



Guidelines and Conditions of Participation

The AfCFTA Moot Court Competition (hereinafter to be referred to as ‘the Competition’) is organised by The AfCFTA Secretariat in partnership with the African Trade Policy Centre under the UN Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA), the Independent Continental Youth Advisory Council on AfCFTA (ICOYACA) and the UPSA Law School, Ghana (hereinafter – ‘the organizing committee’). The organizing committee is responsible for the administration, organization and the execution of the Competition.

The regional oral rounds of the AfCFTA Moot Court Competition will be hosted at agreed-upon regional host universities; the continental oral rounds of the Competition will be hosted in Accra, Ghana.

Academic Exercise and Professionalism

The moot court competition case is purely hypothetical and makes no reference to any real member states; please treat it as such. Students must avoid making actual references to real member states except when citing and referring to existing case law.

Administration

The AfCFTA Secretariat will cover all costs related to travel, accommodation and administrative aspects for the competition. The Secretariat will further support all teams by providing local ground transport and meals throughout the regional oral rounds and the final oral rounds of the competition.

The normal precautions applicable to international travelling should be taken. Valuables, especially memorials, should not be put in check-in luggage as this is sometimes lost by the airlines. Instead, they should be kept in hand luggage. It is strongly advised to leave a copy of the important pages of your passports both in your home country and in your room at the Moot in case you lose the originals.

The organisers will help to facilitate access to medical care where needed, but cannot assume responsibility for such costs. It is the responsibility of participants and participating institutions to make sure they take out medical insurance in advance or have other plans in place to cover such costs. The organizing committee encourages participants to obtain medical insurance for their own peace of mind and to avoid potential issues with accessing healthcare during the competition. It is advisable to travel with some medications such as pills for diarrhoea and painkillers.

Structure of the Competition:

The Competition will be structured as per the following format: The written memorial rounds will precede the regional oral rounds. The best performing teams will advance to the continental oral rounds.

Language

The participating languages of the Competition shall be Arabic, English, French and Portuguese.

Case and Timelines:

The case has been attached and circulated along with the invitation to register for the inaugural *AfCFTA Moot Court Competition*. The same case shall be applied throughout the entire Competition.

Teams are permitted to submit a maximum of five clarification questions to the case authors within the time indicated under “Timelines” below.

Timelines:

Clarification questions to the case authors must be submitted by 08 April 2024 before 23:59 GMT.

Each Team must submit an electronic copy of their written memorials in PDF format (and include a copy in Word format) by 31 May 2024 before 23:59 GMT to AfCFTA-MCC@au-afcfta.org with the subject “Written Memorials for the AfCFTA Moot Court Competition”. Written memorials submitted beyond the deadline shall incur a liability of three points for the first day of delay and five points each day for every subsequent day. No extensions will be granted with respect to the deadline.

The Competition will be structured as per the following format: The written memorial rounds will precede the regional oral rounds. The regional oral rounds will precede the continental oral rounds.

Written Memorials

All written memorials submitted for all purposes of the Competition shall strictly adhere to the rules of the Competition. Students (Speakers) must do all the research and drafting of the written submissions themselves; assistance from anyone who is not a student member of the team is prohibited and will lead to disqualification. Teams must deposit two written submissions; one on behalf of the Complainant State and the other on behalf of the Respondent State. The scores received for the Complainant and for Respondent submissions will be averaged to determine the total score for the written memorials. Written memorials account for 30% of the final score. The ten teams with the highest written memorials scores per geographical region shall advance to the regional oral rounds which will be held at the regional host universities. This means that ten institutions will be represented at the regional oral rounds.

The two teams with the highest scores from each geographical region during the regional oral rounds will proceed to the continental oral rounds in Accra, Ghana. This results in the representation of ten institutions at the continental stage.

Any modification to the written memorials after submission to the organizing committee is prohibited. The written memorials of every participating team will be published online on the AfCFTA Moot Court Competition's website after the final continental oral rounds of the Competition have been concluded; by registering for this Competition teams consent to the publication of their written memorials.

Guidelines for Formatting: Written Memorial Structure

The memorials must include the following pages only:

- i. Cover Page containing the case title, party representation of the memorial (whether Complainant State or Respondent State), name of the Competition, year of the competition, and the Team Code on top right corner of the cover page.
- ii. Table of Contents
- iii. List of Abbreviations
- iv. Index of Authorities
- v. Statement of Jurisdiction
- vi. Statement of Facts
- vii. Issues Raised
- viii. Summary of Arguments
- ix. Pleadings /Arguments Advanced
- x. Prayer
- xi. Declaration of anti-plagiarism

Failure to include the above titles and content in the written memorials shall be penalized in the form of negative scoring. Failure to include a signed Declaration of anti-plagiarism will result in disqualification.

Content Specifications

The following content specifications must be strictly adhered to:

- i. Font and Size (General) - Times New Roman, 12 pts
- ii. Line Spacing (General) - 1.5 lines
- iii. Font and Size (Footnotes) - Times New Roman, 10 pts
- iv. Line Spacing (Footnotes) - Single line
- v. Page Margins - 1 inch on all sides
- vi. The citation should follow the 20th edition of Bluebook. Speaking or pleading footnotes or Endnotes are not permitted and will be penalized in the form of negative scoring.

The Oral Rounds

Teams that have advanced to the oral rounds, both regionally and continentally, are required to participate in each of their assigned rounds. Each team shall plead at least once on behalf of the Complainant State and at least once on behalf of the Respondent State. Teams eliminated at one stage of the competition cannot progress to the subsequent stage. The oral rounds (regional and continental) shall be structured as follows:

- a. Preliminary Rounds
- b. Quarter Final Rounds
- c. Semi Final Rounds
- d. Final Round

Geographical Regions:

The sole determinant of advancement to the regional oral rounds shall be the score of the written memorials. Only ten teams per region shall advance to the regional oral rounds. Only two teams per geographic region may advance to the continental oral rounds. Due the anonymity of teams, their institutions and their countries; there is no prohibition on regional teams originating from the same country advancing to the regional or continental oral rounds. For the purposes of this Competition, countries are classified under the below geographical regions:

Central Africa: Burundi, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Republic of the Congo and São Tomé & Príncipe.

East Africa: Comoros, Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, Madagascar, Mauritius, Rwanda, Seychelles, Somalia, South Sudan, Tanzania and Uganda.

North Africa: Egypt, Morocco, Libya, Algeria, Sudan, Tunisia and the Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic.

Southern Africa: Angola, Botswana, Kingdom of eSwatini, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

West Africa: Benin Republic, Burkina Faso, Cabo Verde, Côte d'Ivoire, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea-Bissau, Guinea, Liberia, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone and Togo.

Remote Participation

Participating teams that do not advance to the continental oral rounds will be provided a link to follow the oral rounds remotely. Participating teams that do not advance to the continental oral rounds will be invited to join the workshop with the case authors remotely.

Teams that advance to the oral rounds but cannot physically attend must communicate this by email no later than 10 days of receipt of their invitation to attend the oral rounds. Remote participation for oralists will be at the discretion of the organizing committee. All interested parties who are not participating in the Competition and who are unable to attend the oral rounds in person may register to follow the oral rounds via a remote link.

Team Composition

The team responsible for drafting the written memorials shall be the same individuals representing an institution at the oral rounds; substitutions are not permitted.

An institution must register one team comprising of three students (designated as Speakers) and one faculty representative. In the case of illness of one or more of the Speakers during the oral rounds, the team shall withdraw their participation: no substitutions are permitted.

Panelists

International trade law experts appointed by the AfCFTA Secretariat as well as affiliated bodies will score the written submissions and the oral rounds. These individuals are referred to as panellists. Panellists will examine and score the written submissions according to predetermined marking and scoring guidelines.

Panels for the oral rounds will always be composed of an odd number of individuals as follows:

- i. Preliminary Rounds – three panellists
- ii. Quarter-Finals – three panellists
- iii. Semi-Finals – five panellists
- iv. Final Round – nine panellists

In the event of force majeure or other unforeseen circumstance, the organizing committee will exercise its discretion to allow an oral round to proceed with an even number of panellists. The minimum number of panellists that can assess an oral round is two.

Dress Code

The participants shall adhere to business attire when present in any room where oral pleadings are taking place during the Competition.

Participation and Registration Procedure

An institution must register a team comprising of three students and one faculty representative. An institution is permitted to register one team only. Teams must register by 31 March 2024, 23:59 GMT by submitting the completed registration form. Registration will be confirmed to the teams via electronic mail to the email indicated in their application form. The team members cannot be changed after the registration deadline unless there are exceptional circumstances; such change is at the discretion of the organizing committee.

Eligibility

Students pursuing an undergraduate LL.B. or a postgraduate LL.M degree course are eligible to participate in the competition. Only one team can participate from each institution. Students (Speakers) must be registered with the institution they represent throughout the duration of the Competition; that is from registration until the termination of the oral rounds.

Anonymity Rule and Team Codes

Each Team shall be assigned a Team Code upon confirmation of registration. All communication with the organizing committee thereafter must be made with the designated Team Code; the name of the institution must not be mentioned. Teams shall identify themselves

by their Team Codes for the duration of the Competition. Teams may disclose the names of their institutions and countries of origin to other participants. Disclosure of their own or other teams' institutions, countries of origin or geographic regions to panellists is strictly prohibited. A breach of this anonymity rule is a material violation which can lead to a punitive reduction in points or disqualification.

The oral rounds (regional and continental) shall be assessed on the following criteria:

Preliminary Rounds

Each of the ten teams will have two rounds of oral arguments in the preliminary rounds. Each team shall have a chance to argue on behalf of the Complainant State and on behalf of the Respondent. The winners of the preliminary rounds, i.e. a total of eight teams, shall qualify for the quarter-final Rounds.

Quarter-final Rounds

This round shall be comprised of eight teams, there shall be one round of oral arguments per team. The winners of the quarter-final rounds will advance to the semi-final rounds.

Semi-final Rounds

The semi-final rounds shall comprise of four teams; there shall be one round of oral arguments per team. The two teams with the highest scores shall be declared as winners of the semi-final rounds and shall qualify for the final rounds.

Final Rounds

The final round shall comprise of two teams; there shall be one round of oral arguments per team. The winner of the final round shall be declared winner of the Competition; the opposing team shall be declared as the runner-up.

General Rules:

The match up of teams in preliminary, quarter-final and semi-final rounds shall be determined on the basis of a draw of lots. In the event of a tie, after taking winning scores into consideration,

the team(s) with the higher written memorials scores will advance into next rounds. The decision of the panellists with regards to the outcome of the rounds shall be final. Teams (including their coaches and/or faculty representatives) shall not be allowed to observe the orals of another team, unless they have been officially eliminated from the Competition. This act is referred to as Scouting and it is strictly prohibited. Scouting by any team shall result in disqualification.

Awards

The following awards will be given to the participating teams at the oral rounds. Only the teams qualified for the oral rounds are eligible for the awards.

1. The Winner
2. The Runner-up
3. The Best Complainant's Written Memorials
4. The Best Respondent's Written Memorials
5. The Best Overall Written Memorials (combined scores of the Complainant and Respondent written memorials).
6. The Best Orator of the Preliminary Rounds
7. Best Orator of the Quarter-finals
8. The Best Orator of the Semi-finals
9. The Best Orator of the Final Round

AfCFTA MOOT COURT COMPETITION

Roadmap

Dates	Activity
December 2023	Official Launch and Publicizing of the Moot Court Competition (Official launch on Friday 8 December 2023)
01 March 2024	Registration opens and circulation of the AfCFTA hypothetical case/moot problem
31 March 2024	Registration Closes
08 April 2024	Deadline for requests from teams for clarification to the AfCFTA moot problem
15 April 2024	Response to clarifications
31 May 2024	Deadline for submission of written briefs and memorials.
01 July 2024	Announcement of finalists for the regional oral rounds.
August 2024	Regional oral rounds to be held in respective geographic regions.
01 September 2024	Deadline for regional winners to confirm participation in the final oral rounds.
November 2024	AfCFTA final oral rounds to be held at the Secretariat.