



AFRICA IN A TRANSACTIONAL WORLD

Can a New Deal Between State and Private Sector Deliver the Continent a Winning Hand?

The gloves are off — states are deploying blunt and direct tools to advance their economic interests. The resurgence of economic nationalism is no longer a distant threat; it is a defining reality, shaping policies from the Americas to Asia and Europe.

In Africa, the potential effects of this paradigm shift are clear. Financing African growth will become harder, with capital seeking safe haven due to economic volatility, governments needing to step in where development aid has been cancelled, and the costs of living and debt-servicing reaching new heights. Faced with this reality, African leaders have little room to manoeuvre.

But this transactional approach to trade and foreign policy is also an invitation to recognise that **the private sector can be Africa's real superpower**. Because our economic resilience now hinges on **agricultural self-sufficiency, financial innovation, digital acceleration, and industrial capacity** that only the private sector can deliver.

It's now time for governments to strike a **New Deal with the African private sector**. A New Deal anchored on **three pillars**:

- Improvement of Governance and Accountability.** Can African governments foster a more business-minded approach to policymaking? Will a new generation of leaders take the bold decisions and investments required? How can tech-enabled governance raise policy impact?
- Targeted Public Policies Addressing Africa's Structural Challenges.** How can smart industrial policies promote value addition in strategic exports? Which domestic industries should be prioritised for a productivity revolution? Can Africa capitalise on a closing industrialisation window in energy, labour and manufacturing?
- Accelerated Continental Free Trade Agreement Implementation.** When will the political obstacles to the AfCFTA finally be removed? Which transport, power and digital infrastructure should be prioritised to create real economic corridors? Can the AfCFTA pool African economic power in a confrontational world?

In a world in which the nexus between public and private is at its peak, **the Africa CEO Forum will convene 2,000 CEOs, investors, heads of state, and ministers** to deliver Africa a winning hand. On **12-13 May 2025**, let us assert ourselves in a transactional world and give the private sector an unequivocal mandate to defend **the interests of the African continent**.

Over the course of two days, the Africa CEO Forum community will engage in debates, negotiations, discussions, and workshops to lay the groundwork for a New Deal. Key topics to be explored include:

AI-Powered African Governments:
Future Vision or Pipe Dream?

No Grid, No Growth: How to Solve Africa's Power Transmission Problem

Breaking New Ground: Can African O&G Turn Divestments into Dominance?

Mine, Not Yours: Are Hard-Ball Tactics Yielding Results for African Nations?

Charting New Trade Routes: Shoring Up Supply Chain Resilience Amid Global Trade War

From Factory to Port: Why Infrastructure Will Drive Africa's Industrial Revolution

End of Aid: Can Local Financing and Philanthropy Fill the Development Gap?

Project Finance: How Can the Private Sector Navigate the Cost of Capital Crisis?