



3233 Nokukhanya Luthuli Street  
 Groutville KwaZulu - Natal  
 South Africa  
 PO Box 1869,  
 KWADUKUZA 4450  
 tel. (032) 559 6822  
 fax: (032) 559 6806  
 email: [luthulimuseum@luthulimuseum.org.za](mailto:luthulimuseum@luthulimuseum.org.za)  
 website: [www.luthulimuseum.org.za](http://www.luthulimuseum.org.za)

## MEDIA ADVISORY

### Director-General: World Trade Organization (WTO) DR NGOZI OKONJO-IWEALA to deliver the 19<sup>th</sup> Chief Albert Luthuli Memorial Lecture

**Issue Date:** Wednesday, 12 November 2025

The Department of Sport, Arts & Culture; Luthuli Foundation and Luthuli Museum in partnership with the University of KwaZulu-Natal will host the 19<sup>th</sup> Chief Albert Luthuli Memorial Lecture on Thursday, 20 November 2025, 4pm at the University of KwaZulu Natal- Westville Campus.

Themed, ***‘Reflecting on the work of the world trade organisation and its global impact’***, Dr Okonjo-Iweala’s address will reflect on the WTO’s global impact since its establishment 30 years ago. This lecture will reflect on the promotion of free and fair trade between countries, resolving trade disputes and maintaining cooperation between countries and other international economic institutions.

It will also reflect on post-colonial economies’ initiatives of interregional trade and integration like those in Africa and South America and whether they stand a chance of sustainable success in the current global economic trade system characterised by tensions between countries and competing interests. Further, it will look at the challenges that the advent of Artificial Intelligence (AI) might pose to intellectual property and international trade; and how can these challenges be addressed.

Dr Okonjo-Iweala is a global finance expert, an economist and international development professional who has over 40 years of experience working in Asia, Africa, Europe, Latin America and North America, ‘Dr Okonjo-Iweala. Dr Okonjo-Iweala was formerly the Chair of the Board of Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance, Global Commission on the Economy, Climate and the World Bank.

Chief Albert Luthuli, Africa's First Nobel Peace Prize recipient for 1960, made his contribution to world peace, friendship, and human dignity. He believed that the world had become '*a neighbourhood*' and therefore countries needed to work together to ensure peace and prosperity for all their inhabitants; In his 1961 Nobel Peace Prize speech, he remarked that, 'humanity longs for a time when great powers of the world become great at heart and curb their ambitions and pave the way for settling of their differences in a statesman like manner and thus remove the threat of war'.

The 2025 Albert Luthuli Lecture will present an opportunity to engage with the speaker on the work of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) and its global impact. The lecture will be on Luthuli Museum ZOOM platform or by physical attendance. It will also be live streamed on the Luthuli Museum YouTube channel.

The lecture will take place as follows:

**Date** : Thursday, 20 November 2025  
**Time** : 16h00 – 19h00  
**Venue** : MH Joosub Hall, Westville Campus, UKZN

Members of the media and the public are invited to attend the event.

For enquiries or registration for the event on ZOOM platform, please contact Zinhle Nyembe on email address [profficer@luthulimuseum.org.za](mailto:profficer@luthulimuseum.org.za) or on telephone number 032 559 6824.

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## EDITOR'S NOTES

Dr Okonjo-Iweala is a Distinguished Visiting Fellow at the Brookings Institution and a Global Public Leader at Harvard Kennedy School. She is the recipient of numerous honours and has authored several books. She was appointed as African Union (AU) Special Envoy to mobilise international financial support for the fight against COVID-19 and WHO Special Envoy for Access to COVID-19 Tools Accelerator. She is a skilled negotiator and has brokered numerous agreements which have produced win-win outcomes in negotiations.

Dr Okonjo-Iweala is regarded as an effective consensus builder and an honest broker enjoying the trust and confidence of governments and other stakeholders. She had a 25-year career at the World Bank. As a development economist and Finance Minister, Dr Okonjo-Iweala steered her country through various reforms ranging from macroeconomic to trade, financial and real sector issues’.

The WTO’s overall objective is to help its members use trade to raise living standards, create jobs and improve people’s lives. It also helps developing economies build their trade capacity and seeks to create a more inclusive trading system.

**ENDS**

Issued by the Luthuli Museum