



Press Release

CHIEF JUSTICE RAYMOND ZONDO ADDRESSES AFSA JAW CONFERENCE – PRAISING THE SIGNING OF THE AFSA - SADC ALLIANCE CHARTER

10th April 2024: Speaking at the gala dinner event held on Day 2 of the Arbitration Foundation of Southern Africa's (AFSA's) inaugural Johannesburg Arbitration Week (JAW), in welcoming Chief Justice Zondo, Michael Kuper SC, Chairman of AFSA stated, "It gives me great honour to introduce the man who the history of our country will regard as an icon of South Africa."

In presenting the keynote address, Chief Justice Raymond Zondo stated, "Arbitration is shaped and strengthened by a rich and varied jurisprudence, which has been founded on the principles of respect found in the region's culture of Ubuntu. The signing of the AFSA - SADC Alliance Charter is wonderful and reflects our shared African Arbitration culture". He went on to state, "Let the region take its rightful place in the practice of arbitration to the benefit of the entire Southern African region".

The event hosted by AFSA was attended by dignitaries from across Africa and the world included the Hon. Titus Mvalo, Minister of Justice Malawi; Minister of Justice Lesotho, Hon. Richard Ramoetsi; Deputy Minister of Justice Zimbabwe, Hon. Nobert Mazungunye; Hon. Advocate Rapelang Motsieloa, Attorney General Lesotho; Flavio Menete, SADC Lawyers Association President; Santhaa Krishnan, Commonwealth Lawyer's Association; Janine Myburgh, LPC Chair South Africa; Stanley Nyamanhindi, CEO SADCLA; and James Banda, SADCLA Past President.

Over 400 local, African and International delegates gathered at the Sandton Convention Centre from Tuesday 9th April 2024 for the inaugural Arbitration Foundation of Southern Africa's (AFSA's) Johannesburg Arbitration Week (JAW), to network, debate and hear 95 speakers covering 9 themes over 3 days with 12 co-hosts, 7 sponsors and over 25 supporting organisations.

The theme for Day 2 was 'Old Problems New Challenges' with Pinsent Masons kicking off with 'Arbitration as an Enabler for the African Energy Transition: from fossil fuel to renewable power' moderated by Thethe Mokele with speakers: Dr Wikus Kruger; Thomas King; and Emma Roberts. This was followed by KPMG's session focused on 'Technology into the Future: from tape recording to arbitrator – how will technology shape arbitration?' moderated by Déan Friedman and Rupesh Vashist.

Allen & Overy's session focused on 'The future of Investment Protection in the SADC region: domestic courts, regional forums or international arbitration?' moderated by Michelle Porter-Wright with panellists: Prof Lise Bosman; Mmiselo Qumba; Xolelwa (Mtumbi) Mlumbi-Peter; and Svetlana Vasileva. Webber Wentzel's panel discussion 'International Treaty Arbitration: ISDS and associated reforms, from a continental perspective' was moderated by Nick Alp with panellists: Toby Landau KC; Matthew Weiniger KC; Sarah McKenzie; and Dr Fola Adeleke.

Herbert Smith Freehills' session 'ESG: fertile ground for disputes?' moderated by Fiorella Noriega Del Valle included speakers: Michael Schottler; Andrew Cannon; and Dr Patricia Nacimiento.

During 39 Essex Chamber's session on 'Integrity in International Arbitration', moderator: Edwin Glasgow CBE KC was joined by speakers: Justice Nageswara Rao; Vivek Kapoor; Peter Ashford; Patrick Lane SC; and Svetlana Vasileva.

In CDH's session, 'Looking at international disputes in an evolving legal environment: are African lawyers prepared?' The panel moderated by Clive Rumsey, discussed relevant industries in which Africa will play a critical role, the inevitable disputes that will develop and how those disputes can best be resolved, with panellist: Khaya Mantengu and speakers: Jacqueline Waihenya; Veronica Connolly; and Kimlynne Olivier.

Herbert Smith Freehills' session, 'How Helpful are Experts in Arbitration?' consisted of speakers: Adv Azhar Bham SC; Prof David Butler; Hannah Ambrose; Laurence Franc-Menget; and Mike McClure KC.

KPMG's session 'Chartered Accountant: expert, expert in a dispute, or arbitrator?' moderated by Déan Friedman included panellists: Susan Breytenbach; Louise Jordaan; and Huns Biltoo.

Pinsent Masons' session on 'Arbitration and Mining in Africa: managing commercial and political risks.' Was moderated by Jason Smit with speakers: Mark Thomas; Graham Coop; Margo Werner; and Nanri Labuschagne.

In the final sessions for the day, General Council of the Bar South Africa discussed 'Arbitrations an Unwitting Facilitator of Corruption in Government?' with moderator: Adv. Seleka SC alongside panellists: Adv. Gerhard Cilliers SC; Adv. Chohan SC; and Adv. Greta Engelbrecht SC. While Advocates Group 621's session on 'Arbitration in Niche Areas: business rescue, intellectual property, and corporate governance.' moderated by Jason Mitchell consisted of speakers: Arnold Subel SC; Bongani Manentsa; Christiaan Bester Panellists: Mmusi Seape ; Mpho Sethaba; and Makhotsa Lengane.

JAW 2024 is hosted by the Arbitration Foundation of Southern Africa (AFSA); and co-hosted by Advocates for Transformation (AFT); Allen & Overy; Bowmans; China-Africa Joint Arbitration Centre (CAJAC); CDH; General Council of the Bar of South Africa; Herbert Smith Freehills; KPMG, Pinsent Masons, Webber Wentzel, 39 Essex Chambers and Advocates Group 621. Sponsors for the event included White & Case, Cape Bar, Control Risks, HKA, Jus Mundi, StoneTurn and Fireblade Aviation.

ENDS

For more information and to register: <https://johannesburgarbitrationweek.co.za/>

About JAW

JAW brings together arbitration professionals, to unpack issues and challenges in the ever-changing world of international commercial arbitration; while paying special attention to significant initiatives that contribute and transform dispute resolution in Africa. This year's event is being hosted at the Sandton Convention Centre, from 9-11 April 2024 and features a multitude of both local and international speakers focusing on 9 insightful and topical themes over the three-day conference.

About AFSA

AFSA is a private dispute resolution authority that manages and administers the confidential resolution of a wide-range of local and international disputes by way of mediation, adjudication, arbitration and related processes. AFSA is a non-profit organisation that counts among its founding members many of the leading firms and institutions in the attorney, accounting and advocate professions as well as organised business and affiliated bodies.

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