

**African Commission on  
Human and Peoples' Rights**



**DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES  
ON FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND  
ACCESS TO INFORMATION  
IN AFRICA**

ADOPTED BY THE AFRICAN COMMISSION ON HUMAN AND PEOPLES' RIGHTS  
AT ITS 65<sup>TH</sup> ORDINARY SESSION  
HELD FROM 21 OCTOBER TO 10 NOVEMBER 2019  
IN BANJUL, THE GAMBIA



# WEBINAR

## INTRODUCING THE DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES ON FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND ACCESS TO INFORMATION IN AFRICA

**TUESDAY 19 MAY 2020**

**Webinar (Zoom)**

**09:00 - 11:00 GMT / 11:00 - 13:00 SAST / 10:00 - 12:00 WAT / 12:00 - 14:00 EAT**

The Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Expression and Access to Information in Africa (the Special Rapporteur) in partnership with the Centre for Human Rights, Faculty of Law, University of Pretoria and ARTICLE 19 (Eastern Africa and Western Africa), is convening a webinar to introduce the revised Declaration of Principles on Freedom of Expression and Access to Information in Africa.

### **Moderator:**

**Prof Frans Viljoen** - Director, Centre for Human Rights, University of Pretoria

### **Panelists:**

- **Lawrence Mute** - Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Expression and Access to Information in Africa
- **Hlengiwe Dube** - Centre for Human Rights, University of Pretoria
- **Maxwell Kadiri** - Open Society Justice Initiative
- **Fatou Jagne** - ARTICLE 19 Western Africa
- **Mugambi Kiai** - ARTICLE 19 Eastern Africa

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### **About the webinar**

The webinar will serve as a forum for disseminating the revised Declaration of Principles on Freedom of Expression and Access to Information in Africa and initiating discussions on the Declaration's continuing relevance to the exercise of Article 9 rights. The webinar will be in English and French.



## Background

The revised Declaration of Principles on Freedom of Expression and Access to Information in Africa (the Declaration) was adopted by the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights (the African Commission) during the 65th Ordinary Session, which was held from 21 October to 10 November 2019 in Banjul, The Gambia. The Declaration was prepared pursuant to Article 45(1) of the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights (the African Charter) which requires the African Commission to promote human and peoples' rights, among others, by formulating and laying down principles and rules to solve legal problems relating to human and peoples' rights and fundamental freedoms upon which African States may base their legislation. The revised Declaration replaced the 2002 Declaration of Principles on Freedom of Expression.

The Declaration establishes the principles that define the rights to freedom of expression and access to information in conformity with Article 9 of the African Charter, which guarantees individuals the right to receive information, as well as the right to express and disseminate information. It was anticipated that the Declaration would be launched during the 66th Ordinary Session of the African Commission which was to be held from 22 April to 12 May 2020. This Session was however deferred due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Expression and Access to Information in Africa (the Special Rapporteur) is convening a webinar to introduce the revised Declaration to the general public. The webinar will serve as a forum for disseminating the Declaration and initiating discussions on the Declaration's continuing relevance to the exercise of Article 9 rights. The webinar, which will be in English and French, will be undertaken in partnership with the Centre for Human Rights, University of Pretoria and ARTICLE 19 (Eastern Africa and Western Africa).

