



2025 IRSK ANNUAL CONFERENCE

JOINT PRESS RELEASE

3rd Edition of the IRSK Annual Conference: Strengthening COMESA's Role in a Shifting Global Landscape

Nairobi, 22 August – As global dynamics continue to shift rapidly, driven by technological advancements, geopolitical realignments, climate change, and economic disruptions, the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) faces both unprecedented challenges and unique opportunities. In response, the annual IRSK Conference 2025 will convene from 1–3 October 2025, in Nairobi Kenya, offering a timely and interdisciplinary space for dialogue, knowledge exchange, and strategic foresight.

Jointly hosted by the COMESA, the International Relations Society of Kenya (IRSK), Konrad Adenauer Stiftung (KAS) – Kenya Office, the African Center for the Constructive Resolution of Disputes (ACCORD) and Acacia Dialogue Center (ADC), this 3rd edition of the IRSK Annual Conference presents an exciting convergence of theory and practice in international relations and diplomacy.

Held under the theme, **"Enhancing COMESA's Strategic Positioning and Resilience in the Evolving Global Order"**. The three-day conference will bring together key stakeholders, including diplomats, government officials, policymakers, scholars, business leaders, media, and civil society from the COMESA region and beyond. Through exciting blend of insightful keynotes, roundtable discussions, research presentations, book launches, workshops, and networking events, the conference will foster collaboration and facilitate knowledge sharing among participants, enabling meaningful contributions towards an empowered COMESA region, capable of navigating complex global challenges with confidence and cohesion.

We expect over 130 delegates from Kenya, Uganda, S.A, Australia, Zambia, Ethiopia, Zimbabwe among others. The participants will include a mix of high-level guests, seasoned experts and emerging voices in international relations and diplomacy, providing a rich tapestry of perspectives and experiences.

At the conference, participants will critically interrogate theoretical, conceptual and methodological approaches as well as instruments adopted to deal with the issues within the COMESA region and its 30 years of impact. These are to be embedded in elaborate, innovative and empirical examination in order to spur both rigorous academic and policy discourse.

The conference's outcomes shall be converted into actionable strategies and policies that will help inform more effective diplomatic approaches to addressing some of the region's most complex challenges.

Participants are invited to register for the IRSK Conference 2025 through our dedicated registration ticket portal: https://gig.co.ke/event/gev_1031/ticket. Early registration is encouraged to secure participation in this high-level event. In the lead-up to the conference, IRSK and its partners will collaborate with selected media outlets to ensure broad coverage and engagement. **Participants are responsible for all their logistics including flights, accommodation and visa.**

Media organisations interested in partnering or covering the event are encouraged to contact the conference press for further information.

For media inquiries, please contact:

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ACCORD



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About the Organisers

The International Relations Society of Kenya (IRSK) is the professional body for the International Affairs and Diplomacy fields in Kenya. The Society serves as a forum for the exchange of ideas, networking, and programmatic initiatives among those involved in the study, teaching, and practice of international relations and diplomacy. IRSK works to promote policy dialogues on international affairs and diplomacy between various parties, carry out pertinent and substantial research, and engage in conversation and collaboration with various actors at national, regional, and international levels. www.irskkenya.or.ke

The Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) was established in 1994 to replace the former Preferential Trade Area (PTA). It is the largest Regional Economic Community with a total of 21 Member States. COMESA's main focus is to promote economic prosperity through regional integration. Its objective also includes the promotion of peace and security in the region as espoused in Article 3(d) of the COMESA Treaty. The program on peace and security specifically focuses on governance, conflict prevention, conflict management and post-conflict reconstruction. www.comesa.int

The African Centre for the Constructive Resolution of Disputes (ACCORD) is a civil society institution working throughout Africa since 1992 to bring creative African solutions to the challenges posed by conflict on the continent. ACCORD impacts political developments by bringing conflict resolution, dialogue, and development to the forefront as an alternative to protracted conflict. As part of its strategic objectives, ACCORD aims to generate, document, and share knowledge that positively impacts on conflict prevention, management, resolution, and transformation. www.accord.org.za

The Konrad Adenauer Stiftung (KAS) is a German political foundation committed to promoting democracy, the rule of law, social market economy, and international cooperation. Named after Germany's first post-war Chancellor, Konrad Adenauer, the foundation operates globally as a think tank and provider of civic education. It supports political dialogue, policy research, and leadership development, with a strong focus on innovation, security, and democratic participation. www.kas.de/en/web/kenia

The Acacia Dialogue Center (ADC) is a pan-African think tank and policy advisory organisation rooted in indigenous African traditions of dialogue and community. Drawing inspiration from the symbolic Acacia tree, the Center promotes peacebuilding, climate resilience, good governance, and inclusive development. Through research, strategic partnerships, and capacity building, it supports governments and communities in addressing complex challenges across Africa with locally grounded, sustainable solutions. www.acaciadialogue.com