

Over 250 participants, including judges, lawyers, legal experts and government officials from the East African region are expected to meet during the 3rd Annual Judicial Conference and Rotational Court Sitting of the East African Court of Justice (EACJ) in Kigali, Rwanda, from February 18 to March 8, 2025.

Justice Nestor Kayobera, the President of the EACJ told journalists in Kigali that the conference will focus on Justice, Ethics, and Enforcement of Decisions for Regional Development.

Justice Kayobera explained that the goal is to improve the enforcement of the court's decisions and ensure partner states implement them. "If our judgments aren't enforced, it would be a huge setback," he added.

The two-day conference on February 18-19, 2025, will kick off discussions on these topics. Afterward, a strategic planning session will take place from February 20 to 22, where participants will adopt and validate a new strategic plan for the court.

From February 24 to March 7, 2025, the court will hold its rotational sitting, where judges will hear nearly 20 cases, including important issues from the First Instance Division and the Appellate Division. Judges will also participate in a special training session on cybercrime from March 10 to 12, 2025.

Over the past two decades, EACJ has handled over 860 cases and 250 cases are still pending, Justice Kayobera spoke about the court's achievements over the past 23 years noting that this performance is positive. He acknowledged that the court faces challenges, such as budget issues and the lack of permanent judges, but emphasized that these challenges are being addressed.

Rwanda's Judiciary Spokesperson, Mutabazi Harison, said the conference will be a great opportunity for knowledge exchange. "Rwandan judges and legal professionals will benefit from learning new skills and ideas from the event," he said.

The EACJ, established in 2001, plays a key role in ensuring that the laws of the East African Community are followed. It is made up of two divisions: the Appellate Division and the First Instance Division. The court's judges are appointed by the EAC Summit of Heads of State and Government.

The 3rd Annual Judicial Conference in Kigali will help improve justice systems across

East Africa, providing a platform for collaboration and addressing key challenges facing the region's legal frameworks.