

## African Arbitration Association Conference:



### *Delegates at the African Arbitration Association annual International Conference at Kigali Convention Center 3-4<sup>th</sup> April 2019*

Rwanda hosted over 250 arbitration practitioners that attended the first African Arbitration Association (**AfAA**) annual international arbitration conference from 3-4<sup>th</sup> April 2019 at Rwanda's iconic Kigali Convention Center. The participants were not only from Africa, but from around the world, with a common goal of ensuring that Arbitration in Africa is developed to ensure that African-related disputes are settled in Africa.

The Rwandan Chief Justice, Prof. Rugege, while opening the conference, called upon participants to set up the required standards for an effective and successful seat of arbitration - a modern international arbitration law; an independent judiciary with expertise in international arbitration; a competent legal profession;

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## KIAC and CILC Project- Strengthening the culture of ADR in Rwanda



*Stakeholders after a very interactive session discussing the achievements of the CILC project*

On 12<sup>th</sup> March 2019, KIAC and Center for International Legal Cooperation (CILC) shared the achievements of the completed 18month project that was very instrumental in strengthening the business and investment climate in Rwanda. The Netherlands Ministry of Economic Affairs through its agency the Netherlands Enterprise Agency (Rijksdienst Voor Ondernemend Nederland) funded this. In attendance was KIAC's board members and selected stakeholders in the Justice sector. The project ended in March 2019.

Speaking at the meeting, Dr. Masengo said the project provided technical assistance in strengthening KIAC's organizational capacity and financial sustainability. He added that the project support enhanced KIAC's visibility that strengthened its position as facilitator and provider of ADR services in the region and beyond.

Among the Project's outstanding achievements, include, the set up of a digital Moodle platform to facilitate an e-learning and certification course in international arbitration at the first level; training and certification of professionals; supported networking platforms that facilitated knowledge sharing between ADR experts and professionals at conferences and symposiums to discuss developments in ADR, challenges and strategies to overcome them. Furthermore, the project provided support towards reform of the ADR legal framework reform (Arbitration, mediation and conciliation, and the new KIAC arbitration rules).

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**Professionals undergo training in Arbitration**



*Professionals pose with the CIArb Tutors after the CIArb training and certification programs in January and April 2019*



*Professionals that successfully completed FCIArb will become the pioneer tutors of the Rwanda CIArb Chapter*

In an effort to build the capacity of ADR professionals through training and certification, KIAC in partnership with The Chartered Institute of Arbitrators-UK (CIArb-UK) conducted two training sessions in January 2019 and April 2019 for 51 interested at KIAC office Nyarutarama. Participants were from the EAC region, Senegal and Ghana.

Prominent arbitration experts and practitioners conducted the sessions at Associate; Membership and Fellowship levels. The candidates who successfully complete this programme will become Associate member of CIArb and will be eligible to apply for Associate-level members of CIArb, UK.

KIAC recognizes that professionals' intervention in the arbitral process is very crucial. Over the years, Rwanda has successfully created a pool of 600 professionals that are promoting a pro-arbitration culture while also facilitating them to serve better in the region and efficiently compete abroad.

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**KIAC Growing Caseload- 110 cases filed**

By May 2019, Kigali International Arbitration Centre (KIAC) has filed 110 cases with the total amount in claim worth more than at US\$50 million. This is an incredible achievement in arbitration since this is against a trend in arbitration whereby it takes 3-5 years for newly established centres to register the first case.

The significant increase in its caseload annually testament that users are increasingly entrusting KIAC with the administration of complex and high-value disputes in arbitration. Parties to cases are notably from the from USA, Italy, South Africa, Kenya, Korea, Turkey, Burundi, Nigeria, Pakistan, Senegal, Spain, Switzerland, Singapore, France, Zambia, Uganda, India, China and the African Union. This has undoubtedly fostered investment and contributed to reducing court case backlog thus raising efficiency of the administration of justice. It is also remarkable that a high percentage of the KIAC awards were enforced within at least 3-6 months and not even one of these was set aside in the Rwandan courts.