

A **REPORT**

on the Proceedings and
Policy Insights from the

5th AFLIGA Fireside Dialogue

TOPIC

THE RUPTURING OF THE RULES-BASED MULTILATERALISM SYSTEM:

Implications for Africa's future
in terms of trade, security,
foreign direct investment (FDI),
artificial intelligence (AI),
and democratic governance

MARCH, 2026



Dr. Emmanuel Dei-Tumi
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Institute of Global Affairs (AFLIGA)



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Foreword



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Economist & Security Analyst



The global landscape in 2026 is defined by a paradox of unprecedented connectivity and deepening fragmentation. As we witness what many describe as the rupturing of the rules-based multilateral system, the foundational principles that governed international trade and security for over half a century are being fundamentally tested. For Africa, this is not merely an academic debate; it is a structural shift that demands a recalibration of our economic and security doctrines.

As an economist and security analyst, I have long observed that the stability of our continent's growth is inextricably linked to the predictability of global norms. However, the reassertion of raw sovereignty and the emergence of a multipolar New World Order have introduced a level of volatility that traditional frameworks are ill-equipped to manage. We are seeing a shift from universal trade rules to a patchwork of transactional agreements, and from collective security to localised, interest-driven interventions.

This report, which documents the proceedings of the **5th AFLIGA Fireside Dialogue**, arrives at a critical juncture. It captures a high-level exchange on how Africa can transform this global rupture into a moment of strategic agency. The discussions herein go beyond surface-level analysis, tackling the complexities of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) as a shield against global protectionism and the dual-edged

nature of Artificial Intelligence in our security and governance architectures.

What makes this dialogue particularly significant is its custodian: the **Africa Future Leaders Institute of Global Affairs (AFLIGA)**. In an era where the youth dividend is Africa's greatest asset, **AFLIGA** serves as the vital bridge between current policy challenges and the ethical, innovative leadership required to solve them. The insights in this document reflect **AFLIGA's** commitment to African Solutions for African Problems, a mantra that is moving from a rhetorical ideal to a geopolitical necessity.

As you read through these pages, I invite you to look past the crisis of the present and focus on the opportunity of the future. The rupturing of the old system provides Africa with the rare chance to help draft the new rules. Whether it is through insisting on local value addition in our mineral wealth or establishing our own digital sovereignty in the age of AI, our path forward must be defined by collective economic resilience and a proactive security posture.

I commend **AFLIGA** for convening this timely discourse and the participants for their rigorous contributions. This report is more than a summary of a conversation; it is a roadmap for navigating the complexities of a world in transition.



Table of Contents

Foreword	ii
Executive Summary	iv
1. Background and Context	1
2. Objectives of the Dialogue	2
3. Participation and Audience Profile	4
4. Panel Composition	5
5. Overview of Discussions	6
5.1 The Crisis of Rules-Based Multilateralism	5
5.2 Power Politics and the Reassertion of National Interest	7
5.3 The Role of Major Powers in Reshaping Global Governance	8
5.4 Implications for Global Institutions: The United Nations and Beyond	8
5.5 Africa's Position: Between Marginalisation and Opportunity	9
5.6 Internal Constraints and the Imperative of African Unity	9
5.7 Strategic Implications for Trade, Security, and Governance	10
6. Key Takeaways	11
7. Recommendations	14
7.1 Next Steps	15
8. Overview of AFLIGA	17
9. Conclusion	18
10. References	17
LIST OF FIGURES	
Figure 1: Objectives of the Dialogue	3
Figure 2: Participants' Gender	4
Figure 3: The moderator, Dr Dei-Tumi, setting the tone for the discussion	7
Figure 4: Prof Felix Kumah-Abiwu analysing the current international system, arguing that global powers are increasingly acting outside established multilateral frameworks.	8
Figure 5: Dr Litlhare Rabele stressing the need for reforms in the UN, relooking at the veto power of some states, which limits the UN's ability to respond effectively to global crises.	9
Figure 6: Key Takeaways from the Fireside Dialogue	13
Figure 7: Recommendations	15
Figure 8: Event Flyer	19



Executive Summary

The Africa Future Leaders Institute of Global Affairs (AFLIGA) convened the 5th Fireside Dialogue on 29th March 2026 under the theme “The Rupturing of the Rules-Based Multilateralism System,” focusing on the implications of the emerging global order for Africa’s future in trade, security, foreign direct investment (FDI), artificial intelligence (AI), and democratic governance.

The dialogue brought together leading scholars and practitioners from across Africa and the African diaspora to critically examine the shifting dynamics of global governance. Central to the discussion was the growing perception that the post-World War II multilateral system, once anchored in rules, institutions, and cooperative diplomacy, is undergoing significant strain, driven by rising geopolitical tensions, unilateral state actions, and the reassertion of national interests by major powers.

A key insight from the dialogue was that the current global transition does not necessarily signal the complete collapse of multilateralism, but rather its transformation into a more fragmented and transactional system. In this evolving context, power asymmetries are becoming more pronounced, with global engagement increasingly shaped by strategic interests rather than collective norms.

For Africa, this transformation presents a dual reality. On one hand, the weakening of traditional global power structures creates opportunities for greater strategic autonomy, diversified partnerships, and enhanced global voice for Africa and other countries in the Global South. On the other hand, it exposes the continent to heightened geopolitical competition, potential exploitation, and continued marginalisation in global decision-making processes.

The discussion further highlighted the limitations of existing global institutions, particularly the United Nations, whose structures and decision-making mechanisms were widely viewed as outdated and insufficiently representative of contemporary geopolitical realities. Calls for reform, especially within the UN Security Council, featured prominently.

Critically, the dialogue underscored that Africa’s position in the emerging global order will be determined not solely by external shifts, but by internal coherence and strategic agency. Unfortunately, persistent challenges, including weak institutional capacity, limited regional integration, and governance deficits, continue to constrain the continent’s ability to effectively leverage global opportunities.

The session concluded with a strong consensus on the need for Africa to adopt a proactive, coordinated, and forward-looking approach to global engagement. This includes strengthening continental institutions, investing in strategic sectors, and asserting a unified voice in international affairs.

Ultimately, the dialogue reaffirmed that while the global order is changing, Africa’s ability to shape its future within it will depend on its willingness and capacity to act decisively, collectively, and strategically.

01

Background and Context

The Africa Future Leaders Institute of Global Affairs (AFLIGA) convened a high-level 5th edition of the Fireside Dialogue on Sunday, 29th March 2026, under the theme “The Rupturing of the Rules-Based Multilateralism System,” with a focused discussion on “Implications of the New World Order for Africa’s Future: Trade, Security, FDI, AI and Democracy.”

This dialogue was situated within a rapidly evolving global context characterised by increasing geopolitical tensions, shifting power dynamics, and growing scepticism toward long-standing multilateral institutions. For over seven decades, the post-World War II international system, anchored on institutions such as the United Nations and shaped by principles of collective security, international law, and cooperative diplomacy, has provided a framework for managing global relations. However, recent developments suggest a gradual erosion of this system, marked by unilateral actions by major powers, weakened adherence to international norms, and the rise of transactional diplomacy.

This 5th edition of the dialogue drew attention to the emerging multipolar global order, where influence is increasingly distributed among multiple state and non-state actors. While this shift potentially creates space for greater inclusion of historically marginalised regions, it also introduces heightened uncertainty, competition, and fragmentation in global governance. For Africa, this transformation presents a paradox: it offers new opportunities

The Fireside Dialogue, served as a timely platform to interrogate not only the nature of the changing global order but also Africa’s preparedness to navigate and shape these transformations.

for strategic engagement and diversification of partnerships, yet simultaneously exposes the continent to intensified geopolitical contestation and external dependency.

Importantly, the session was framed by a critical question raised during the opening remarks: whether Africa risks remaining absent from key global decision-making platforms, thereby having its future shaped by external actors or will reorganize to push for a seat at the table? This concern underscores a longstanding structural challenge in international relations, the marginalisation of Africa despite its demographic, economic, and geopolitical significance.

The Fireside Dialogue, therefore, served as a timely platform to interrogate not only the nature of the changing global order but also Africa’s preparedness to navigate and shape these transformations. By bringing together scholars and practitioners from across Africa and the diaspora, AFLIGA reinforced its role as a convening space for strategic reflection on Africa’s place in global affairs, with a strong emphasis on policy-relevant discourse and forward-looking analysis.

02

Objectives of the Dialogue

The AFLIGA Fireside Dialogue, held on a quarterly basis, is designed as a policy-oriented engagement to critically examine structural and systemic shifts in the global architecture and their implications for Africa. Beyond serving as a platform for intellectual exchange, the dialogue seeks to generate actionable insights that can inform policy, academic discourse, and leadership development across the continent.

Specifically, the 5th edition of the dialogue aimed to:

A. Interrogate the Transformation of the Global Order

To critically assess the extent to which the rules-based multilateral system is undergoing rupture, decline, or transformation, and to identify the key drivers underpinning these changes, including geopolitical rivalries, economic nationalism, and evolving security dynamics.

B. Examine the Implications for Africa's Strategic Sectors

To analyse how the emerging global order affects Africa's core development and governance priorities, particularly in:

- Trade and economic integration, including shifting global supply chains and market access
- Security and peacebuilding, in the context of declining multilateral cooperation
- Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) flows and patterns
- Technological advancement, especially in artificial intelligence and digital governance

- Democratic governance and institutional resilience

C. Explore Africa's Agency in Global Affairs

To evaluate the extent to which Africa can transition from a passive participant ("rule-taker") to an active shaper ("rule-maker") within the international system, and to identify strategies for enhancing continental voice, representation, and influence.

D. Assess the Effectiveness of Multilateral Institutions

To critically examine the relevance, legitimacy, and effectiveness of global governance institutions, particularly the United Nations, in addressing contemporary global challenges, and to explore pathways for reform that reflect current geopolitical realities.

E. Promote Policy-Relevant Dialogue and Thought Leadership

To create a platform for informed, solution-oriented discussions among scholars, practitioners, and emerging leaders, in line with AFLIGA's broader mission of advancing thought leadership and capacity building in Africa, in global affairs.

F. Encourage African-Centred Perspectives and Solutions

To foreground African experiences, historical contexts, and indigenous perspectives in analysing global trends, while promoting the principle of **African-led solutions to African challenges** in both policy and practice.



Figure 1: Objectives of the Dialogue

03

Participation and Audience Profile

The Fireside Dialogue recorded a total of 80 high-level participants, reflecting strong interest in the subject matter and AFLIGA’s growing reach across diverse geographic and professional contexts.

Participation spanned 14 countries, including Botswana, Liberia, Ghana, Malawi, Uganda, Nigeria, Rwanda, South Sudan, Tanzania, the United States, Zimbabwe, South Africa, Eswatini, and the United Kingdom. This wide representation underscores the transnational relevance of the issues discussed and highlights AFLIGA’s ability to convene a globally dispersed yet Africa-focused audience.

In terms of gender distribution, the session recorded 56 male and 24 female participants,

indicating a reasonable level of engagement while also pointing to the continued need to strengthen gender inclusivity in high-level policy dialogues.

Overall, the diversity of participants, cutting across regions, professional backgrounds, and levels of expertise, enriched the quality of the discussion, enabling a multiplicity of perspectives on Africa’s position within the evolving global order.

Participants' Gender

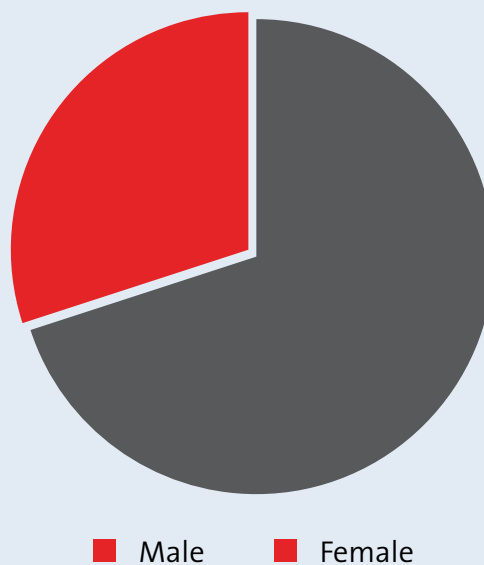


Figure 2: Participants' Gender

04

Panel Composition

The dialogue featured a distinguished panel of scholars and practitioners with expertise spanning international relations, peace and security, African studies, and global governance.



Prof. Felix Kumah-Abiwu

Kent State University, USA



Dr Litlhare Rabele

University of Pretoria, South Africa



Dr Victor Kofi Afetorlom Doke

Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Centre, Ghana (representing Prof. Kwesi Aning)



Prof. Munyaradzi Nyakudya

University of Zimbabwe, Zimbabwe



Dr. Emmanuel Dei-Tumi

Executive Director, AFLIGA

The panel struck a balance between academic depth and policy-relevant expertise, with contributions grounded in both scholarly research and practical experience across regions of Africa and the diaspora.

5.1 The Crisis of Rules-Based Multilateralism

The dialogue opened with a critical interrogation of the stability and relevance of the post-World War II rules-based multilateral system. Setting the tone for the discussion, Dr Dei-Tumi, who served as the moderator, framed the session around a central concern: whether the global order is experiencing a “rupture” or gradual erosion, and what this means for Africa’s future.

Re-echoing the statement by the Prime Minister of Canada, Mark Carney, he posed the question whether “Nations that are absent from the table risk having their futures decided for them.”?

Prof. Felix Kumah-Abiwu argued that while the international system has historically been anchored in established rules and institutions, there is growing evidence of a weakening of these norms, particularly as powerful states increasingly act outside agreed multilateral frameworks. He described the current moment as one marked by uncertainty, where the predictability that once characterised global governance is steadily diminishing.

“There seems to be this... fading away of the rule-based system that we all grew up studying.”
— **Prof. Felix Kumah-Abiwu**

He cautioned against a simplistic conclusion that a completely new world order has emerged. Instead, he suggested that what is being witnessed is a “fading” or “decaying” of the existing order, rather than its total collapse. This distinction is significant from a policy perspective, as it implies that existing institutions remain relevant, even if their authority is being challenged.

Importantly, Prof. Munyaradzi Nyakudya challenged the notion that the current moment represents an entirely new rupture. Drawing from a historical perspective, he argued that Africa has long experienced disruptions in global and regional orders across different periods.

“I want to believe that we have lived through generations of the rupturing of the status quo within Africa for various reasons.”
— **Prof. Munyaradzi Nyakudya**

This perspective reframed the discussion by suggesting that the current shifts should be understood not as unprecedented, but as part of a broader historical continuum of systemic change.



Figure 3: The moderator, Dr Dei-Tumi, setting the tone for the discussion

5.2 Power Politics and the Reassertion of National Interest

A dominant theme across the discussion was the resurgence of power politics and the prioritisation of national interest over collective global governance.

Dr Victor Kofi Afetorlom Doke of the Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Centre provided a critical perspective, arguing that the notion of a rules-based system has always been somewhat uneven in practice. According to him, global “rules” have historically reflected the interests of dominant economic and military powers, raising questions about their neutrality and fairness.

“There were rules, but rules that favoured those who were dominant.”

— **Dr Victor Kofi Afetorlom Doke**

He further noted that the current moment is characterised by an explicit return to realist principles in international relations, where states act primarily to protect their sovereignty and strategic interests. This shift is evident in the increasing use of unilateral actions, economic leverage, and military influence by powerful states.

Similarly, Dr Litlhare Rabele emphasised a fundamental transformation in the nature of diplomacy. She observed that global engagement has shifted from dialogue-driven multilateralism to transactional diplomacy, where interventions are increasingly conditioned on strategic gains.

“It is no longer diplomacy based on dialogue; it is now transactional. What is in it for me?”

— **Dr Litlhare Rabele**

This transactional approach, she argued, undermines the normative foundations of multilateralism, particularly the principles of cooperation, mutual accountability, and respect for international law.

Complementing these perspectives, Prof. Nyakudya noted that while power politics presents clear challenges, it may also create openings for Africa to rethink its strategic positioning. He emphasised that periods of global disruption can generate both risks and opportunities, particularly for regions willing to act strategically within changing power dynamics.



Figure 4: Prof Felix Kumah-Abiwu analysing the current international system, arguing that global powers are increasingly acting outside established multilateral frameworks.

5.3 The Role of Major Powers in Reshaping Global Governance

The panel devoted significant attention to the role of major powers, particularly the United States, in influencing the trajectory of the global order.

In response to questions on the implications of contemporary foreign policy approaches, Dr Doko highlighted the prominence of “America First”-style policies, which prioritise domestic interests and strategic dominance. He noted that such approaches reflect a broader global trend in which states increasingly pursue self-interest, often at the expense of multilateral cooperation.

Expanding on this, Dr Rabele argued that the conduct of powerful states is reshaping global diplomacy in ways that privilege coercion and leverage over dialogue and consensus-building. She pointed to instances where international engagement is tied to conditional benefits, reinforcing asymmetrical power relations between states.

While acknowledging these concerns, Prof. Kumah-Abiwu offered a more nuanced perspective. He noted that the United States has historically played a central role in maintaining global stability through multilateral institutions, particularly in the post-Cold War era. However, he also recognised that recent deviations from established norms, such as unilateral interventions, pose significant risks to the legitimacy and effectiveness of these institutions.

This divergence in perspectives reflects an important analytical tension: whether current

developments represent a departure from past norms or a continuation of longstanding patterns of power asymmetry in global politics.

5.4 Implications for Global Institutions: The United Nations and Beyond

The weakening of multilateral norms has direct implications for global governance institutions, particularly the United Nations.

Prof. Kumah-Abiwu warned that the increasing tendency of powerful states to bypass multilateral processes could undermine the authority and credibility of the United Nations, which has historically served as a platform for dialogue and conflict resolution.

The panel broadly agreed that while institutions such as the UN remain relevant, they are facing significant legitimacy and effectiveness challenges, especially in addressing contemporary conflicts and geopolitical tensions.

Dr Rabele further emphasised the need for structural reforms, particularly within the UN Security Council. She criticised the persistence of outdated power structures, including veto powers held by a small group of states, arguing that these limit the institution’s ability to respond effectively to global crises.

This call for reform reflects a broader consensus that global governance institutions must evolve to reflect current geopolitical realities, including the growing importance of the Global South.



Figure 5: Dr Litlhare Rabele stressing the need for reforms in the UN, relooking at the veto power of some states, which limits the UN’s ability to respond effectively to global crises.

5.5 Africa’s Position: Between Marginalisation and Opportunity

A central thread throughout the discussion was Africa’s position within the evolving global order.

Prof. Kumah-Abiwu highlighted the historical marginalisation of Africa in global decision-making processes, noting that the continent has often functioned as a “rule-taker” rather than a “rule-maker.” However, he also suggested that the current transformation of the global system presents an opportunity for Africa to assert greater agency, particularly in advocating for reforms and strengthening its voice in international institutions.

“Africa has always been considered as the rule-taker of the world. We have to be there now to make the rules.”
— **Prof. Felix Kumah-Abiwu**

From a historical perspective, Prof. Munyaradzi Nyakudya emphasised the need to understand Africa’s past in order to chart its future trajectory, posing the critical question: “Where did the rain begin to beat us?”

He argued that meaningful engagement with the future requires a clear understanding of the past, including the structural and historical factors that have shaped Africa’s current position.

At the same time, he emphasised that the evolving global context could create new opportunities for Africa to act collectively, leverage its resources, and reposition itself within the international system.

“Africa has an opportunity now to really speak and act with one voice.”
— **Prof. Munyaradzi Nyakudya**

5.6 Internal Constraints and the Imperative of African Unity

Despite the opportunities presented by a shifting global order, speakers were unanimous in highlighting the internal challenges that continue to limit Africa’s global influence.

Dr Rabele stressed the urgent need for Africa to organise itself internally, bluntly pointing to persistent weaknesses in institutional capacity and coordination.

“The continent needs to organise itself internally. Nothing of our own works.”
— **Dr Litlhare Rabele**

Similarly, Dr Doke raised concerns about governance challenges, including corruption and weak institutional frameworks, arguing that these undermine Africa’s ability to effectively leverage external opportunities.

A key takeaway from this segment was that Africa's external positioning is deeply intertwined with its internal realities. Without strengthened governance systems, regional integration, and collective action, the continent risks remaining vulnerable to external pressures despite changes in the global system.

5.7 Strategic Implications for Trade, Security, and Governance

The discussion also explored the practical implications of the changing global order for Africa's key strategic sectors.

- **Trade and Investment:** The evolving global landscape may create opportunities for diversified partnerships and increased investment flows. However, there is also a risk that Africa remains confined to its traditional role as a supplier of raw materials, unless deliberate efforts are made toward value addition and industrialisation.

- **Security and Peacebuilding:** The weakening of multilateral cooperation could result in more unilateral interventions and reduced global support for peacekeeping efforts. This underscores the need for African-led security mechanisms and strengthened regional cooperation.

- **Governance and Democracy:** External geopolitical influences may shape governance trajectories across the continent. Speakers emphasised the importance of strengthening democratic institutions to ensure resilience in the face of these pressures.

Overall, the panel underscored that Africa must adopt a proactive, strategic approach to navigating the emerging global order rather than remain reactive to external developments.

The 5th AFLIGA Fireside Dialogue generated several critical insights with direct implications for policy, research, and strategic engagement across Africa. These insights also align with key debates in international relations and global political economy.

A. The Rules-Based Multilateral System is Under Strain, Not Obsolete

While the current global order is experiencing visible stress, manifested through unilateral actions, declining compliance with international norms, and increasing geopolitical tensions, it has not entirely collapsed. Rather, it is undergoing a gradual transformation (Eilstrup-Sangiovanni & Hofmann, 2020).

This reflects ongoing scholarly debates on the resilience and adaptation of the liberal international order, particularly the argument that multilateralism is evolving rather than disappearing (Ikenberry, 2018). The system continues to function, albeit in a more fragmented and contested form, requiring reform and recalibration rather than outright abandonment.

B. Power and National Interest are Reasserting Dominance in Global Affairs

The resurgence of interest-driven state behaviour underscores a return to the core assumptions of realist theory, in which states prioritise survival, power, and national interest over collective commitments (Basrur & Kliem, 2020).

Major powers are increasingly engaging in unilateral decision-making, strategic competition, and selective cooperation (Basrur & Kliem, 2020). This shift is redefining the operational logic of multilateralism, moving

it away from norm-based cooperation toward power-based bargaining and strategic alignment (Patrick et al., 2021).

C. Global Institutions Face a Crisis of Legitimacy and Effectiveness

Institutions such as the United Nations remain central to global governance, but they are increasingly constrained by structural and operational limitations. Key challenges include:

- Structural imbalances, particularly the concentration of power within the UN Security Council (López-Claros et al., 2020)
- Limited responsiveness to emerging and complex global conflicts (Medjdoub & Lammari, 2025)
- Erosion of trust and legitimacy among member states (Ungar, 2024)

These concerns align with critiques in the literature on institutional legitimacy and global governance reform, which argue that existing institutions reflect outdated power configurations and are insufficiently representative of the Global South.

D. Africa's Marginalisation Persists, but Opportunities are Emerging

Africa continues to occupy a relatively peripheral position in global decision-making processes, often functioning as a “rule-taker” within international systems. This reflects longstanding structural inequalities highlighted in dependency theory and postcolonial international relations (Masumbe, 2024).

However, the evolving global order, particularly the shift toward multipolarity, presents a strategic opening for Africa to:

- Advocate for institutional reforms
- Diversify diplomatic and economic partnerships
- Strengthen its collective bargaining power

This aligns with emerging scholarship on Global South agency, which emphasises the ability of developing regions to exercise influence within shifting power structures (Lala, 2019).

E. Internal Cohesion is Central to Africa's Global Relevance

A recurring theme was that Africa's external positioning is deeply dependent on its internal organisation. Weak institutions, governance deficits, and limited regional coordination continue to undermine the continent's ability to act collectively on the global stage (Irabor & Irabor, 2025).

This insight reflects perspectives from regional integration theory and state capacity literature, which emphasise that effective participation in global governance requires strong domestic institutions and coordinated regional frameworks.

Without internal cohesion, Africa risks remaining vulnerable to external pressures despite changes in the global system (Okoli & Atelhe, 2021).

F. The Shift Toward Transactional Diplomacy Carries Risks for Africa

The transition from dialogue-based multilateralism to transaction-driven diplomacy reflects a broader shift toward strategic bargaining in international relations. While this creates opportunities for negotiation and leverage, it also risks reinforcing asymmetrical power relations, where weaker states may be compelled to exchange strategic assets (natural resources, political alignment, or policy concessions) for short-term benefits (Meerts, 2020). This aligns with critiques in neo-realist and critical political economy literature, which highlight the risks of unequal exchanges in global systems.

G. Strategic Sectors Require Proactive Policy Responses

The changing global landscape has direct implications for Africa's key development sectors, requiring deliberate and forward-looking policy responses:

- Trade and FDI: There is an urgent need to move beyond primary commodity dependence toward industrialisation and value addition, consistent with structural transformation theories (Abdulle, 2024).
- Security: The weakening of multilateral security guarantees necessitates stronger African-led peace and security mechanisms, aligned with regional security frameworks (Amusan & Oyewole, 2017)
- Governance: External geopolitical pressures highlight the importance of resilient democratic institutions capable of maintaining stability and legitimacy (Erakpotobor, 2025)

These insights align with broader debates on developmental state theory, regional security governance, and institutional resilience.

H. African Agency Must Be Assertively Defined and Practised

A central takeaway from the dialogue was the need for Africa to transition from passive participation to active agency in global affairs.

This requires:

- Strategic diplomacy
- Investment in knowledge production and research
- Coordinated continental action
- Strong leadership at national and regional levels

This perspective aligns with the growing body of literature on African agency and Global South participation, which emphasises the importance of self-determination, voice, and strategic engagement in shaping global outcomes (De Carvalho et al., 2019; Kasera et al., 2025).

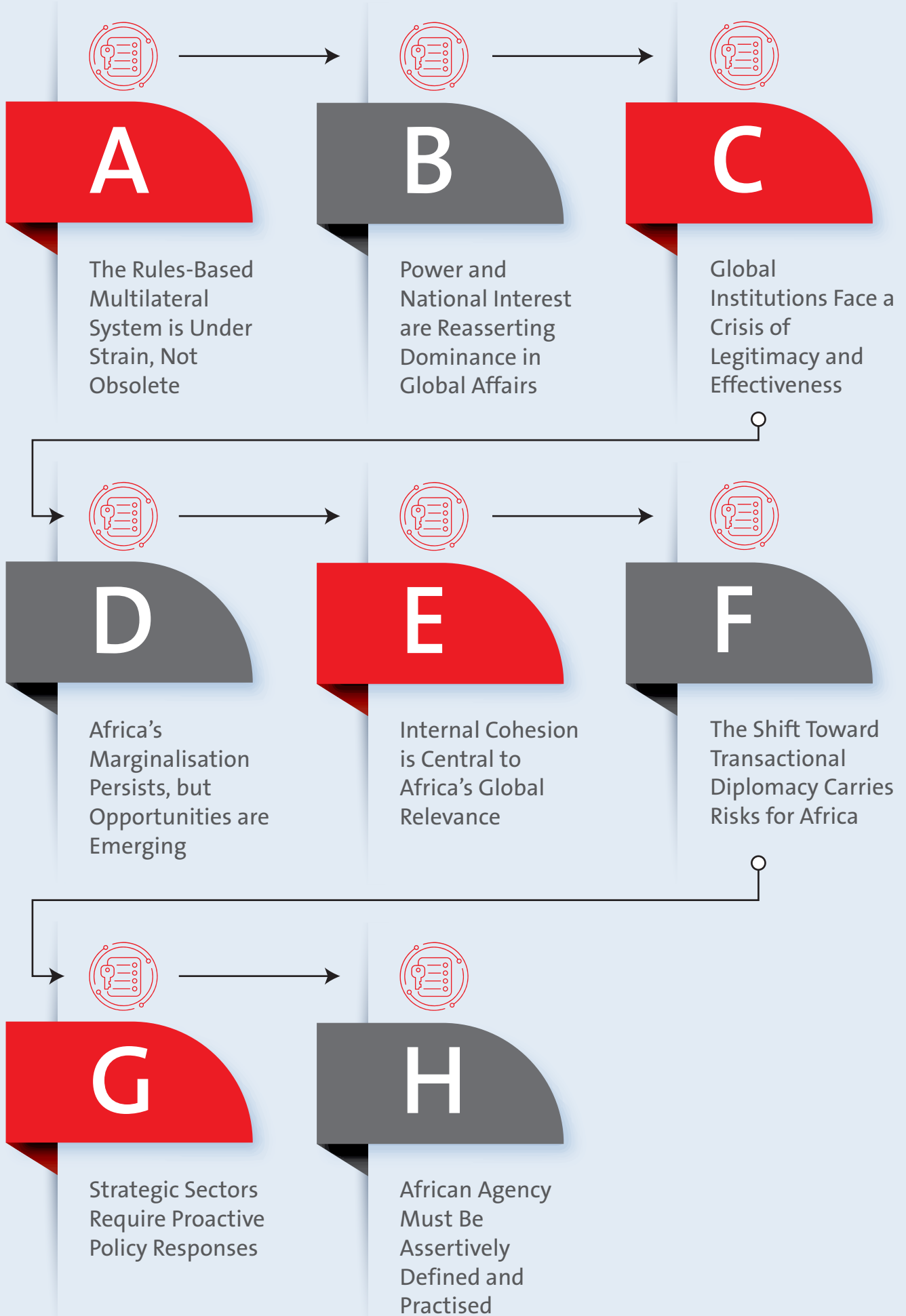


Figure 6: Key Takeaways from the Fireside Dialogue

07

Recommendations

Drawing from the insights generated during the 5th Fireside Dialogue, several strategic recommendations emerge for policymakers, regional institutions, and African stakeholders as they navigate the evolving global order.

A. Need to strengthen Africa's collective voice in global governance.

African states must move beyond fragmented engagement and adopt a more coordinated approach within international forums. This includes advancing unified positions on global issues, intensifying advocacy for reforms within multilateral institutions, particularly the United Nations Security Council, and enhancing diplomatic cooperation across the continent.

B. Institutional reform and governance strengthening remain critical.

The dialogue underscored that Africa's external influence is closely tied to its internal capacity. Addressing corruption, improving accountability, and strengthening policy coherence at both national and regional levels are essential steps toward enhancing credibility and effectiveness in global engagement.

C. The continent must prioritise African-led solutions to security challenges.

In light of the declining reliability of multilateral mechanisms, there is an urgent need to strengthen regional peace and security architectures, invest in conflict-prevention and resolution frameworks, and reduce overreliance on external actors in managing crises across the continent.

D. Africa must reposition itself within the global trade and investment landscape.

This requires a deliberate shift from raw material export dependence toward value addition, industrialisation, and economic diversification. Leveraging continental frameworks such as the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) will be critical in enhancing intra-African trade and strengthening the continent's bargaining power in global markets.

E. Investing in strategic sectors, particularly technology, artificial intelligence, and innovation.

As global competition increasingly centres on digital transformation, African countries must develop forward-looking policies, build human capital, and invest in digital infrastructure to ensure meaningful participation in the global knowledge economy.

F. Need to enhance the participation of youth and women in leadership and decision-making processes.

Given Africa's demographic profile, empowering the young women and youth in general to participate in decision-making is not only a matter of inclusion but a strategic imperative for sustainable development and effective governance.

G. Support for institutions such as AFLIGA to play a critical role in sustaining policy-oriented dialogue and knowledge production.

By convening stakeholders, generating evidence-based insights, and bridging the gap between academia and practice, such platforms can contribute meaningfully to shaping Africa's engagement with the global system.



Figure 7: Recommendations

7.1 Next Steps

In line with these recommendations, **AFLIGA** will continue to build on the momentum generated by the 5th **Fireside Dialogue** through a series of strategic actions. These include the continued organisation of **Fireside Dialogues** and **Thought Leadership Series** on emerging global and continental issues, the expansion of leadership development programmes focused on governance and diplomacy, and

the strengthening of partnerships with academic institutions, policy organisations, and development partners.

Additionally, **AFLIGA** will prioritise the production of policy briefs and reports to translate dialogue outcomes into actionable insights, while expanding its outreach to engage a broader network of stakeholders across Africa and the diaspora.

Africa Future Leaders Institute of Global Affairs (AFLIGA) is a forward-looking leadership and development institution dedicated to shaping a new generation of African leaders equipped to navigate the complexities of global affairs. Positioned at the intersection of leadership development, policy engagement, and capacity building, AFLIGA seeks to contribute to Africa's transformation by fostering ethical, innovative, and globally competent leadership.

At its core, **AFLIGA** is driven by a vision of an Africa that is self-reliant, strategically positioned, and actively engaged in shaping global outcomes. The Institute's mission centres on equipping emerging leaders with the knowledge, skills, and values required to address the continent's governance and development challenges, while positioning Africa as a proactive actor within the international system.

AFLIGA's work is anchored in a strong commitment to Pan-Africanism, inclusive leadership, and sustainable development. It recognises that Africa's progress depends not only on economic growth but also on the quality of its leadership and the strength of its institutions. As such, the Institute places particular emphasis on nurturing leaders who are grounded in African realities, globally aware, and strategically oriented.

Through its various programmes and initiatives, **AFLIGA** creates platforms for critical dialogue, policy engagement, and leadership development. Its flagship activities, including the **Thought Leadership Series** and **Fireside Dialogues**, provide spaces for scholars, practitioners, and

emerging leaders to engage with pressing global and continental issues. These platforms are complemented by targeted leadership programmes focused on youth and women, as well as initiatives to foster entrepreneurship, innovation, and policy reform.

A defining feature of **AFLIGA's** approach is its integration of academic insight with practical application. By combining rigorous analysis with real-world perspectives, the Institute ensures that its programmes are not only intellectually grounded but also relevant to contemporary policy challenges. This approach enables participants to translate knowledge into action, thereby contributing to tangible outcomes within their respective contexts.

Ultimately, **AFLIGA** represents more than an institution, it is a catalyst for Africa's leadership renaissance. By investing in people, ideas, and dialogue, it is helping to build a generation of leaders capable of redefining Africa's place in the world and driving the continent toward a more prosperous, peaceful, and globally influential future.

The 5th AFLIGA Fireside Dialogue provided a timely and substantive platform for examining the implications of a rapidly evolving global order for Africa's future. The discussions made it clear that the current moment represents not merely a disruption, but a critical inflexion point in global governance.

While the weakening of rules-based multilateralism introduces significant uncertainties, particularly for regions historically reliant on structured international systems, it also presents a strategic opportunity for Africa to redefine its position within the global arena.

However, the dialogue underscored that such an outcome is not automatic. The extent to which Africa benefits from these transformations will depend on its ability to:

- Act collectively and coherently
- Strengthen its institutions and governance systems
- Assert its voice in global decision-making platforms
- Translate its resource endowments into a strategic advantage

Crucially, the discussions reinforced the imperative for Africa to move beyond reactive engagement toward proactive global positioning, grounded in clear priorities and long-term vision.

In this regard, AFLIGA's role as a platform for thought leadership, dialogue, and capacity building remains vital. By convening diverse stakeholders and fostering critical conversations on Africa's place in the world, AFLIGA contributes meaningfully to shaping a future in which the continent is not merely affected by global shifts but actively shapes them.

Ultimately, the dialogue affirmed a central proposition: Africa's future in the emerging global order will be determined not only by external dynamics but by the continent's own agency, leadership, and strategic choices.

10

Event Flyer



AFRICA FUTURE LEADERS INSTITUTE
OF GLOBAL AFFAIRS

PRESENTS

A Fireside Discussion on

THE RUPTURING OF THE RULES-BASED MULTILATERALISM SYSTEM

TOPIC Implications of The New World Order for Africa's Future: Trade, Security, FDI's, AI and Democracy



Sunday,
29th March
2026



3pm GMT
5pm SAT
6pm EAT

Register to join us in the conversation



PANEL DISCUSSANTS



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Kent State University,
USA



DR. LITLHARE RABELE
University of Pretoria,
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Security Analyst,
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Figure 8: Event Flyer

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The Africa Future Leaders Institute of Global Affairs (AFLIGA) is a pioneering leadership and development programme designed to equip Africa's Youth and emerging leaders, entrepreneurs, policymakers, and professionals with the mindsets, skills, knowledge, and tools needed to drive transformative change across the continent.