



CEO
CAUCUS
INTERNATIONAL SOLAR ALLIANCE



Private sector roundtable discussion: **Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe**

Advancing E-Mobility Ecosystems in Africa & Shared Solutions on Battery Storage

August 27, 2026 | 11:15 – 12:45 CAT | 14:45 – 16:15 IST
At the Elephant Hills Resort, Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe.



Context

Africa's vehicle fleet is at an inflection point. Ownership across sub-Saharan Africa remains below 30 per 1,000 people, versus 210 in China, while the continent's urban population is set to double to 1.4 billion within three decades. The infrastructure choices made now, before fleets lock into fossil fuels, will decide whether that growth is electric.

The economic case is strong. Fuel imports absorb close to a quarter of the region's merchandise imports, exposing economies to price volatility — a vulnerability sharpened by recent oil market disruptions. For operators, electrification cuts costs directly: electric motorcycle taxis already undercut petrol equivalents per kilometre in markets like Kenya. Battery and solar costs have fallen roughly 93% and 87% since 2010, playing to Africa's fleet mix, dominated by motorcycles and three-wheelers whose modest battery needs suit distributed solar.

Battery storage is central to this shift, not only as a vehicle component but as shared infrastructure. Swap networks let riders exchange depleted packs for charged ones, turning batteries into a pooled, interoperable asset. Batteries cycling through swap stations or retired from vehicles can then be redeployed into stationary storage, supporting mini-grids where the grid is weak or absent — linking mobility and stationary storage, provided interoperability and safety standards are set early.

Deployment nonetheless remains early-stage: EVs were under 1% of car sales in 2024, held back by financing costs, fuel subsidies, thin charging infrastructure, unclear regulation, and a shortage of trained technicians. Kenya offers a working model — targeted tariffs, duty exemptions, and catalytic development finance took its EV fleet from under 800 vehicles in 2022 to nearly 25,000 by end-2025, with electric motorcycles reaching over 15% of new registrations.

The Meeting

The International Solar Alliance (ISA) launched the CEO Caucus as a high-level forum designed to bring together C-level industry representatives to exchange ideas, network, and contribute to the global advancement of solar energy. This initiative builds on the success of the 2024 & 2025 CEO Caucus Roundtables, which focused on developing a diversified and resilient global supply chain, enabling access to technology, mobilizing capital, and creating an enabling policy environment.

Themes of deliberations

Deliberations will be focusing on issues related to:

1. Financing and investment climate for e-mobility and storage in the Region:

High local currency interest rates combined with dollar-priced EV and battery components create a dual cost burden that limits deployment to only the most favourable markets. Development finance institutions have already proven a model through concessional lending and first-loss capital backing early movers.

- *Is concessional development finance the only way to make African e-mobility bankable at scale, or does it risk crowding out the commercial capital it's meant to attract?*

2. Charging and battery-swapping infrastructure: shared asset or fragmented risk?:

Fewer than one in five African countries has ten or more public charging stations, and swap networks are emerging as an alternative that turns batteries into a pooled, interoperable asset rather than a vehicle-locked one. But competing operators building incompatible networks could just as easily fragment the market.

- *Should governments mandate open, interoperable swap and charging standards now, or let competing private networks fight it out and let the market pick a winner?*

3. Battery storage beyond the vehicle: second-life and shared solutions in the Region:

Batteries retired from e-mobility use, or cycling through swap stations, still retain significant capacity for stationary storage: a natural bridge to mini-grids and off-grid solar in areas the main grid doesn't reach. Realising this depends on safety and certification standards that don't yet exist in most markets.

- *Is second-life battery storage a genuine near-term opportunity for Africa's energy access gap, or a technically appealing idea that will stay stuck in pilot projects for another decade?*

4. Local manufacturing and workforce readiness in the Region:

Africa's fleet is dominated by motorcycles and three-wheelers, a segment well suited to local assembly of small-scale EV and battery kits rather than large PV- or automotive-style manufacturing. Meanwhile, a shortage of trained EV technicians is already constraining deployment even where financing and policy are favourable.

- *Should the priority be building local assembly and repair capacity now, even if it slows the pace of imports and short-term scale-up?*

5. Regulatory frameworks and competing with the informal fleet in the Region

Kenya shows that dedicated tariffs, duty exemptions, and clear regulation can shift a market in three years. But in most countries, fuel subsidies and a thriving trade in cheap second-hand combustion vehicles keep the bar for EV economics artificially high.

- *Should governments phase out fossil fuel subsidies and restrict second-hand ICE imports to accelerate e-mobility, even knowing it raises transport costs for the poorest in the short term?*

Structure and Planned activities of the Zimbabwe CEO Caucus

- **Roundtable Discussions:** A series of roundtables will be organized to deliberate on the key themes. These discussions will involve industry leaders, policymakers, and experts from the solar sector and others.
- **Networking Events:** Networking opportunities will be provided to foster collaboration and partnerships among participants.
- **Policy Briefs and White Papers:** The outcomes of the discussions will be documented in policy briefs and white papers, outlining actionable recommendations for stakeholders.

The outcome of the session

The ISA CEO Caucus represents a significant step towards how e-mobility and battery storage can scale together, and what shared infrastructure, financing, and standards are needed to get there.

Agenda

Time (in CAT)	Agenda Item
11:15 to 11:25	Opening remarks and context setting presentation - ISA
11:25 to 11:30	Inaugural address by Mr. Ashish Khanna, Director General, ISA
11:30 to 12:45	Thematic deliberations with roundtable discussants
Lunch at 12:45 to 14:00 at the Elephant Hills Resort, Victoria Falls	

In collaboration with: