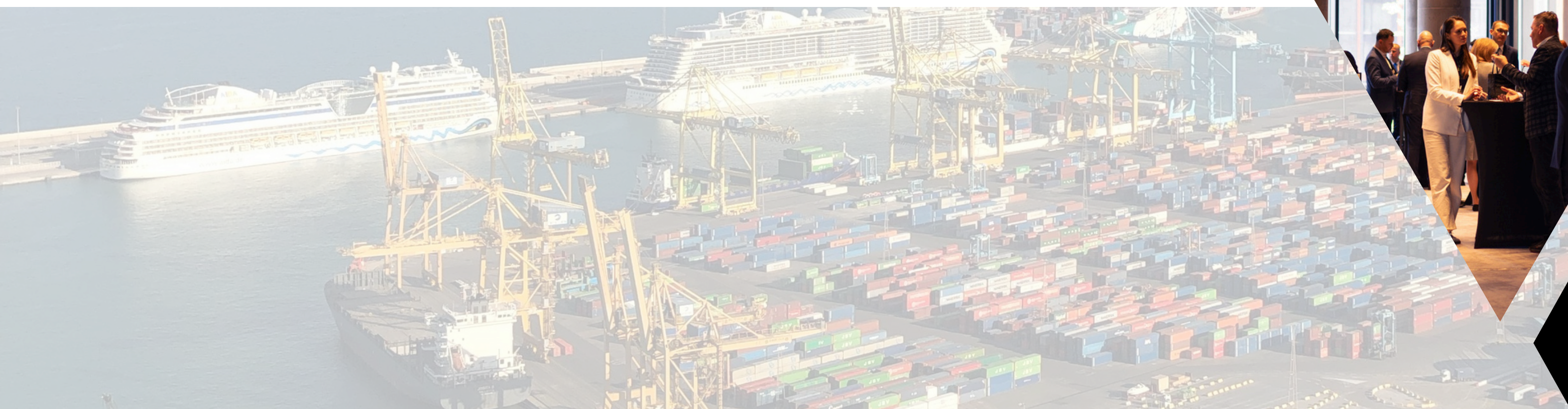


# East Africa Trade, Treasury & Commodities Summit 2025

1st April 2025, Radisson Blu Hotel, Nairobi Upper Hill



Presented by



Supporting Partner



Treasury Partner



Community Partner



TREASURY EXCELLENCE AS STANDARD





SUCCESS IS OUR STRATEGY IN TRADE



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**MERGE** is delighted to present the inaugural **‘East Africa Trade, Treasury, and Commodities Summit 2025’**. This one day in-person gathering will bring together the industry’s brightest minds from the East Africa region and beyond, to discuss the latest trends and critical market insights. The programme will be produced collaboratively by local businesses, treasurers and bankers with the aim to provide actionable insights for you to take your business to the next level!

This first edition in Nairobi will cover four key themes under international trade from updates on trade finance as well as commodity market dynamics. It will also shine a spotlight on digital transformation in the transaction banking space, examining how this change is empowering corporate treasury teams through innovative and intelligent cash and payment solutions.

Besides delivering critical market updates, candid corporate discussions, expert explainer sessions, and lively panel debates, we aim to be the leading business meeting facilitator in the East Africa region. We will gather decision-makers from corporations across different industries – ranging from SMEs to MNCs – alongside international service providers involved in international trade, treasury, and commodities, in one location. Our goal is to deliver numerous high-quality business interactions and enable you to host numerous meetings and secure new business/finance for your future pipeline.

Join us to take advantage of the latest insights from local figureheads. We will deliver a well-rounded outlook on the region’s economic growth, trade concerns, and priorities for the future, including ongoing challenges around foreign exchange, and developments such as artificial intelligence.

We look forward to welcoming you at this new industry benchmark event. Truly a conference not to be missed!

Register today to secure your place.

## Event Programme

09:00 - 09:15

KEYNOTE  
SPEECH



### Kenya's Pivotal Role as a Regional Trading Hub in East Africa

09:15 - 09:45

CASE  
STUDIES



### Corporate Case Studies: Enhancing Trade and Supply Chain Finance Solutions

In this candid session, local corporates explain the major headaches they have faced around their international and local importing and exporting activities – and the financing of these flows. What are their solutions to resolve critical supply chain challenges such as cash flow issues and delayed payments? What were the challenges faced during implementation and how were these hurdles overcome? The session will also explore the importance of having strategic partnerships and innovative financial solutions in building resilience and improving competitive advantage.

09:45 - 10:30

PANEL  
DISCUSSION



### Overcoming the challenges in the manufacturing sector and setting up for the next level of growth

The manufacturing sector plays a crucial role in the Kenyan economy. Its contribution to GDP has however stagnated between 7.2%-7.8% for the last few years. In 2024, several multinational corporations (MNCs) in the manufacturing sector chose to exit the Kenyan market, primarily due to an unfavorable business environment and increased overall costs. The panel will discuss in great detail the challenge posed by the high operational costs in the sector and possible solutions to solve some of these challenges. Not limited to the cost of energy, this panel will explore the opportunities for multisectoral players coming in to solve for cost, efficiency and growth supported by Financial Services.



10:30 - 11:15

11:15 - 11:55

FIRESIDE  
CHAT



### Coffee Break and Networking



### Fireside Chat - The "I" word - How to Profit from Trade Digitisation?

If there was a system to make trade faster, cheaper, simpler and more secure - would you want to be a part of it? With the increasing digitalisation of trade, how can corporates leverage the Interoperability movement to streamline their operations and enhance cross-border transactions? Should companies prioritize the assessment of these opportunities, considering the complexities within the region's trade finance landscape?

The panel will explore the readiness of local businesses to adopt paperless trade amidst varying levels of technological infrastructure and regulatory environments. Is there the necessity for corporates to invest time and resources into understanding the digital landscape, weighing the potential benefits against existing operational challenges? Is embracing digital trade a top priority for companies in the region, and how can they align their strategies with the evolving market demands?



## Event Programme

11:55- 12:30

BEST  
PRACTICE  
MASTERCLASS

### Best Approach to Managing Data in Cross-border Payments

With payments data gains significance in cross-border transactions, businesses are increasingly prioritizing key factors such as speed, certainty, visibility, and security in their money transfer processes. The emergence of instant payments, blockchain technology, and SWIFT GPI has accelerated transaction speeds like never before. However, this rapid advancement also heightens the risk of fraud and other financial crimes. What potential solutions exist to enhance data sharing on both regional and global scales? What existing regulations, both local and international, are currently in place, and what additional measures should be implemented? Furthermore, what collaborative efforts can be undertaken by banks, fintech companies, and payment service providers to facilitate more efficient and secure cross-border transactions?

12:30 - 13:45

### Lunch and Networking

13:45 - 14:10

PANEL  
DISCUSSION

### The Evolving Role of Treasury in Advancing ESG Initiatives in East Africa

As numerous global companies establish ESG and net-zero targets with operations in Africa, treasury departments are increasingly taking on a vital role in advancing sustainability efforts. There are a range of financial instruments from green bonds, sustainable deposits to even ESG-linked foreign exchange (FX) derivatives which are designed to help suppliers meeting their ESG KPIs. How can treasurers leverage these tools and can more be done by banks and asset managers in their offerings? Panelists discuss their ESG strategies and share their experience.

14:10-14:45

PANEL  
DISCUSSION

### How to Fully Harness AI Potential in Treasury?

In the rapidly evolving landscape of corporate treasury, the integration of AI is poised to redefine operational efficiencies and strategic insights. As AI technologies advance, they are being leveraged to streamline processes such as cash management, risk assessment, and financial forecasting. This panel discussion delves into the critical question: how much value does AI realistically add to corporate treasury? What are the potential barriers to AI adoption within treasury functions, including data privacy concerns, integration with legacy systems, and the need for skilled personnel to interpret AI-driven insights.

14:45 - 15:25

PANEL  
DISCUSSION

### Navigating the Shift: The Impact of Fraud Concerns and Financial Transition on Midsized Players in the Commodities Sector

As fraudulent activities affect midsized commodities companies in the East, financial institutions worldwide have shielded away from providing the essential financial backing these players need. Instead, they are prioritizing support for larger global firms in the sector. Since financial support and operational efficiency are crucial for the success of commodities players, this shift has left mid-sized companies in a vulnerable position. The pressing question is: if this trend persists, what does the future hold for these midsized commodities players?

In addition to Mid-Sized commodities companies struggling amid fraud concerns, the large corporates are also transitioning from Structured Trade Finance, which involves lenders controlling the commodities, to Receivables Finance, where they sell their receivables. This places the large corporate at a great advantage as they have good quality receivables and many FIs are keen to support them including Credit Insurance which only enhances the risk appetite from lenders. Mid-Sized corporates continue to be at a disadvantage even with the quality of receivables. This session will discuss the shifting paradigms and what the future might hold in the commodities sector.

15:25 - 16:10

### Coffee Break and Networking

## Event Programme

16:10-16:35

PANEL  
DISCUSSION



### Key strategies for Market Success in Structured Commodity Finance to Assist Long Term Growth

Commodity finance is a sector that underpins the movement of the world's raw materials and is a process that links almost all global trade and development. The world's essential commodities are typically moved in large quantities, involve complex operations and have high notional values. This makes the various layers of finance a critical component in the process that enables the links between producer and consumer. How should businesses adapt with the market despite challenges such as regulatory constraints on bank lending on SME traders and restrictions for liquidity?

16:35 - 17:05



### Fintech Showcases

3 presentations followed by Q&A

17:05 - 17:30



### Funding for Fintechs - where are we at now?

PANEL  
DISCUSSION

Africa's FinTech ecosystem continues to thrive despite facing macroeconomic challenges, even as investments in the sector have seen a significant decline, with the number of deals dropping by 30% year-on-year. East Africa's FinTech sector in fact experienced remarkable growth in 2024, with total investments doubling to \$16.5 million, driven primarily by Zambia and Seychelles. Despite the slowdown in funding trends globally, the prospects for FinTech in Africa remain promising. Currently, cash still accounts for approximately 90% of transactions across the continent, and over half of the African population remains unbanked or underbanked. This indicates immense potential for revenue growth in the FinTech space, particularly if penetration levels can reach those of leading markets such as Kenya. What strategies can the FinTech sector implement to better capitalize on these opportunities and attract increased funding for expansion?

17:30



### Closing Remarks

# Contact Us

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