



**Center for International Mediators
and Arbitrators**

England & Wales

**Oxfordshire-Africa Forum on
International Arbitration**

非洲地區副總裁

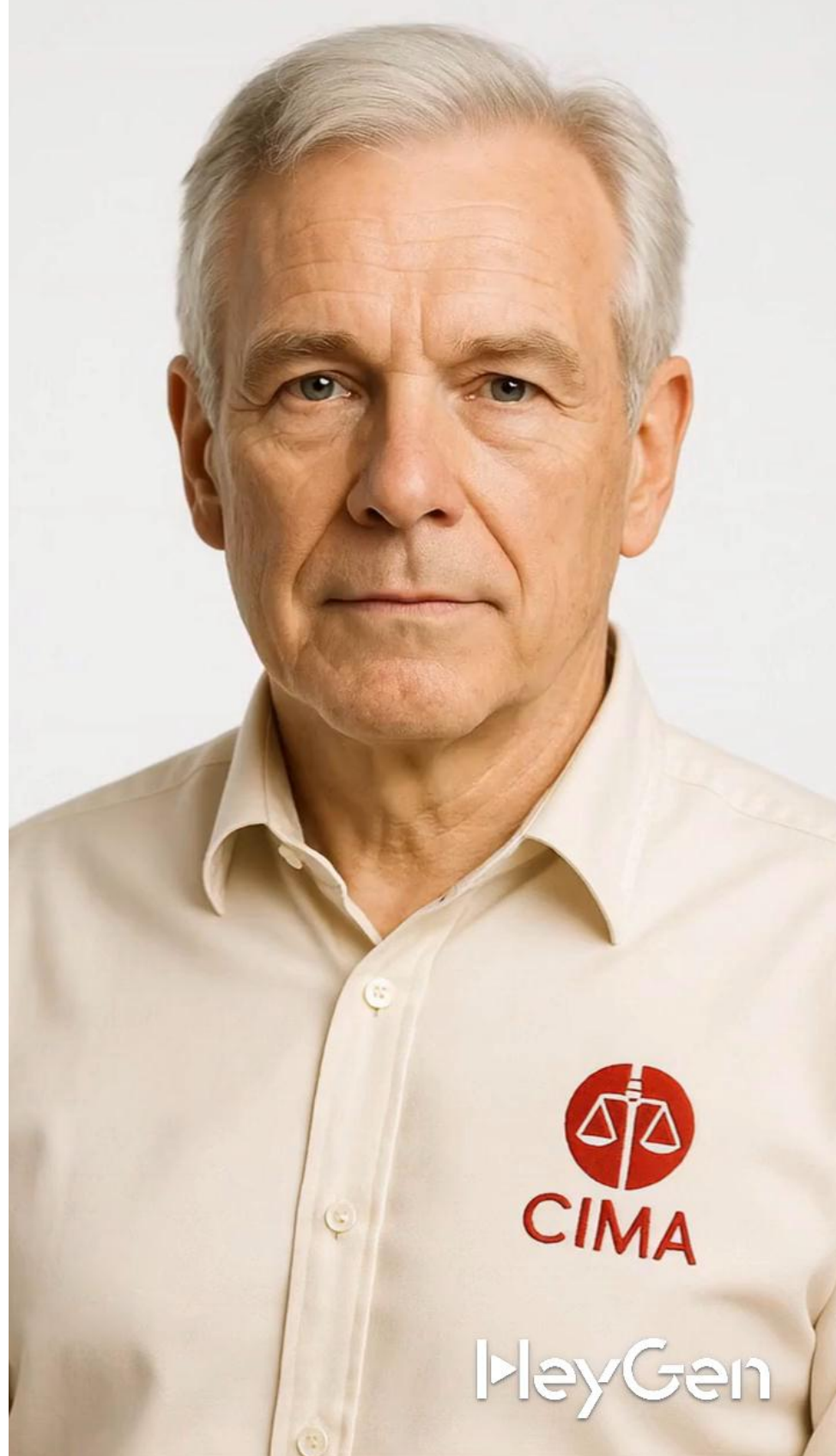


“The arbitration landscape in Africa is experiencing unprecedented transformation.” – Dr Osei Bonsu Dickson, CIMA Workshop Italy

Arbitration Trends In Africa: Transformation & Opportunity

Dr Osei Bonsu Dickson FCIMArb, Barrister





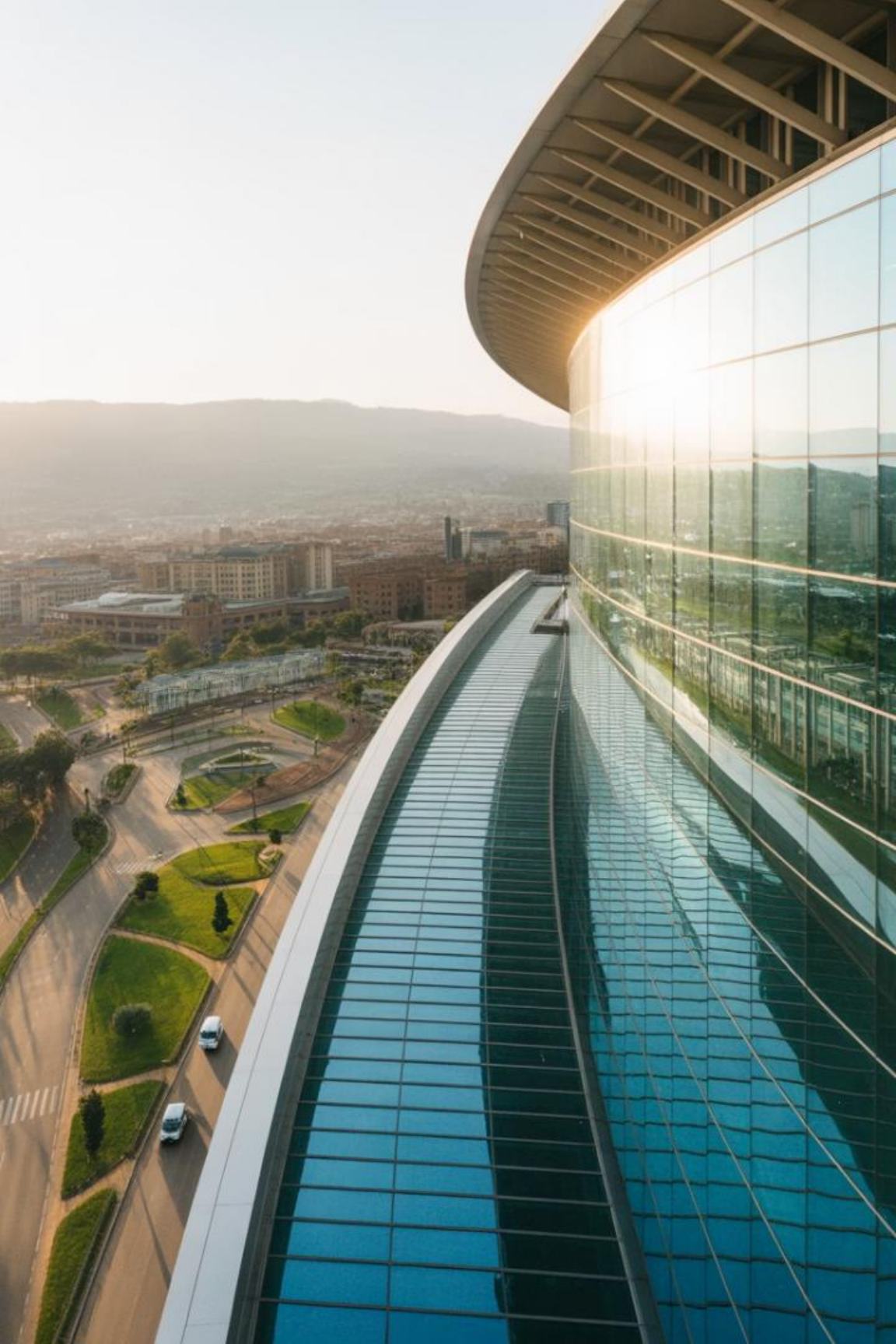
CIMA AI LAB



AI and The Future of Arbitration



Meet Michael Smith
Lead AI Facilitator , CIMA



African Arbitration: Growth & Transformation



Rapid Growth

Arbitration cases across Africa increased by 35% through 2024-2025.



Shifting Centers

New arbitration hubs emerging beyond traditional locations.



ICCA-KIAC Conference

Landmark event scheduled for June 5, 2025 in Kigali, Rwanda.



CIMA's Qualitative Development Push

CIMA is pushing for improved frameworks and institutional capacity building across jurisdictions.

Key African Arbitration Developments (2024)



Legislative Reforms

Multiple jurisdictions modernized arbitration laws to align with international standards.



Judicial Support

Courts increasingly uphold arbitration agreements and awards.



Institutional Growth

Regional arbitration centers reported 40% increase in caseload.



Cross-Border Cooperation

Enhanced frameworks for recognition and enforcement of awards.



CIMA's Arbitration Revolution



CIMA 2024 Oxfordshire-Africa Conference

Pivotal arbitration framework developed at Worcester College, Oxford University to modernize dispute resolution in Africa ORD.



Program with University of Ghana School of Law

Groundbreaking Training with LLM. Maritime Programme



Pro-Arbitration Engagement and Training with African Bar Associations

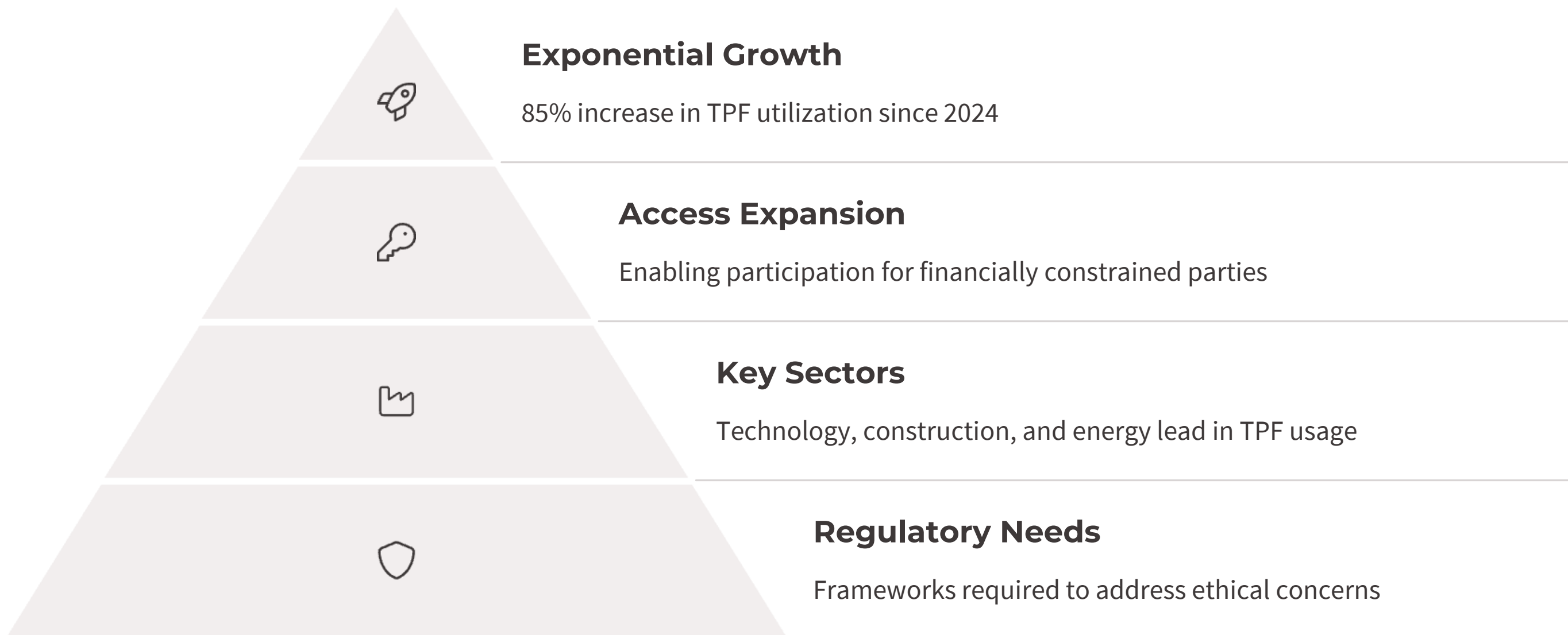
Law Society of Sierra Leone, Liberia and Ghana consistently upholding interest in Arbitration and mediation.



Pro-Arbitration Engagement and Training with Law Society of Kenya / Uganda

Precedent-setting \$1.9M award successfully enforced.

Third-Party Funding: Game-Changer for Africa



Emerging Arbitration Hubs in Africa

Rwanda

Positioning as East Africa's premier arbitration center. KIAC reported 65% case increase in 2024.

South Africa

Reformed framework attracting international disputes. New International Arbitration Act fully implemented.

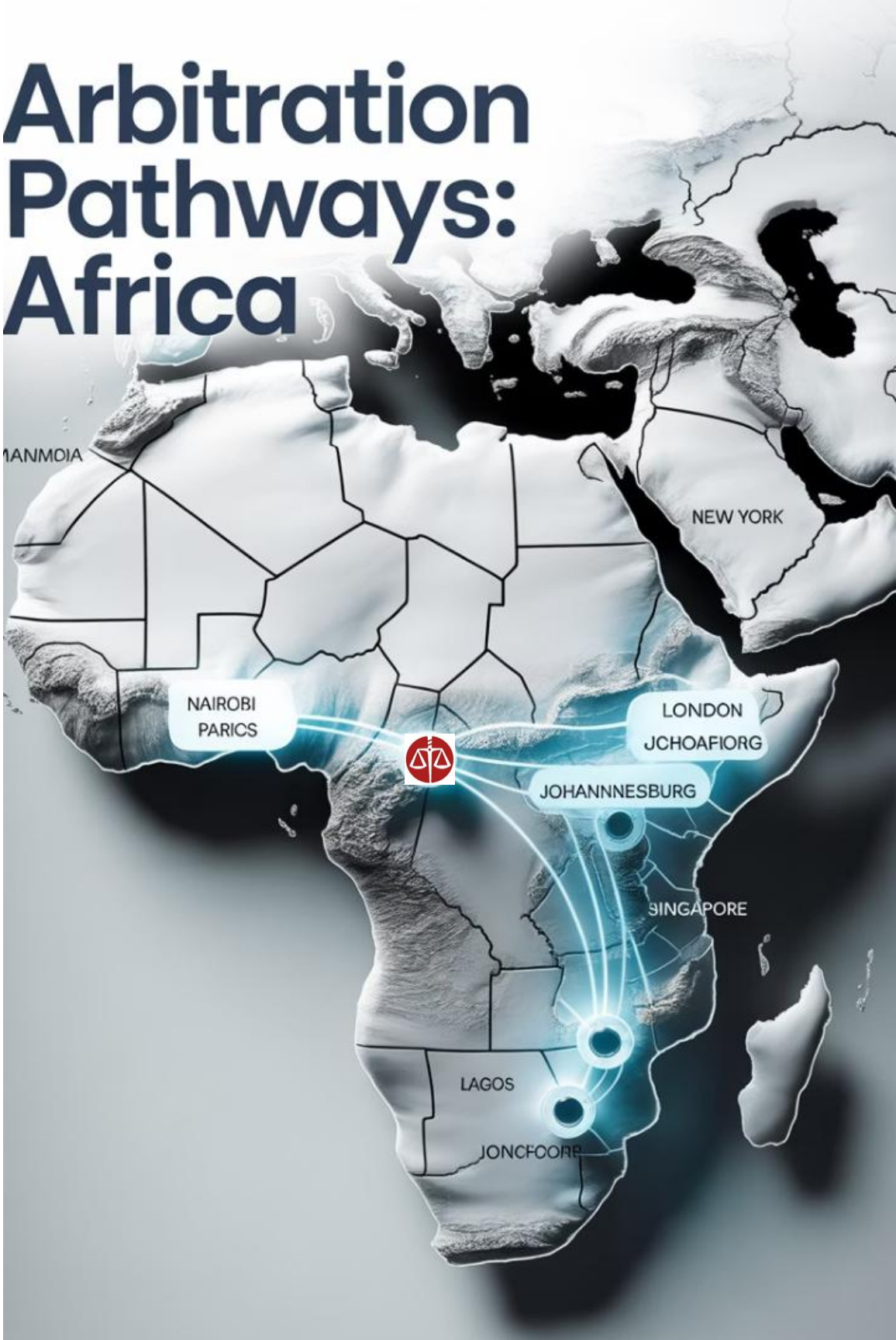
North Africa

Egypt and Morocco developing specialized commercial arbitration facilities. CRCICA expanding operations.

West Africa

Regional cooperation through OHADA. Nigeria's new arbitration framework gaining prominence.

Arbitration Pathways: Africa



AfCFTA's Impact on Arbitration

Dispute Resolution Mechanisms

Dedicated protocols for commercial conflicts within AfCFTA framework

Investment Protocols

Specialized mechanisms for investor-state dispute resolution



Cross-Border Frameworks

CIMA engaging AfCFTA for streamlined procedures for multi-jurisdictional business disputes

Harmonized Practices

Standardization of arbitration procedures across member states



Case Study: Rwanda's Arbitration Evolution

ICCA Conference Host

Selected to host prestigious International Council for Commercial Arbitration conference in June 2025.

Revenue Authority Case

Landmark decision established finality of arbitral awards against government entities.

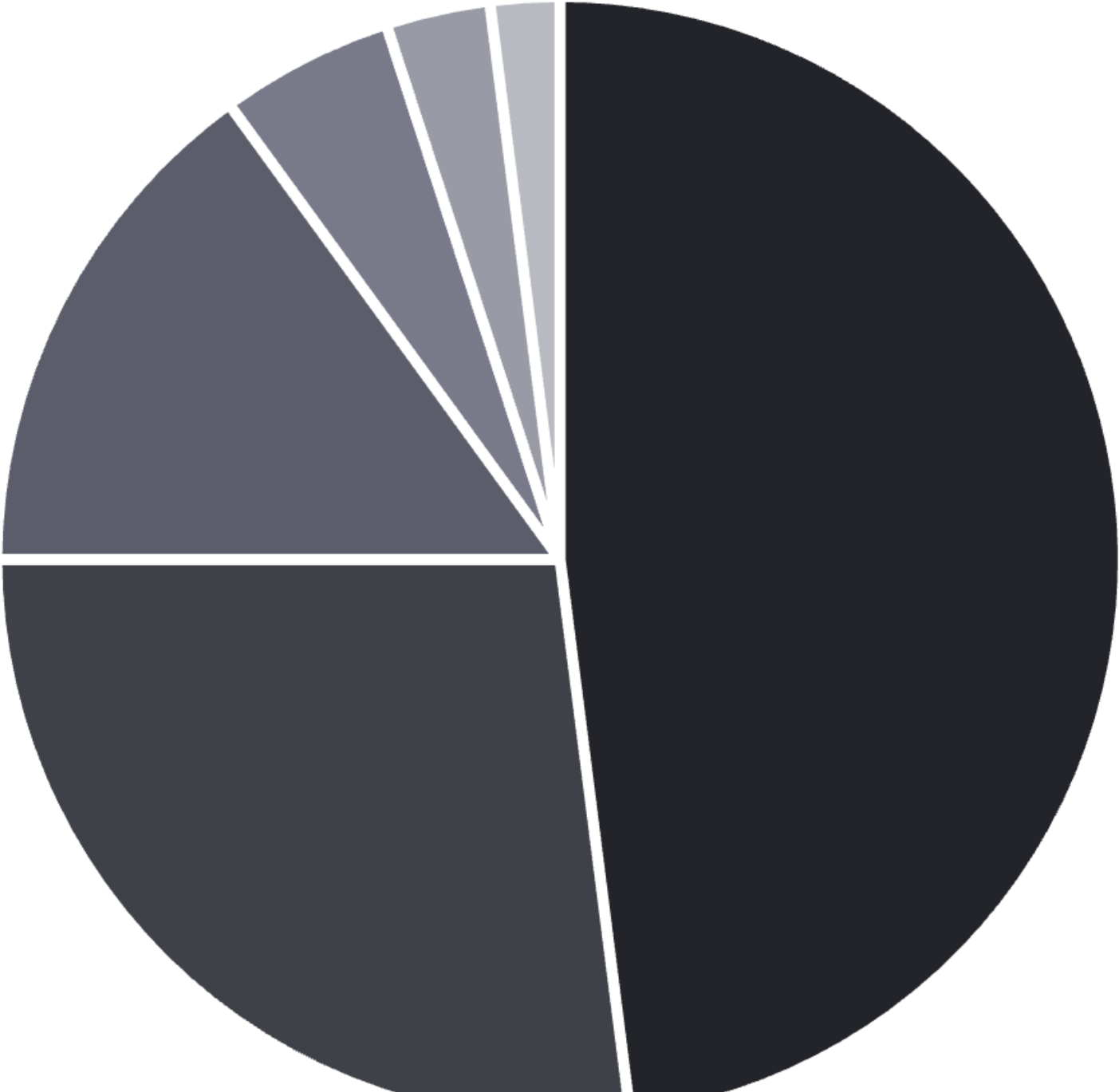
Infrastructure Investment

\$15M dedicated to arbitration facilities and practitioner training programs.

Neutral Venue Recognition

Growing selection as seat for disputes between parties from different African regions.

Diversity in Arbitration: African Perspective



Gender Equality in Arbitration

Current Statistics

Women represent only 21% of arbitrators in African cases. This marks a 5% increase from 2022.

Only 15% of sole arbitrator appointments are women. Panel appointments show slightly better figures at 24%.

Key Initiatives

- African Women in Arbitration Network launched in 2024
- Pledge for Equal Representation adopted by 35 institutions
- Mentorship programs connecting 250+ practitioners
- Database of qualified female arbitrators expanded



Racial & Ethnic Diversity Initiatives

CIMA's **DIAL** Project



Appointment Programs

Initiatives targeting balanced representation in arbitrator selection. 15 institutions adopted diversity protocols in 2024.



Cross-Cultural Competency

Training programs for international practitioners. Over 500 arbitrators completed cultural sensitivity certification.



Linguistic Diversity

Enhanced translation services for proceedings. Support for indigenous languages in appropriate disputes.



Customary Law Integration

Recognition of indigenous legal principles. Specialized training for arbitrators in traditional dispute resolution.

Geographical Diversity & Inclusion



Geographical barriers continue to limit arbitration access. Digital solutions and mobile services are bridging these divides across Africa.

Green Arbitration: African Innovation



African Green Arbitration Initiative

Launched in 2024 with 28 founding institutions across the continent.



Paperless Proceedings

Digital documentation reduced paper usage by 85% in participating institutions.



Remote Hearings

Virtual proceedings cut carbon emissions by 60% compared to in-person hearings.



Environmental Impact Metrics

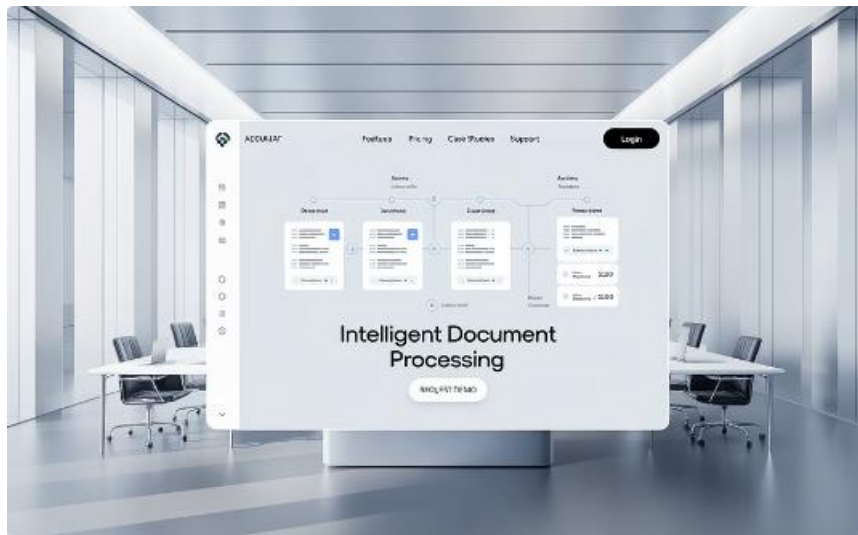
Standardized measurement protocols track sustainability improvements.



ESG Factors in African Arbitration



Technology Transforming African Arbitration



AI Document Analysis

Machine learning tools process thousands of documents in hours. Adoption increased 120% in 2024.



Virtual Hearings

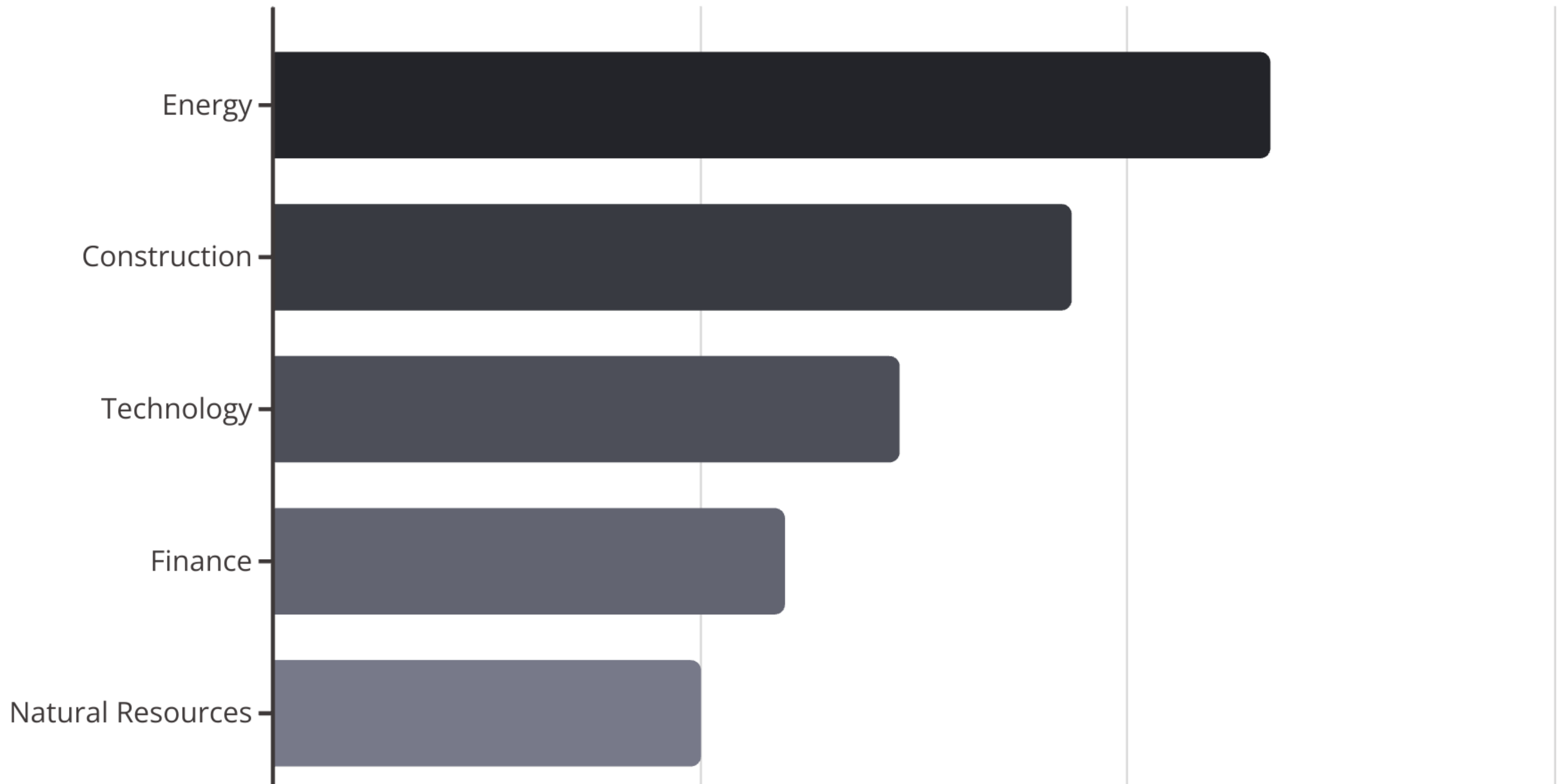
Advanced platforms enable seamless remote participation. 65% of hearings now include virtual elements.



Blockchain Verification

Immutable evidence records enhance integrity. Pilot programs launched in 5 major institutions.

Industry-Specific Arbitration Trends



Arbitration Career Pathways in Africa



Entry Level

Specialized education and initial practice experience



Counsel Experience

Representing clients in arbitration proceedings



Arbitrator Appointments

Beginning with sole arbitrator roles in smaller disputes



Institutional Leadership

Roles within arbitration centers and policy development

Professional Development Resources



Certifications

Specialized qualifications from accredited institutions. CIArb courses now available in 12 African countries.



Mentorship Programs

Structured guidance from experienced practitioners. 350+ mentor-mentee relationships established in 2024.



International Exchanges

Cross-border learning opportunities expanding horizons. Scholarship programs supporting talent development.



Arbitration
Edmeseind for
Admitraon p Yor

Sharpen your skills.
Advance your practice.



Continuing Education Requirements

Jurisdiction	Annual CPD Hours	Specialized Requirements
Nigeria	20	5 hours ethics training
South Africa	15	Technology competency verification
Kenya	18	Cultural sensitivity module
Egypt	12	International law updates
Rwanda	25	ESG certification requirement

Building an Arbitration Practice

Service Definition

Develop clear specialized arbitration service offerings. Focus on specific industries or dispute types.

Network Development

Build connections across jurisdictions. Join professional associations and attend key conferences.

Thought Leadership

Publish articles and speak at events. Establish expertise through content creation and sharing.

Institutional Engagement

Seek panel appointments at arbitration centers. Participate in institutional committees and initiatives.





Challenges in African Arbitration

Enforcement Difficulties

Some jurisdictions still resist recognition of foreign awards. Procedural hurdles delay enforcement in 35% of cases.

Regulatory Inconsistencies

Varying legal frameworks across borders complicate cross-jurisdictional practice. Harmonization efforts ongoing but incomplete.

Resource Limitations

Smaller practitioners struggle with research access and technology costs. Economic disparities affect competitive landscape.

Political Interference

Government influence remains problematic in certain regions. Independence of arbitration requires continued vigilance.

Future Trends: 2025 and Beyond

AI Integration

Artificial intelligence moving beyond document management into decision support systems. Predictive analytics for outcome forecasting gaining traction.

Ethical frameworks for AI in arbitration developing alongside technological advances. Ensuring human oversight remains essential.

Climate Dispute Resolution

Specialized mechanisms for climate change disputes emerging rapidly. Carbon credit disputes expected to rise 300% by 2027.

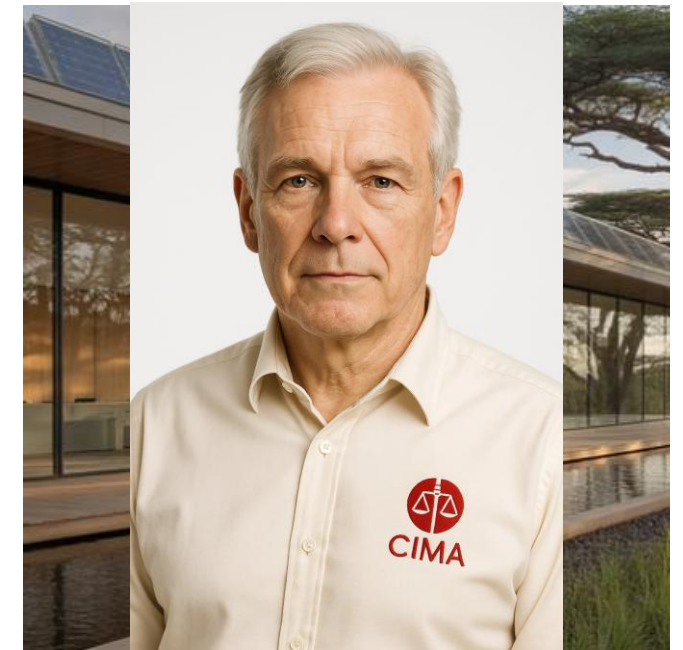
Environmental impact assessments becoming standard in multiple sectors. Green arbitration protocols expanding beyond procedural matters.

Digital Asset Arbitration

Cryptocurrency and blockchain disputes requiring specialized expertise. Four major institutions launched digital asset arbitration rules in 2024.

Smart contract automation of certain arbitration processes being piloted. Technical arbitrator qualifications evolving rapidly.

Case Studies: Success Stories



These success stories demonstrate the remarkable progress in African arbitration. Breakthroughs in representation, technology, and sustainability are transforming the field.

Resources for Further Learning

45+

Key Publications

Specialized journals and books on African arbitration

12

Research Institutions

Think tanks dedicated to arbitration development

8

Online Platforms

Digital learning resources with specialized content

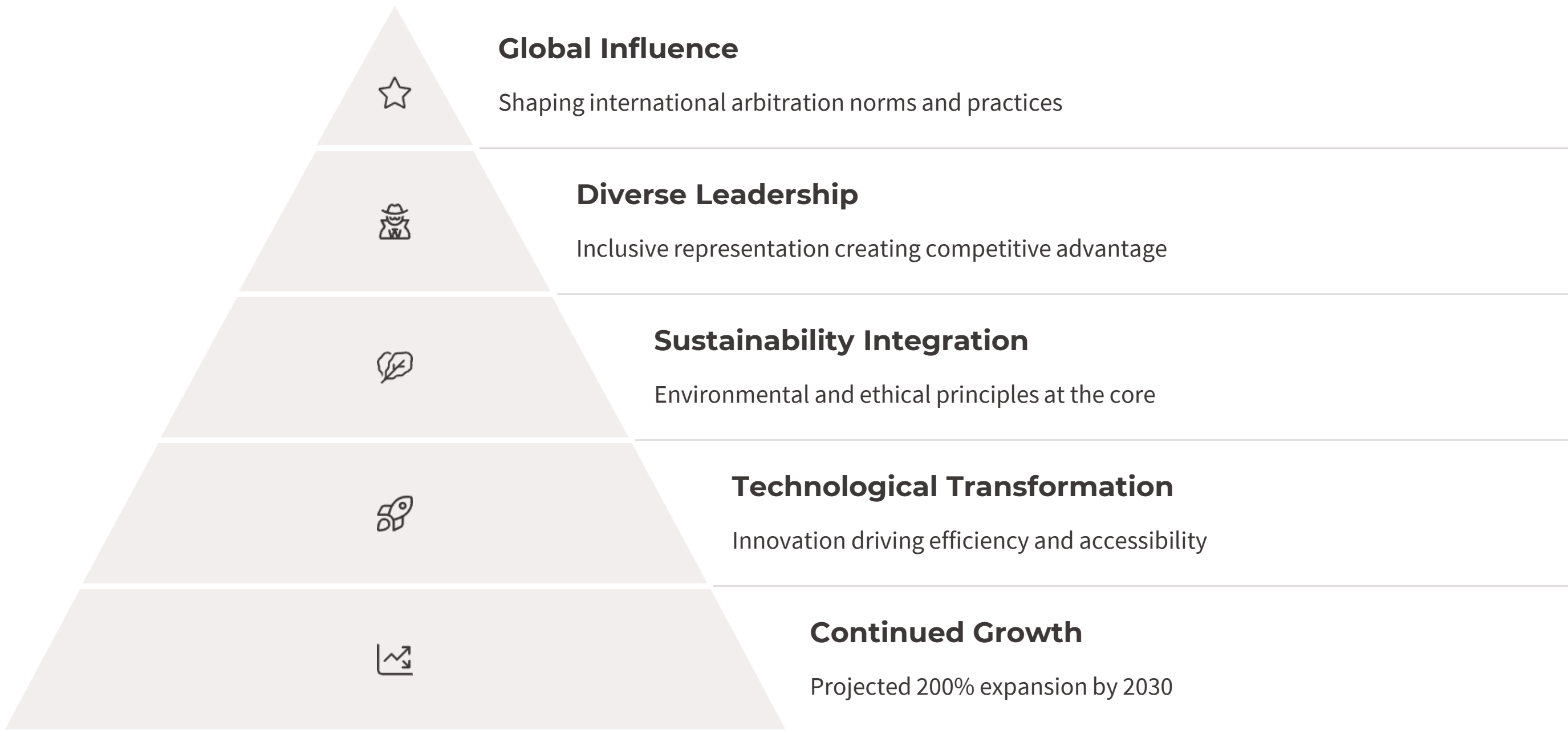
25+

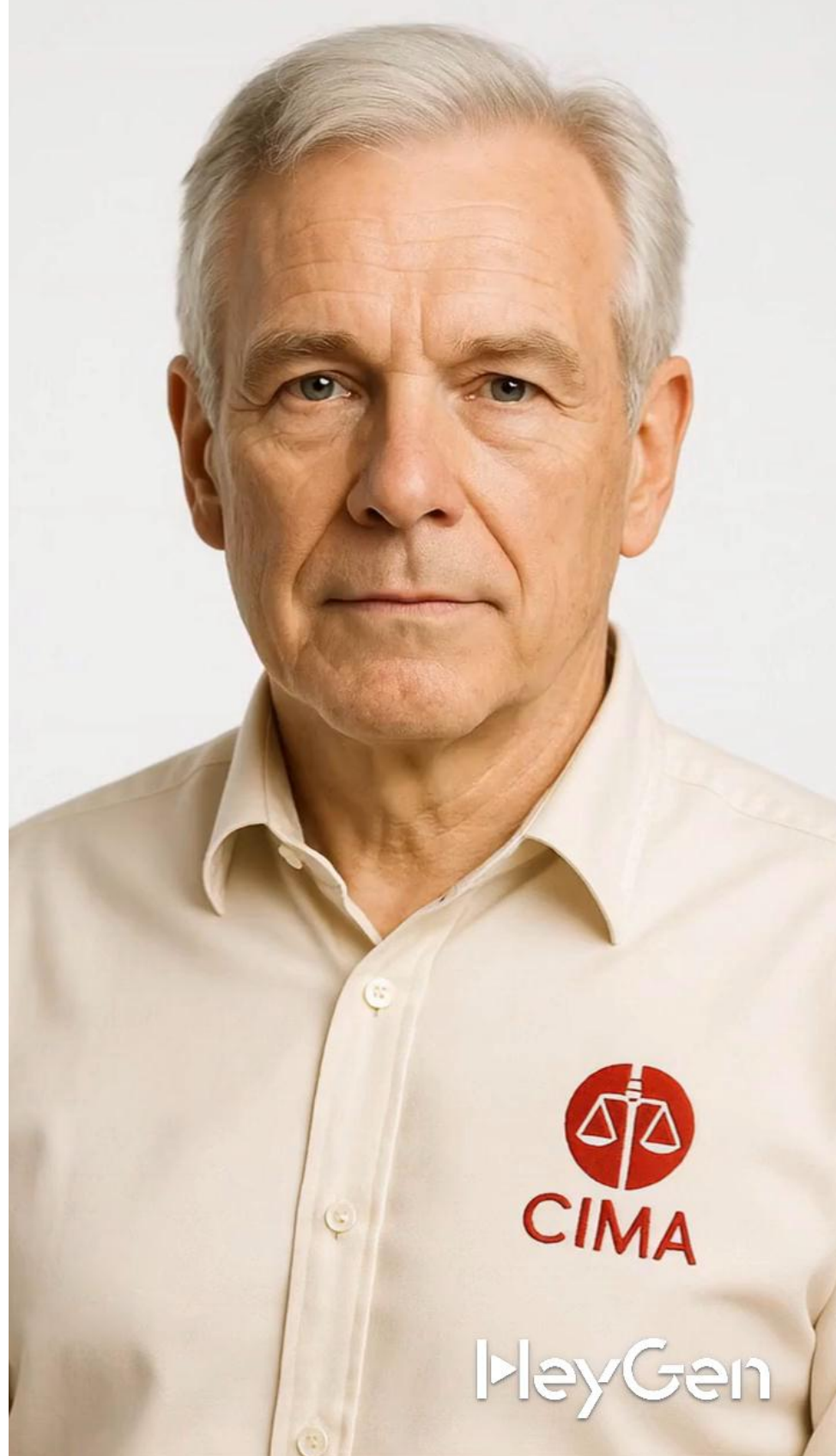
Annual Conferences

Networking events across the continent



Conclusion: The Future of African Arbitration





AI and The Future of African Arbitration

Meet Michael Smith
Lead AI Facilitator , CIMA