



African Society of  
Cambridge University

# Concept Note

**Africa Together Conference  
2026**

Africa in the Age of Disruption



# About

**Africa enters 2026 at the centre of global transformation.** Geopolitical alliances are being reconfigured, economic models are shifting under the pressure of global volatility, and technological advances are outpacing regulatory capacity. Across the continent, political transitions, regional security realignments, climate shocks, and demographic forces are redefining both risks and opportunities.

From the Sahel's withdrawal from long-standing regional blocs, to civic awakenings in East Africa, to South Africa's landmark hosting of the G20 Summit, the continent is navigating a world in which traditional assumptions no longer apply. **These developments reveal not a continent reacting to disruption, but one actively reshaping its pathways,** forging new alliances, and challenging inherited dependencies.

Across the continent, countries are turning disruption into opportunity—from green hydrogen leadership in Namibia and Morocco, to digital innovation in East and West Africa, democratic renewal in Southern Africa, creative influence from Nigeria and South Africa, and major infrastructure transformation in the Horn. These diverse bright spots affirm a central truth: **disruption is a catalyst for reinvention, and every African nation is shaping its own response.**

**Africa Together Conference 2026** explores how African governments, businesses, innovators, and citizens can forge a strategic, resilient, and forward-looking response to this global era of uncertainty. In this **Age of Disruption, Africa is not merely adapting to a fractured world; it is repositioning itself within it.** New coalitions are emerging. Governance models are being rewritten. Innovation is being driven not from the margins, but from necessity.

Hosted at the **University of Cambridge** by the African Society of Cambridge University (ASCU), ATC 2026 will convene leading thinkers, policymakers, business leaders, cultural icons, innovators, and emerging voices to interrogate Africa's strategic choices. This year's conference focuses on five thematic tracks that capture **the critical areas shaping the continent's trajectory.**

# Thematic Tracks

01

## Geopolitics and Global Realignment

**Africa's global partnerships are evolving as BRICS expands, Western alliances recalibrate, and new strategic actors enter the landscape.**

### Key Questions:

- How can Africa strengthen its leverage in a multipolar world order?
- What strategies secure influence amid US–China competition?
- How should African states navigate shifts in aid, security arrangements, and regional blocs?
- How will Africa's new G20 representation shape global governance?

02

## Economic Futures & Industrial Transformation

**Amid debt pressures, trade tariffs, currency instability, and fractured supply chains, African economies are redesigning models for resilience.**

### Key Questions

- How can AfCFTA accelerate industrialisation and regional value chains?
- What is required to build shock-proof logistics, ports, and transport corridors?
- How can green industrialisation and responsible mineral development drive competitiveness?
- What governance reforms can unlock private investment and reduce sovereign risk?
- How can African economies build resilience against global commodity and capital volatility?

**Africa stands at the frontier of a new digital era where data governance, cybersecurity, and AI ethics will determine agency.**

#### Key Questions

- How can Africa shape AI regulation that reflects its realities and values?
- What digital public infrastructure safeguards citizen rights?
- How can fintech, e-commerce, and innovation hubs scale sustainably amid global capital shifts?
- What Africa-built technological solutions can transform global markets?
- How do African societies future-proof education and labour systems for an AI-driven world?

**As populations grow younger and civic expectations rise, states face new pressures to govern effectively.**

#### Key Questions

- How can states strengthen institutions, the rule of law, and responsive governance amidst democratic decline and rising insurgency?
- What models of inclusive leadership can navigate complex social transitions?
- How are digital communities reshaping collective action and political participation?
- How should Africa's demographic advantage be managed relative to ageing regions?
- How can societies address inequalities, gender-based violence, and fragility in high-risk contexts?

**Africa's creative industries—music, film, fashion, literature, games, and digital storytelling—are reshaping global culture and redefining the continent's influence.**

#### Key Questions

- How can Africa harness its creative economies as engines of soft power and economic growth?
- What business models best support the global expansion of African art, entertainment, and fashion?
- How can intellectual property, digital rights, and fair compensation be strengthened for creators?
- How can cultural expression build social cohesion, civic identity, and global influence?
- What role do creative industries play in shaping Africa's narrative in an era of disruption?

# Closing Call to Action

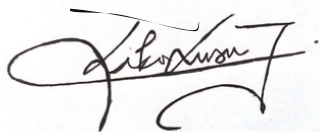
As we look toward ATC 2026, we invite you to **stand with us in shaping Africa's response to an era defined by rapid change**. Africa in the Age of Disruption reflects not only the challenges before us, but the ingenuity, resilience, and strategic agency that define this moment. Across the continent, nations are transforming uncertainty into opportunity—demonstrating that disruption is not merely a force to withstand, but a catalyst for reinvention.

We call upon partners, sponsors, innovators, and leaders to join this collective effort. Your engagement will help create a space where ideas converge, collaborations take root, and solutions emerge to guide Africa's next chapter. Together, we can amplify the continent's diverse strengths—from technological breakthroughs and creative expression to governance reform and regional cooperation.

By contributing your voice, expertise, or support, you help shape a conference that empowers Africa's brightest thinkers and boldest leaders. ATC 2026 is more than an event; it is a platform for connection, imagination, and action.

We welcome your participation in making ATC 2026 a defining milestone in Africa's pursuit of resilience, sovereignty, and shared prosperity.

Sincerely,



**Junior Lusu Kika**  
President



**Michelle Hadebe**  
Conference Chair

# Get In Touch

We are excited to partner with you to make ATC 2026 a defining event that accelerates Africa's growth and global influence. For further details, please reach out—we look forward to creating a lasting impact together.

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