Call for Papers: Manenga Ndulo Conference on Economic Development - “Securing Africa’s Industrial and International Trade Situation Amidst Global Shifts”

By:

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Overview

Since 2006, the Southern Africa Institute for Policy and Research (SAIPAR) has fostered research, expert analysis, policy dialogue, and the exchange of knowledge on various issues and challenges facing Africa. The Institute has, in collaboration with the Institute for African Development at Cornell University, U.S.A. and other organisations, previously organised academic conferences on various themes ranging from poverty and inequality to data issues and dynamics in the African context. In 2025, SAIPAR intends to organise a Conference on Economic Development to be held in **Lusaka, Zambia, from**

12 to 14 August 2025 in honour of Professor Manenga Ndulo. Prof Ndulo is a leading scholar in economics and a distinguished educationist who has trained many Zambian economists.

The theme of the Conference is “Securing Africa’s Industrial and International Trade Situation Amidst Global Shifts”.

The conference will focus on the following four subthemes:

1. ***Global and Regional Integration impacts on Africa's Development Prospects****:* Africa is accelerating its integration agenda and yet its intra-regional trade and overall global trade both remain dismally small relative to the rest of the world. The integration process provides prospects for African development by promoting regional value chains, regional value addition, export sophistication, import substitution, and so on. However, there are uncertainties around the effect of the process on the level of intra-African trade, investment and growth. We welcome papers around this theme that foster a deep dive into the complexities and nuances of international trade and Africa's economy amid the fragmentation of production and regional value chains, as well as trade remedies, dispute resolution and intellectual property rights. For many countries, trade in services remains peripheral. Papers exploring strategies for economic diversification to reduce reliance on limited export commodities and services, examining the role of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) in bolstering intra-African trade and its effectiveness are particularly encouraged. Trade and climate change papers are welcome.

2. ***Industrial Policy and Industrial Development in Africa****:* Africa is a net importer of manufactured goods while it exports primary commodities. The initial gains in industrialisation vanished with the neglect of industrial policy in the 1990s. This theme seeks papers with practical African strategies to build its industrial base amidst increasing globalisation. This sub-theme will cover conversations centred around the return to industrial policy and structural transformation.

3. ***Role of Higher Education in Innovation and Development in Africa****:* In principle, higher education plays a critical role in fostering innovation and development. However, the higher education sector has been neglected in some African countries while other countries have progressed and are exporting higher education services. The financing, organisation and management of higher education services has varied across countries and regions in Africa. This has impacted on innovation and quality of education which can potentially affect development. This theme will accept papers around higher education addressing questions around; trade in education services, organisation and outcomes of higher education, innovative financing of higher education and role of state and private sector driven education.

4. ***Disparities in Urban-Rural Development in Africa's Housing Markets****:* The housing sector in Africa reflects deep disparities between urban and rural areas, shaped by uneven economic development, infrastructure investment, and policy priorities. Urban centers experience rapid population growth, rising property prices, and the proliferation of informal settlements due to housing shortages, while rural areas remain characterised by limited investment, inadequate housing quality, and insufficient access to essential services such as clean water, sanitation, and electricity. These imbalances reinforce socio-economic inequalities and hinder inclusive development. This sub-theme invites papers that explore the structural and policy-driven causes of urban-rural housing disparities, innovative financing mechanisms for equitable housing development, and integrated planning models that bridge the urban-rural divide. Contributions analysing the impact of globalisation on real estate dynamics, foreign direct investment in housing markets, and the role of the AfCFTA in shaping spatial development and housing policy are particularly encouraged.

We invite and encourage policy-oriented papers that align with the conference's overarching theme, offering practical insights and evidence-based recommendations.

*For details on the Call for Papers, see **here**.*

Submission Guidelines:

Interested authors should submit their extended abstracts by **1 April 2025** to **manenganduloconference@gmail.com**. Based on the extended abstract submissions, full papers and advanced papers addressing the Conference theme will be considered for presentation. We encourage the submission of applied research papers and policy—and solution-oriented papers with strong empirical foundations.

Authors are asked to submit their papers and register for the Conference according to the following schedule:

• Submission of Abstracts: 1 April 2025

• Submission of advance papers: 10 June 2025

• Notification of acceptance: 30 June 2025

• Last day for registration for presenters: 10th July 2025

• Conference dates: 12-14 August 2025

Early career and PhD Young African researchers are especially encouraged to submit their articles. The Conference will provide an opportunity to share and disseminate work with a broader audience and receive feedback on the work.

Format Guidelines for Papers

• Read the guidelines thoroughly. Papers will not be reviewed if they do not follow the submission guidelines.

• Papers should be submitted electronically to **manenganduloconference@gmail.com**

• All manuscripts should be submitted dually, in PDF and Word formats, with 1.5 line spacing. We strongly recommend manuscripts not to exceed 8,000 words. The suggested length includes reference lists, figures, and tables. Excessively long submissions may be summarily rejected.

• Please use 12-point Times New Roman or a similar font. The margins should be 1.5 inches on the top, bottom, and sides.

• Your paper should include a title page with each author's name, affiliation, and contact information (email address). • Include an abstract of 100 or fewer words.

• We do not require a cover letter.

Review process:

All abstracts/papers will be blind peer-reviewed. Only original, high-quality work will be accepted for presentation.

Sponsorship and Awards:

Limited funding is available for selected academics. A distinguished panel will assess the papers presented and award a prize to a young author whose work is deemed the best conference paper. The winner will be announced at the closing ceremony.

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