



United Nations  
Economic Commission for Africa



## Special Event 2023

# Adebayo Adedeji Memorial Lecture

## Governance, Social Contract, and Economic Development in Africa: Looking Back, Projecting into the future

Dr. Mohamed Ibn Chambas,  
African Union High Representative  
for Silencing the Guns



The United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) launched its first Adebayo Adedeji Lecture in March 2014 to honour and recognize the late Adebayo Adedeji for his intellectual and policy contributions to African development. Now, in its tenth year, the Adebayo Adedeji Lecture features distinguished personalities and scholars who have made notable contributions to the development of the Continent.

A visionary African leader with a strong pan-African perspective, and a passionate believer in African integration and development, Adebayo Adedeji served as Executive Secretary of ECA from 1975 to 1991. He contributed tremendously to development thinking, policy and practice in Africa, pioneered and played a major role in the establishment of several of the continent's regional economic communities, and in the articulation of alternative development paradigm for Africa. His long and distinguished academic, political and diplomatic career was marked by immense contributions to the development of the continent.

The 2023 Adebayo Adedeji Lecture will be delivered by Dr. Mohamed Ibn Chambas on the theme: **Governance, Social Contract, and Economic Development in Africa: Looking Back, Projecting into the future** during the ECA Conference of African Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, to be held in Addis Ababa from 15 to 21 March 2023.

Recent developments on the governance landscape, including resurgence of coup d'état, constitutional amendments on presidential term limits, riots and protests by citizens in some countries arising from increasing economic hardships, rising inflation and others suggest that the governance project is under stress and state-society relations being impaired. The COVID 19 with its socio-economic consequences exacerbated the challenges of governance in Africa with declining resources, growing demands from the citizens, and increasing level of poverty. Marginalized groups of youth, and women have bore most of the brunt of the fallouts of COVID 19. In many instances, resentment, disillusionment and indifference characterize the reaction of the youth towards the state. The social pact is largely fractured.

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Mohammed Ibn Chambas with his diverse knowledge and experiences will address the interface between governance, Social Contract and economic development in Africa with retrospection to the past and looking forward to the future. He would elucidate on how governance can be improved in Africa as a means of rebuilding the social contract between the state and citizens, in which a context of inclusiveness, economic empowerment and good governance will drive economic development in Africa.

Mohamed Ibn Chambas is a distinguished African personality and like Adebayo Adedeji, a Pan-Africanist per excellence. He has served in various capacities at the national, regional, continental and global levels, and is the current African Union High Representative for Silencing the Guns. He served as Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Office for West Africa and the Sahel (UNOWAS) from 2014 to 2021. During that period, he was also Chairman of the Cameroon-Nigeria Mixed Commission (CNMC) which was established to facilitate implementation of the judgment of the International Court of Justice (ICJ) on the Cameroon-Nigeria boundary dispute.

Before joining UNOWAS, he was the African Union-United Nations Joint Special Representative for Darfur and Head of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur.

From 2010 to 2013, He was Secretary-General of the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States. Prior to that, he served as President of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), from 2006 to 2009, and Executive Secretary, from 2002 to 2005.

From the time he joined the Government of Ghana in 1987, he served as Deputy Foreign Minister and Deputy Minister in Charge of Tertiary Education at different periods. He was also a First Deputy Speaker and Member of Parliament of Ghana.

From the beginning of the outbreak of the Liberian civil war, he was involved in ECOWAS mediation efforts till the Accra Comprehensive Peace Agreement (ACPA) of 2003. He was similarly involved in ECOWAS mediation efforts in several transitions from military to civilian rule in a number of West African countries.

Mohamed Ibn Chambas holds a bachelor's degree in political science from the University of Ghana. He also has a master's degree and a Doctor of Philosophy Degree from Cornell University and a Jurist Doctorate Degree from Case Western Reserve University School of Law, both institutions in the United States. He was admitted to the Bar of the State of Ohio and the Republic of Ghana.

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