days and the Declaration adopted Thursday is that story's conclusion.

Every session operates on a 90-minute format: 10 minutes of chair framing, 50 minutes of panel conversation and 30 minutes of open floor. Each session has one moderator and a minimum of three and a maximum of four speakers. Gender balance - minimum two women per panel - is a non-negotiable requirement across the entire programme.



On behalf of the Programme Committee, it is our distinguished honour and privilege to welcome you to the ***Takuka Conference 2026***.

With warm regards and great anticipation,

Godwin Omoaka, SAN, FCIARB
Co-Chair of the Programme Committee
Board Member, AfAA Board of Directors.

David Onsare, FCIARB
Co-Chair of the Programme Committee
Board Member, Chartered Institute of Arbitrators (Kenya)

**ULTIMATE
PROGRAMME
GUIDE >**

DAILY TIMETABLE (ALL MAIN CONFERENCE DAYS: TUESDAY TO THURSDAY) >

Time	Activity
08:30	Registration and arrival tea
09:00	Opening plenary or day framing (30 minutes)
09:30	Session 1 (90 minutes)
11:00	Tea break (20 minutes)
11:20	Session 2 (90 minutes)
12:50	Lunch (70 minutes)
14:00	Session 3 (90 minutes)
15:30	Tea break (20 minutes)
15:50	Closing plenary or day wrap (30 minutes - 60 minutes on Thursday)
16:20	End of formal programme (16:50 on Thursday)
16:30	Networking

Friday: Same clock for both concurrent streams simultaneously. Full conference reconvenes at 16:00 for 30-minute joint close ending at 16:30.

MONDAY 5 OCTOBER 2026 - PRE-CONFERENCE DAY >

Two full-day concurrent events run simultaneously throughout Monday.

AfAA/SOAS Training Programme (full day). Details to be confirmed by AfAA and SOAS.

Young AfAA x CIARB Kenya YMG Conference (full day), dedicated programme for ADR practitioners under 40.

Theme: "Africa's Next: The Unfiltered Conversation About Building an ADR Career on the Continent"

**09:30 to 11:00
YMG SESSION 1**

**Build at Home, Go Continental or Chase the World? The Career Track Decision Every
Young African ADR Practitioner Is Getting Wrong**

ABOUT THE SESSION

An honest and practical strategic conversation about where the real opportunities for young African ADR practitioners are in 2026. Three tracks are available - domestic, continental (AfCFTA) and international. Most young practitioners are making career-defining decisions based on an outdated map of the market. This session updates that map.

WHY THIS TOPIC

The AfCFTA changes the equation for young African practitioners in ways that are not yet widely understood. A continental track - building expertise in intra-African commercial disputes - may be the most strategically intelligent choice for practitioners starting out now, yet it is the least discussed. This session gives young practitioners the honest strategic intelligence they need.

MONDAY 5 OCTOBER 2026 - PRE-CONFERENCE DAY >

11:20 to 12:50
YMG SESSION 2

You Were Not Warned: The Real Cost of Building an ADR Practice in Africa

ABOUT THE SESSION

The financial conversation the profession consistently avoids. Membership fees, conference costs, panel applications, training programmes, years of reduced income before appointments become regular - nobody tells young practitioners what it actually costs to build a credible ADR profile. This session puts numbers on the table and asks hard questions about who should bear those costs.

WHY THIS TOPIC

Young practitioners are being told to invest in their careers without anyone examining whether the profession is investing in them. The financial model of becoming an established African ADR practitioner is demanding and the costs fall disproportionately on those with the least resources. Avoiding this conversation is a form of institutional dishonesty.

MONDAY 5 OCTOBER 2026 - PRE-CONFERENCE DAY >

14:00 to 15:30
YMG SESSION 3

Qualified, Experienced and Still Waiting: The Structural Barriers Keeping Young African Practitioners Out of the Room - and the Solutions That Actually Work

ABOUT THE SESSION

The appointment conversation - the honest version. This session names the structural barriers that keep qualified young practitioners out of appointment pipelines and then moves immediately to strategy and solutions. It is not a sympathy panel. It is a strategy session with practitioners who have broken through and can say concretely how.

WHY THIS TOPIC

Young African practitioners do not need to be told the problem exists. They live it every day. What they need - and what the profession rarely gives them - is a strategy session that produces actionable intelligence: what to do, what works and what institutions must be held accountable for. This session delivers that.

TUESDAY 6 OCTOBER 2026 - CONFERENCE DAY 1 | WHO DECIDES? THE SOVEREIGNTY QUESTION IN AFRICAN DISPUTE RESOLUTION >

Opening Keynote (09:00 to 09:30): Africa Has Always Decided - Reclaiming the Continent's Dispute Resolution Sovereignty

Profile: Senior continental figure - former head of state, sitting or retired Chief Justice or senior AU or AfCFTA official or globally recognised African arbitration scholar. The keynote speaker must command the room, articulate the continental moment and leave delegates feeling the week that follows matters. To be confirmed by the Programme Committee.

**09:30 to 11:00
SESSION 1**

Chief Justice Fireside: Who Controls the Courtroom? The Judiciary, Arbitration and the Future of Dispute Resolution in Africa

Tuesday | Who Decides? The Sovereignty Question in African Dispute Resolution

ABOUT THE SESSION

The signature session of the entire conference. Three Chief Justices in a moderated fireside conversation - no papers, no presentations, no prepared statements. The format is deliberately informal to draw out candid institutional thinking rather than rehearsed positions. This session has no equivalent at any other African dispute resolution conference.

WHY THIS TOPIC

Courts and arbitration are not separate worlds. The enforcement of awards, the exercise of supervisory jurisdiction and the quality of judicial support or intervention define the arbitration ecosystem more than institutional rules do. No panel carries more authority on the future of dispute resolution in Africa than the heads of three African judiciaries. Kenya's Article 159 AJS mandate adds a dimension no other jurisdiction can bring.

TUESDAY 6 OCTOBER 2026 - CONFERENCE DAY 1 | WHO DECIDES? THE SOVEREIGNTY QUESTION IN AFRICAN DISPUTE RESOLUTION >

11:20 to 12:50
SESSION 2

Africa and the Seat Problem: Why African Disputes Still Leave the Continent and What Must Change

Tuesday | Who Decides? The Sovereignty Question in African Dispute Resolution

ABOUT THE SESSION

The foundational diagnostic session of the conference. Data-driven, honest and unflinching. This is not a panel about diversity in arbitration - it is a panel about structural market failure. No solutions expected from this session. The expectation is an accurate, evidence-based naming of the problem that the rest of the conference works to address.

WHY THIS TOPIC

The conference cannot credibly claim that Africa Decides while avoiding the reality that most of the deciding happens elsewhere. This session earns the conference its credibility by confronting that reality head-on in the first substantive session of the week. It sets the intellectual and emotional register for everything that follows.

TUESDAY 6 OCTOBER 2026 - CONFERENCE DAY 1 | WHO DECIDES? THE SOVEREIGNTY QUESTION IN AFRICAN DISPUTE RESOLUTION >

14:00 to 15:30
SESSION 3

Rethinking ISDS: Reform, African Sovereignty and the Right to Regulate

Tuesday | Who Decides? The Sovereignty Question in African Dispute Resolution

ABOUT THE SESSION

The investment treaty and sovereign policy conversation. ISDS claims have been used to challenge African states' right to regulate in the public interest - on environmental standards, public health measures and resource nationalisation. The AfCFTA Protocol on Investment and the proposed African Investment Court make this an immediate institutional question, not a theoretical debate.

WHY THIS TOPIC

ISDS is the most consequential intersection of arbitration and state sovereignty for Africa. It affects every country on the continent that has signed a BIT or investment chapter. Government representatives must be in this room - not as observers but as principal voices. A panel without government voices reduces this to a practitioners' discussion of a political economy problem.

WEDNESDAY 7 OCTOBER 2026 - CONFERENCE DAY 2 | DECIDING DIFFERENTLY: INNOVATION, TECHNOLOGY AND THE TOOLS OF TOMORROW >

09:30 to 11:00
SESSION 4

AI in African Dispute Resolution: Who Writes the Rules Africa Plays By?

Wednesday | Deciding Differently: Innovation, Technology and the Tools of Tomorrow

ABOUT THE SESSION

A grounded technology governance session - not a speculative AI futures panel. The starting point is what AI is already doing in arbitration proceedings globally and what African institutions, practitioners and regulators are doing - or not doing - in response. CIArb published AI guidelines in March 2025. African institutions have produced nothing comparable.

WHY THIS TOPIC

AI governance standards for arbitration are being written in London and Geneva. African practitioners are adopting AI tools without institutional guidance, and African institutions are issuing awards in proceedings where AI has been used without any agreed framework. Africa must engage now or inherit rules built for other contexts.

WEDNESDAY 7 OCTOBER 2026 - CONFERENCE DAY 2 | DECIDING DIFFERENTLY: INNOVATION, TECHNOLOGY AND THE TOOLS OF TOMORROW >

11:20 to 12:50
SESSION 5

Third Party Funding in African Arbitration: Access, Ethics and the Regulation Gap

Wednesday | Deciding Differently: Innovation, Technology and the Tools of Tomorrow

ABOUT THE SESSION

TPF is operating across African jurisdictions without regulatory frameworks. Nigeria moved first with the Arbitration and Mediation Act 2023. Most African states have not. The access to justice argument and the conflicts of interest argument exist in genuine tension - this session refuses to resolve that tension cheaply.

WHY THIS TOPIC

TPF is reshaping who can afford arbitration in Africa. African practitioners and governments cannot afford to ignore a growing market that creates significant risks for parties, arbitrators and institutions. The absence of rules does not mean the absence of TPF - it means the absence of protection.

WEDNESDAY 7 OCTOBER 2026 - CONFERENCE DAY 2 | DECIDING DIFFERENTLY: INNOVATION, TECHNOLOGY AND THE TOOLS OF TOMORROW >

14:00 to 15:30
SESSION 6

ESG Disputes and Africa's Natural Resources: Is the Continent Ready for What Is Coming?

Wednesday | Deciding Differently: Innovation, Technology and the Tools of Tomorrow

ABOUT THE SESSION

The forward-looking session connecting sovereignty, environmental obligation and development imperatives. Africa is resource-rich and sits at the centre of the global energy transition dispute landscape. Nine in ten energy executives globally expect the energy transition to generate disputes. African institutions and practitioners are not ready. This session starts building readiness.

WHY THIS TOPIC

ESG disputes are arriving whether African institutions are ready or not. The continent's natural resource wealth, its climate vulnerability and the pressure from international investors and development financiers make this the most consequential emerging dispute category for Africa. Getting ahead of it is a strategic imperative.

THURSDAY 8 OCTOBER 2026 - CONFERENCE DAY 3 (JOINT CLOSING DAY) | DECIDING TOGETHER: ACCESS TO JUSTICE AND THE AFRICAN ADR ECOSYSTEM

Joint Closing Plenary (15:50 to 16:50): From Conversation to Commitment - What Africa Decided This Week

Closing address by senior AfAA or CIArb Kenya figure synthesising the week. Formal presentation and adoption of the Conference Declaration. Signing by Institutional Chairs. Conference Declaration distributed to all delegates and media.

09:30 to 11:00
SESSION 7

The Singapore Convention and Africa: Ratification, Resistance and the Cross-Border Mediation Question

Thursday | Deciding Together: Access to Justice and the African ADR Ecosystem

ABOUT THE SESSION

The mediation enforcement policy conversation. The Singapore Convention gives mediation the enforcement architecture that the New York Convention gave arbitration. African state ratification has been slow. Understanding why reveals what governments actually think about mediation as a commercial tool - and what it will take to change that.

WHY THIS TOPIC

Without enforcement architecture, cross-border mediated settlements remain fragile and parties choose arbitration by default. Africa is the primary region yet to fully engage the Convention. This session moves the advocacy forward with governments, mediators and business in the same room.

THURSDAY 8 OCTOBER 2026 - CONFERENCE DAY 3 (JOINT CLOSING DAY) | DECIDING TOGETHER: ACCESS TO JUSTICE AND THE AFRICAN ADR ECOSYSTEM

11:20 to 12:50
SESSION 8

Med-Arb, Arb-Med and Hybrid Processes: The Due Process Question Africa Cannot Keep Avoiding

Thursday | Deciding Together: Access to Justice and the African ADR Ecosystem

ABOUT THE SESSION

Hybrid ADR processes are being used across Africa without adequate procedural frameworks. Med-Arb is fast, cost-effective and popular. It is also a significant due process risk when the same neutral holds confidential caucus information and then makes a binding decision. African courts are reaching different conclusions when these processes are challenged. Clarity is urgently needed.

WHY THIS TOPIC

Practitioners are using hybrid processes in high-value commercial and construction disputes. When they go wrong, the enforceability of the outcome is uncertain and the parties have no reliable framework for what comes next. This session produces the framework practitioners can carry into every hybrid process engagement.

THURSDAY 8 OCTOBER 2026 - CONFERENCE DAY 3 (JOINT CLOSING DAY) | DECIDING TOGETHER: ACCESS TO JUSTICE AND THE AFRICAN ADR ECOSYSTEM

14:00 to 15:30
SESSION 9

Stronger Together: Institutional Collaboration as the Engine of African ADR Development
Thursday | Deciding Together: Access to Justice and the African ADR Ecosystem

Thursday | Deciding Together: Access to Justice and the African ADR Ecosystem

ABOUT THE SESSION

The institutional conversation. The AfAA and CIArb Kenya partnership that produced this conference is the live evidence of what institutional collaboration can produce. This session extracts the lessons from that experience and asks what the continent's ADR institutions must build together that they cannot build alone.

WHY THIS TOPIC

Fragmented African ADR institutions weaken the continental argument. Individual institutions compete for the same small pool of appointments, training revenue and institutional credibility. Collaboration - through shared rosters, cross-recognition, joint advocacy and co-produced events - builds something the continent can point to. This conference is proof of concept.

FRIDAY 9 OCTOBER 2026 - STREAM A: CONSTRUCTION ADJUDICATION AND DISPUTE AVOIDANCE (Joint AfAA and CIArb Kenya) >

09:30 to 11:00
SESSION 10A

The Adjudicator-Arbitrator Interface: Who Has the Final Word on African Infrastructure Projects?

Friday Stream A | Construction Adjudication and Dispute Avoidance (Joint AfAA and CIArb Kenya)

ABOUT THE SESSION

The natural joint session for AfAA and CIArb Kenya. When an adjudicator's decision is challenged, the matter moves to arbitration. Arbitrators then decide whether to honour, override or treat the adjudicator's decision as a provisional finding pending final resolution. This legal boundary is contested, consequential and unresolved across African jurisdictions.

WHY THIS TOPIC

This interface question is the reason Stream A must be a joint AfAA and CIArb Kenya conversation. Adjudicators alone cannot resolve it. Arbitrators alone cannot resolve it. Construction lawyers, judges and government procurement officers all have a stake in how it is answered. Getting it right has direct consequences for infrastructure project delivery across the continent.

FRIDAY 9 OCTOBER 2026 - STREAM A: CONSTRUCTION ADJUDICATION AND DISPUTE AVOIDANCE (Joint AfAA and CIARB Kenya) >

11:20 to 12:50
SESSION 11A

Government as Client: Public Procurement Disputes and the Limits of Enforcement Against the State

Friday Stream A | Construction Adjudication and Dispute Avoidance (Joint AfAA and CIARB Kenya)

ABOUT THE SESSION

Government is the dominant infrastructure client in Africa and the most common source of disputes - through late payment, scope changes, politically motivated interference and procurement irregularities. The structural imbalance between government as sovereign and government as contracting party creates a dispute environment that standard commercial frameworks are not designed to handle.

WHY THIS TOPIC

African infrastructure disputes cannot be adequately addressed without addressing government behaviour as a contracting party. Construction lawyers, adjudicators and arbitrators spend enormous resources on disputes that better procurement practice would have prevented. This session asks who is responsible for changing that and what change looks like.

FRIDAY 9 OCTOBER 2026 - STREAM A: CONSTRUCTION ADJUDICATION AND DISPUTE AVOIDANCE (Joint AfAA and CIArb Kenya) >

14:00 to 15:30
SESSION 12A

Dispute Avoidance Before the Arbitration Clause Triggers: DAABs, FIDIC and the Upstream Argument

Friday Stream A | Construction Adjudication and Dispute Avoidance (Joint AfAA and CIArb Kenya)

ABOUT THE SESSION

The forward-looking conversation aligned with the global DRBF direction. The profession is shifting from dispute resolution to dispute avoidance. DAABs have a strong evidence base for preventing disputes from escalating and resolving those that do escalate quickly and cheaply. Despite this, they are rarely used on African infrastructure projects. This session addresses why and what must change.

WHY THIS TOPIC

The DRBF's Rome and Kigali 2026 conferences are both focused on dispute avoidance. Nairobi must be part of that conversation. Positioning the Takuka Conference within the global discourse on dispute avoidance gives it international relevance and distinguishes it from a standard arbitration conference.

FRIDAY 9 OCTOBER 2026 - STREAM B: ACCESS TO JUSTICE SYSTEMS - KENYA'S CONSTITUTIONAL FRONTIER (CIARB Kenya-owned) >

Joint Close (16:00 to 16:30): Full conference reconvenes. Stream A and Stream B rapporteurs report back. Final reflections. Official close of the Takuka Conference 2026.

09:30 to 11:00
SESSION 10B

AJS and the Constitution: Kenya's Legal Foundation and the Implementation Gap

Friday Stream B | Access to Justice Systems - Kenya's Constitutional Frontier (CIARB Kenya-owned)

ABOUT THE SESSION

The constitutional conversation. Article 159 of Kenya's Constitution mandates the promotion of AJS as an alternative form of dispute resolution. This session examines what that mandate actually requires of the judiciary, the legislature and practitioners - and measures it against what has been delivered across counties. The gap is real and measurable.

WHY THIS TOPIC

Kenya has a constitutional obligation that no other African jurisdiction has formalised at this level. The implementation gap undermines the constitutional promise and reduces AJS to a rhetorical commitment rather than a functioning system. Kenya has the opportunity to demonstrate to the continent what genuine constitutional commitment to indigenous justice looks like - but only if the implementation gap is closed.

FRIDAY 9 OCTOBER 2026 - STREAM B: ACCESS TO JUSTICE SYSTEMS - KENYA'S CONSTITUTIONAL FRONTIER (CIARB Kenya-owned) >

11:20 to 12:50
SESSION 11B

Culture as the Foundation of AJS: Why the Constitution Recognised What Communities Already

Friday Stream B | Access to Justice Systems - Kenya's Constitutional Frontier (CIARB Kenya-owned)

ABOUT THE SESSION

The cultural depth conversation. AJS derives its legitimacy not from Article 159 but from the communities that have practised it for generations. The constitutional recognition formalised what was already working. This session examines the cultural architecture of AJS - the values, the community structures, the restorative principles - and asks what formalisation must preserve rather than replace.

WHY THIS TOPIC

Without understanding the cultural foundation of AJS, formalisation risks creating a legal category that has the name of indigenous justice but none of its substance. The communities that rely on AJS do not need a constitution to tell them it works. But they need legal frameworks that preserve what makes it work when those frameworks interact with formal law.

FRIDAY 9 OCTOBER 2026 - STREAM B: ACCESS TO JUSTICE SYSTEMS - KENYA'S CONSTITUTIONAL FRONTIER (CIARB Kenya-owned) >

14:00 to 15:30
SESSION 12B

AJS and Formal ADR: Competition or Complementarity? Knew

Friday Stream B | Access to Justice Systems - Kenya's Constitutional Frontier (CIARB Kenya-owned)

ABOUT THE SESSION

The interface conversation that closes the AJS stream. What is the relationship between customary dispute resolution and formal mediation, arbitration and adjudication? Can AJS outcomes be recognised and enforced through formal channels? Does formal ADR complement AJS or compete with it for the same community disputes? This session does not resolve these tensions - it maps them honestly and asks what policy and practice should do with them.

WHY THIS TOPIC

Getting the AJS-formal ADR interface right has continental implications. Other African jurisdictions are developing their own frameworks for recognising indigenous dispute resolution. Kenya's experience - with its Article 159 constitutional mandate and its active judiciary collaboration - is the most developed on the continent. What Kenya learns here, the continent will eventually follow.

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Save The Date
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