

26<sup>th</sup> February 2025

52<sup>nd</sup> Session of the Monthly ARSO Webinar

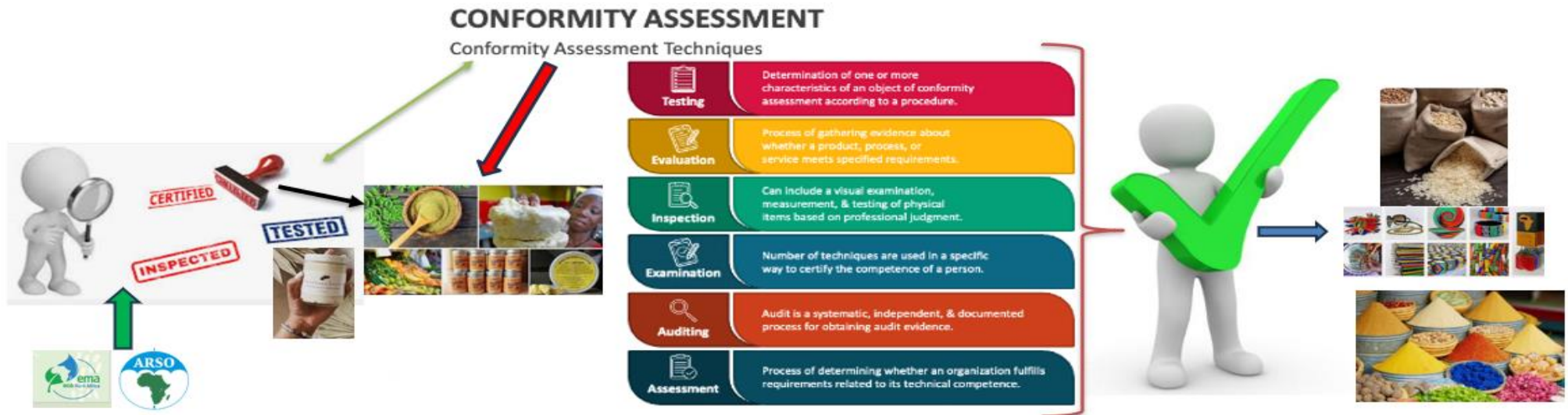
Time: 2:00 – 4:00 (14:00 – 16:00) PM- EAST AFRICAN TIME.



**Theme: The Necessity and Impact of Testing in Conformity Assessment for sustainable development.**

**Topic: Evolving Needs for Testing of products in Trade, Industry and Society and the role in Sustainable development.**

**Host: Dr. Hermogene Nsengimana, Secretary General ARSO**



# The Plenary/Panelists



Welcome to the 52nd ARSO Monthly Webinar

## The Necessity and Impact of Testing in Conformity Assessment for sustainable development

Topic - Evolving Needs for Testing of products in Trade, Industry and Society and the role in Sustainable development.

HOST



Dr. Hermogene Nsengimana  
Secretary General

### Webinar Details

Wednesday, 26th February 2025

1400 HRS to 1600 HRS EAT

English - French Interpretation

Register Here - <https://tinyurl.com/arsocoformity>



Live Streamed on the AAU YouTube Page



52nd ARSO  
Monthly Webinar

The Necessity and Impact of Testing in Conformity Assessment for sustainable development

### PANELISTS



Understanding the ARSO Conformity Assessment Programme and Conformity Assessment compliance methods including Testing and why it is crucial to Industry, Society, Trade and Sustainable development.

– Mr. Reuben Gisore, Technical Director, ARSO



Standards and conformity assessment procedures - Testing against specific standards as a tool for supporting manufacturer's (self) declarations of conformity to purchaser specifications or government regulations and Quality Assurance – Benefits and challenges for the SMEs.

– Mr. Wesley Aondo, Country Manager, Kenya and the Regional VOC Manager for East and Southern Africa, COTECNA



The world's measurement systems, traceability chain and measurement uncertainties: The role of Testing in Conformity Assessment and in promoting Market Access and Trade in the context of the AfCFTA.

– Mr. Douglas Nyamori, the East Africa Regional Manager for Intertek GTS



The benefits of evaluating the credibility, reliability and accuracy of testing solutions – the role of AOAC in the context Standard Method Performance Requirements and the AOAC Test Standards.

– Dr. Erin Crowley, Past-President, AOAC INTERNATIONAL and Chief Scientific Officer, Q Laboratories, Inc in Cincinnati, Ohio

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# What is Conformity Assessment

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❖ **World Trade Organization (WTO)** is an international organization that regulates international trade. It provides a framework for negotiating trade agreements, resolving disputes, and ensuring smooth, predictable, and fair trade between nations. The WTO plays a key role in setting trade rules, reducing trade barriers, and promoting economic cooperation among its 164 member countries. **Agreement on Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT Agreement)**, established in 1995, ensures that technical regulations, standards, and **conformity assessment procedures** do not create unnecessary obstacles to international trade.

## Definition & Scope

**Conformity Assessment:** refers to procedures used to determine whether a product, service, or system meets specified requirements in technical regulations or standards. These include:

- ✓ **Testing** (e.g., laboratory analysis of food safety, product quality checks)
- ✓ **Inspection** (e.g., factory audits, border control inspections)
- ✓ **Certification** (e.g., ISO 9001 certification, organic product labeling)
- ✓ **Accreditation** (e.g., ensuring the competence of testing and certification bodies)



# Key Provisions on Conformity Assessment under the WTO TBT Agreement

## Article 5 – Conformity Assessment Procedures

1. Members must ensure conformity assessment procedures are not **more strict than necessary** to meet a **legitimate objective** (e.g., health, safety, environmental protection).

2. They should not create **unnecessary barriers to trade** by imposing redundant or costly certification requirements.

3. Transparency and fairness should be maintained, ensuring **equal treatment of domestic and foreign products**.

## Article 6 – Mutual Recognition & International Standards

1. **Mutual Recognition Arrangements (MRAs):** WTO members are encouraged to recognize conformity assessment results from other countries to **avoid duplicate testing**.

2. **Harmonization:** Members should base conformity assessment procedures on international standards (e.g., ISO, IEC) to ensure global alignment.

3. **Accreditation & Peer Review:** National accreditation bodies should be aligned with international accreditation organizations (e.g., ILAC, IAF) to build trust in certification and testing results.

## Article 9 – Technical Assistance & Capacity Building

1. Developing countries should receive support and technical assistance in setting up conformity assessment infrastructure to improve market access and compliance.



# Why is Conformity Assessment Important?

- ✓ Facilitates market access by proving compliance with local and international standards.
- ✓ Builds consumer trust by ensuring product safety and reliability
- ✓ Supports regulatory enforcement by verifying adherence to health, safety, and environmental laws
- ✓ Reduces technical barriers to trade (TBT) by harmonizing standards across borders

## It can be conducted by:

- **First-party (self-declaration)** – Manufacturer or supplier declares compliance.
- **Second-party (buyer verification)** – Buyer or retailer assesses compliance.
- **Third-party (independent certification)** – Conducted by an accredited certification or inspection body.

## AfCFTA and Conformity Assessment

The AfCFTA Agreement – Annex 6 (TBT Annex) outlines commitments related to standards, technical regulations, and conformity assessment. Specifically, **Article 8 on Cooperation in Conformity Assessment** calls for:

- ✓ Harmonization of conformity assessment procedures to avoid duplicate testing and certification.
- ✓ Recognition of international standards to enhance African products' global competitiveness.
- ✓ Mutual acceptance of conformity assessment results to reduce trade costs and improve market access.
- ✓ Strengthening accredited conformity assessment bodies to ensure reliable testing, inspection, and certification.



# Conformity Assessment Initiatives at Regional and International Levels

## 1 WTO TBT Agreement (World Trade Organization – Technical Barriers to Trade)

- Encourages **harmonization of conformity assessment procedures** to avoid unnecessary trade barriers.
- Promotes **Mutual Recognition Agreements (MRAs)** to ensure that test results and certifications are accepted across borders.
- Supports developing countries in building **conformity assessment infrastructure** through technical assistance.

## 2 ISO CASCO (ISO Committee on Conformity Assessment)

- Develop international **standards for conformity assessment**, such as:
  - **ISO/IEC 17000** (Terminology and Principles)
  - **ISO/IEC 17025** (Testing & Calibration Laboratories)
  - **ISO/IEC 17065** (Product Certification Bodies)

These standards provide guidelines for testing, inspection, and certification globally.

## 3 ILAC & IAF (International Accreditation Cooperation)

- **ILAC (International Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation)**: Ensures mutual recognition of accredited laboratory test results worldwide.
- **IAF (International Accreditation Forum)**: Focuses on the recognition of product, system, and personnel certification bodies.
- ILAC and IAF promote **Multilateral Recognition Arrangements (MLAs)** to build global trust in conformity assessment.

## 4 AOAC INTERNATIONAL (Association of Official Analytical Chemists)

- Provides **validated test methods** for food safety, pharmaceuticals, and environmental analysis.
- Supports **Proficiency Testing (PT)** programs for laboratory competence verification.

## 5 COTECNA & INTERTEK (Global Testing & Certification Organizations)

- COTECNA: Provides **certification and inspection services** for trade compliance.
- INTERTEK: Specializes in **product testing, auditing, and certification** for various industries worldwide.



# Regional Initiatives

## 1 AfCFTA

Annex 6 on TBT promotes harmonized conformity assessment systems

**ARSO through its Conformity Assessment Programme (ACAP):**

- ✓ **African Eco-Mark:** Sustainability certification for African products.
- ✓ **Continental Dual Marking System:** ARSO Mark + national quality marks.
- ✓ **Self-Declaration of Conformity (ISO/IEC 17050):** Enables local manufacturers to declare compliance

## 2 AFRAC (African Accreditation Cooperation)

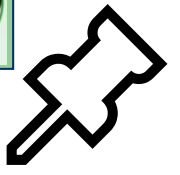
- Supports mutual recognition of **testing, inspection, and certification bodies** across Africa.
- Works closely with ILAC and IAF to align Africa's accreditation framework with international best practices.

## 3 SADCAS & SADCA (Southern African Development Community)

- **SADCAS (Southern African Development Community Accreditation Service)** provides accreditation to countries without national accreditation bodies.
- **SADCA (SADC Accreditation Cooperation)** fosters **mutual recognition agreements** among SADC member states.

## 4 PAQI (Pan-African Quality Infrastructure)

- A network of African organizations supporting standardization, metrology, accreditation, and conformity assessment.
- Includes ARSO (Standards), AFRIMETS (Metrology), AFRAC (Accreditation), and AFSEC (Electrotechnical Standards).



# Impact of These Initiatives

- ✓ Reduces trade barriers by ensuring mutual recognition of conformity assessment results.
- ✓ Enhances market access for African and international products.
- ✓ Boosts consumer confidence in product safety and quality.
- ✓ Supports SMEs & industries by simplifying certification processes.





## Objective of the Webinar

The main objective is to strategically engage the Conformity Assessment Bodies, Policy Makers, the Standardisation Community and Regulators, Traders and Manufactures and all Stakeholders and provide a platform for discussions on Conformity Assessment Practices, with particular reference to Testing as a key Technique in the conformity Assessment procedure.

## Specific Objectives

1. To facilitate better Understanding of what Conformity Assessment is and the place of Testing in Conformity Assessment?
2. To facilitate a better understanding on how Conformity Assessment fits into the Quality Infrastructure.
3. To facilitate better understanding of the different Conformity Assessment Procedures and Practices, particularly Testing.
4. To facilitate better understanding of the Testing Procedure, different Attestation methods for the testing results, application of Quality Marks and Certificates.
5. To facilitate a better understanding of how Conformity Assessment Affects or Promotes Trade and Sustainable development.
6. To create awareness on various Initiatives by the NSBs, Conformity Assessment Bodies (COTECNA, INTERTEK and AOAC) on the role of Conformity Assessment and best regulatory practices for effective Conformity Assessment systems including Mutual Recognition Arrangements.
7. To motivate Governments, Stakeholders, and Policy makers, NSBs and the Private sector to work together and consult to ensure good regulatory Frameworks for Conformity Assessment.



Dr Hermogene  
Nsengimana.

**HOST**

**Dr. Nsengimana is the Secretary General of the African Organisation for Standardisation, ARSO, since 2012.**

**Dr. Nsengimana holds a PhD in Analytical and environmental chemistry from the School of Chemistry, University of the Witwatersrand, South Africa, and a Post-doctoral Studies from the Witwatersrand University and University of Botswana.**

**Dr Hermogene Nsengimana began his Career with ARSO in 2012 as the Secretary General.**

**Steering ARSO to fulfil its Mandate of harmonizing Standards and Conformity Assessment to reduce Technical Barriers to Trade and promote Intra-African and global Trade, Dr. Nsengimana has demonstrated higher success at all key programmes of the Organisation, given his thorough understanding of the challenges of Technical Barriers to Trade issues in Africa and in World Trading systems, based on his wide knowledge of the World Trade Organisation TBTs Agreement (WTO TBT Agreement).**

**Beyond his more than 20 years of service to Africa, many of which in leadership positions, and with a long standing and clear track record with ability for delivery of results, Dr. Hermogene's specific areas of Expertise is Corporate Governance; Strategic Planning and Execution; Team Management and mentorship; Programmes Monitoring, implementation and evaluation; Trade and Economic Policy analysis and implementation, with a bias towards African Economic and Trade Policy Agenda. He has in-depth knowledge of Quality Infrastructure, with a deep grasp of its major components (Standardisation, Conformity Assessment, Metrology and Accreditation) and their interplay and how each affects trade and economies of nations of the world.**

**“Understanding the ARSO Conformity Assessment Programme and Conformity Assessment compliance methods including Testing and why it is crucial to Industry, Society, Trade and Sustainable development”.**

**Mr. Reuben Gisore, is currently, since 2012, the Technical Director at ARSO, and is responsible for the Coordination of Technical programmes with Regards to Standards Harmonisation and Conformity Assessment Systems and Resources mobilisation.**

**Mr. Gisore is highly experienced on Quality Infrastructure Issues Mr. Gisore has initiated and contributed to many of the ARSO Standardisation and Conformity Assessment Continental Policy documents, guiding the implementation of the ARSO Mandate and resources mobilization on the same and presents ARSO in various Technical International Panel Discussions on standardisation and its impact on sustainable development and in the context of Africa. Prior, Mr. Gisore worked at the Kenya Bureau of Standards (KEBS,from 1997) as a Standards Officer and represented Kenya in the harmonization of standards and trade negotiations in the East African Community and the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa, where he contributed to the formulation of the East African Community Standardization, Quality Assurance, Metrology and Testing (EAC SQMT) Act 2006 and the COMESA Standardization and Quality Assurance (COMESA SQA) Policy and participated in the initial stages of negotiating the COMESA-EAC-SADC Tripartite Free Trade Area Agreement. Currently pursuing a Doctorate (PHD) degree in Development Studies,**



**Mr. Reuben Gisore  
ARSO.**

**Panelist**

**He holds a master’s degree in Development Studies, and a BSc in Electrical and Electronics Engineer from Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology (JKUAT, 1996).**

**“Standards and conformity assessment procedures - Testing against specific standards as a tool for supporting manufacturer's (self) declarations of conformity to purchaser specifications or government regulations and Quality Assurance – Benefits and challenges for the SMEs”.**

**Wesley Aondo – Country Manager, Kenya and the Regional VOC Manager for East and Southern Africa, COTECNA.**

**Mr. Wesley Aondo is the Country Manager, Kenya and the Regional VOC Manager for East and Southern Africa, COTECNA and has over 20 years’ experience in the in testing, inspection and certification industry and has a long and exhaustive experience in the Conformity assessment.**

**His expertise covers different sectors including Technical Inspection Protocols, Technical Engineering Aspects, Metrology Methodology, Testing and Laboratory practices, Business Development, Strategic Management and Public Policy Formulation.**

**His background is in Engineering as undergraduate, and currently master’s in leadership and international business management.**



**Wesley Aondo  
COTECNA**

**Panelist.**

# **"The world's measurement systems, traceability chain and measurement uncertainties: The role of Testing in Conformity Assessment and in promoting Market Access and Trade in the context of the AfCFTA".**

**I. Mr. Douglas Nyamori - the East Africa Regional Manager for Intertek GTS.**

**Mr. Douglas Nyamori is the East Africa Regional Manager for Intertek GTS.**

**With over 20 years experience in conformity assessment industry, Mr Nyamori has been involved in the implementation of various programmes in the region, designed to facilitate trade by assisting compliance with standards and securing the international supply chain.**

**This involves participation in the design of innovative solutions that provide Assurance, Testing, Inspection and Certification (ATIC) services to customers around the world.**

**Douglas is a graduate of Chemistry and Mathematics from the University of Nairobi, and a recently certified leadership and team coach.**



**Mr. Douglas Nyamori  
/Intertek**

**Panelist.**

# “The benefits of evaluating the credibility, reliability and accuracy of testing solutions and the role of AOAC in the context Standard Method Performance Requirements and the AOAC Test Standards”.

Dr. Erin Crowley - Dr. Erin Crowley, Past-President, AOAC INTERNATIONAL AND Chief Scientific Officer, Q Laboratories, Inc, Cincinnati, Ohio.



Dr. Erin Crowley  
/AOAC

Panelist.

Dr. Erin Crowley is a former President of **AOAC INTERNATIONAL** and currently **Chief Scientific Officer** at **Q Laboratories, Inc** in **Cincinnati, Ohio** where she oversees all aspects of **Research & Development, Method Validation** and technical expertise for the **Food Safety Industry**.

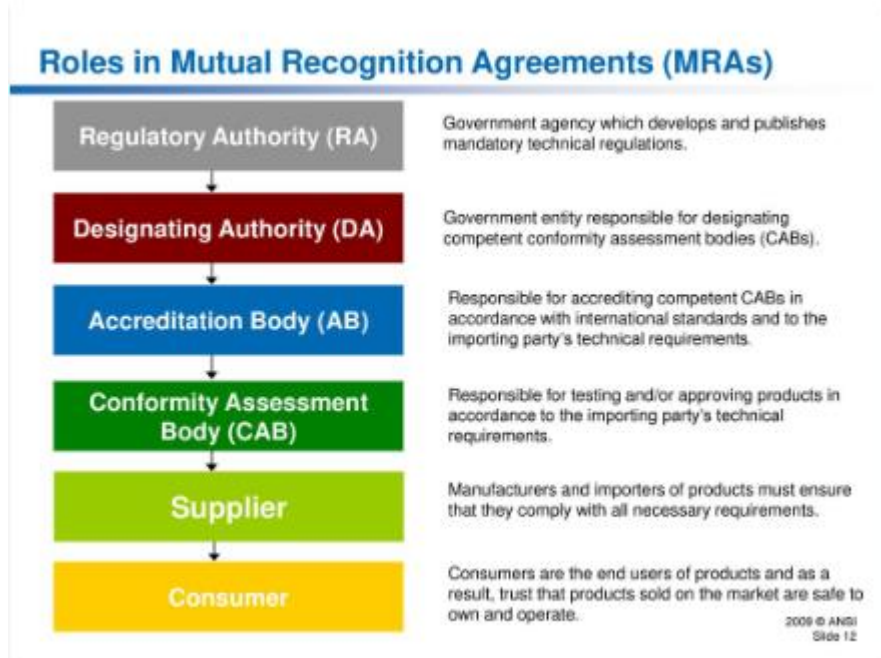
Dr. Erin and her team serve as an Expert Laboratory for **AOAC Official Methods of Analysis, AOAC Research Institute Performance Tested Methods Program, MicroVal** and **AFNOR NF Certification Programs**. Erin frequently presents technical symposia globally on **Method Validation, Method Verification, Harmonization** and **ISO standards development** often representing the perspective of the third-party laboratory. Erin is an active member of **AOAC INTERNATIONAL** and the **International Association of Food Protection (IAFP)**.

Erin has key leadership roles at **AOAC INTERNATIONAL** including **President of the Board of Directors** and **Chair of the AOAC Official Methods Board**.

Erin is a member of the **MicroVal Technical Committee (MVTC), ISO TC34/SC9/WG 3 Committee on Method Validation** and **Chair of the JIFSAN Advisory Council**. Erin earned a **B.S. from the University of Cincinnati** and an **M.A. from Tufts University**.

# “Plenary Session – Question and Answer session”

1. Chart box questions
  2. Comments and clarifications
  3. Raised hands – responses
  4. Panellists one second/Minute take-aways – recommendation on the webinar, theme, title and discussions.
1. End of the session.



## Impact

1. Increased Intra-African and Global Trade
2. Effective and Better Conformity Assessment Procedures and Programmes and activities, including for Effective Testing systems.
3. Best regulatory practices for effective Conformity Assessment systems including Mutual Recognition Arrangements
4. Public Policy for Africa's Industrialisation and sustainable development
5. Effective Regulatory Practices in the Conformity Assessment making process
6. More initiatives by NSBs, Conformity Assessment Bodies (COTECNA, INTERTEK, AOAC), in supporting Conformity Assessment activities.



## ARSO in Brief – The ARSO Webinar Themes and Dates for 2025

The ARSO 2024 Webinar themes
<p><b>51<sup>st</sup> Session</b> <b>23<sup>rd</sup> January 2025</b> co-hosted with the Kingdom of Morocco/IMANOR <b>Theme:</b> The Halal industry, Trade and Standardisation <b>Topic:</b> Halal Standards and Their Contributions to the Growth of Halal Economy and potential for Intra-African Trade under the AfCFTA.</p>
<p><b>52<sup>nd</sup> Session</b> <b>26<sup>th</sup> February 2025</b> <b>Theme:</b> The Necessity and Impact of Testing in Conformity Assessment for sustainable development. <b>Topic:</b> Evolving Needs for Testing of products in Trade, Industry and Society and the role of in Sustainable development.</p>
<p><b>53<sup>rd</sup> Session</b> : <b>26<sup>th</sup> March 2025</b> <b>Theme:</b> Africa's Strategic Commodities and Trade <b>Topic:</b> Role of standardisation in developing effective Regional Value Chains for Africa's Strategic Commodities and promotion of Intra-Africa Trade and Global Market Access.</p>
<p><b>54<sup>th</sup> Session</b> <b>23<sup>rd</sup> April 2025</b>, Co-hosted with EOS/Egypt <b>Tourism and sustainable development</b> <b>Topic:</b> Harnessing Tourism for Economic Development and Growth in Africa and Fostering Sustainable Tourism for Improved Livelihoods and the role of Standardisation and Government Policies.</p>
<p><b>55<sup>th</sup> Session</b> <b>28<sup>th</sup> May 2025</b> <b>Theme:</b> The AfCFTA Opportunities for Africa <b>Topic:</b> Making the AfCFTA work for Africa through effective policies and strategies for exports, diversification, industrialization, and value chain development.</p>
<p><b>56<sup>th</sup> Session</b> : <b>25<sup>th</sup> June 2025</b> <b>Theme:</b> The power of Africa's Mineral Resources for sustainable development <b>Topic:</b> Africa's development needs and the potential of the Mineral sector for Africa's sustainable development and the Role of Standardisation.</p>
<p><b>57<sup>th</sup> Session</b> : <b>23<sup>rd</sup> July 2025</b> <b>Theme:</b> Intra-African Trade and the Made in Africa <b>Topic –</b> Promoting the African sustainable manufacturing and trade through competitive Made in Africa Products and the role of standardisation.</p>
<p><b>58<sup>th</sup> Session</b> : <b>27<sup>th</sup> August 2025</b> <b>Theme:</b> Regulatory environment for Electricity Markets in Africa <b>Topic:</b> Facilitating intra-African Trade in Electricity through regional power pools and electricity markets – the potentials, opportunities, challenges and role of electrotechnical Standards.</p>
<p><b>59<sup>th</sup> Session</b> : <b>28<sup>th</sup> September 2025</b> <b>Theme:</b> E-mobility for the African economies and Trade : <b>Topic:</b> Africa's electric promise: Positive implications of E-mobility transformative' shift and the role of Standardisation and Government Regulatory Policies to Leverage its huge potential.</p>
<p><b>60<sup>th</sup> Session</b> : <b>22<sup>nd</sup> October 2025</b> <b>Theme:</b> Smart Africa: Implementing Smart Cities for Industrialisation, Sustainable development and transformation of the global economy. <b>Topic:</b> Benefits and Relevance of Smart Cities: Making urbanisation and Smart Sustainable Cities a powerful driver of economic development and social mobility in Africa and the role of standards and regulatory frameworks in promoting Sustainable Urban Development.</p>
<p><b>61<sup>st</sup> Session</b> <b>27<sup>th</sup> November 2025</b> : Co-hosted with EOS/ Zimbabwe <b>Theme:</b> Climate Change and Sustainable trade <b>Topic:</b> Influencing sustainable production and trade through Sustainability Standards and certification.</p>

**Theme: Africa's Strategic Commodities and Trade**

**Topic: Role of standardisation in developing effective Regional Value Chains for Africa's Strategic Commodities and promotion of Intra-Africa Trade and Global Market Access.**



The challenges arising from continually fluctuating commodities prices and Africa's limited value addition to its natural resources renders Africa vulnerable to the external shocks derived from export dependency and therefore necessitates a holistic rethinking and a new approach to the question of how Africa's commodities wealth can drive the continent's development. The recognition of the challenges and opportunities from Africa's commodity wealth has been reflected in different decisions of the African Union (AU) including the Arusha Declaration on African Commodities as well as other frameworks such as the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Program (CAADP), the Africa Mining Vision (AMV) and the Strategy for the Accelerated Industrial Development of Africa (AIDA). With the adoption of Agenda 2063 as the strategic framework to guide Africa's inclusive economic growth, the AU undertook to consolidate and guide the development of an Africa wide commodities strategy that will ensure a more coherent and collaborative process of African states developing, managing and benefiting from their natural resources and collectively positioning the continent to live up to its potential as an economic powerhouse.

**The continental Commodities Strategy is a flagship project of the AU's Agenda 2063 and envisions a commodity-led industrialisation: developing Africa's commodities as a driver for achieving the structural, social and economic transformation of the continent. The strategy aims to identify, formulate and drive the implementation of policies and programmes that will enable African countries to add value, extract higher rents from their commodities, integrate into global value chains and promote vertical and horizontal diversification anchored in value addition and local content development.**

## Tanzania Hosts the 31<sup>st</sup> ARSO General Assembly Meetings/ the 2025 ARSO week, in Zanzibar

The Government of the Tanzania through the Tanzania Bureau of Standards, TBS is scheduled to Host the 31st ARSO General Assembly Events, including the Annual African Day of Standardisation Forum and the Made in Africa Expo (Made in Tanzania) on 23rd – 27th June 2025 under the Theme: “Accelerating Fair and Just Trade in Africa under the African Continental Free Trade Area through an African Coherent Regulatory Framework and Harmonised Standards”.



The Theme is based on the AU 2025 theme “Justice for Africans and People of African Descent Through Reparations”. The theme was officially launched by Heads of State and Government during the 38<sup>th</sup> AU Summit held on 15<sup>th</sup> February 2025, in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.



Thank you

Merci

For more information

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[www.arso.org](http://www.arso.org)