



Internet Governance Forum 2023 | Regional Parliamentary Track alongside the AFIGF

The Contribution of Parliamentarians to Shape Digital Trust on the African Continent

Concept note

CONTEXT

The [Internet Governance Forum](#) (IGF), convened annually by the UN Secretary-General, is a global multistakeholder platform that facilitates discussions on Internet and digital policy issues. This year, the Government of Japan will host the United Nations 18th Internet Governance Forum (IGF 2023) under the overarching theme “*The Internet We Want – Empowering All People*”.

The [African IGF](#) (AFIGF) is a regional IGF initiative dedicated to fostering exchanges within the region on relevant digital policy topics. In recent years, the IGF has sought to strengthen the participation of parliamentarians in discussions on some of the most pressing issues related to the use, evolution and governance of the Internet and related digital technologies.

Building on last year's Parliamentary Track experience at the African IGF in Malawi, a [symposium dedicated to parliamentarians from across the African region](#) is to be held again this year in Abuja, Nigeria, in the context of the 2023 AFIGF meeting. The overarching theme of the track is “The Contribution of Parliamentarians to Shape Digital Trust on the African Continent”.

DESCRIPTION

The regional Parliamentary Track is dedicated to members of national parliaments from African countries and members from other regions who would like to attend or contribute. The activities will facilitate dialogue and exchanges on key digital policy issues among Members of Parliaments (MPs), and between MPs and other stakeholders from within and beyond the African continent. Focus will be given to the Parliamentarians in the information and communication technology (ICT) related committees at the national or regional parliaments, who work on digital affairs and Internet policy issues.

Objectives

- Familiarize MPs with the IGF space and the broader international ecosystem for Internet governance and digital policy. Encourage them to actively contribute to relevant regional and international processes.
- Prepare MPs for participation in the IGF 2023 meeting and the dedicated Parliamentary Track, as well as future IGF meetings and activities.
- Update MPs on a set of Internet governance and digital policy issues relevant to African countries. Facilitate dialogue on these issues with other parliamentarians, as well as with relevant international and regional organisations from different stakeholder groups (intergovernmental organisations, the technical community, private sector, civil society).



- Discuss the relevance of legislative work in shaping a trustworthy digital future in the region. Highlight issues that need to be considered when legislation for the digital space is developed (e.g., avoiding unintended consequences for the open and global nature of the Internet).
- Facilitate cooperation and exchanges of good practices with MPs from national and regional parliaments, as well as parliaments from other regions, which have advanced legislative work on digital policy issues.
- Expose the MPs to relevant internet governance processes (e.g., the Global Digital Compact, WSIS+20 review) and UN flagship initiatives (e.g., the Roadmap for Digital Cooperation, Our Common Agenda).

Co-organizers

- The symposium is co-organised by the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA), the IGF Secretariat, the AfIGF Secretariat, the African Union, the GIZ and the African School on Internet Governance (AfriSIG).

OUTPUT

Parliamentarians from the region are invited to discuss the proposed issues with experts, share their views, explore the questions at hand, and exchange opinions and experience on existing or potential legislative solutions.

The key messages that emerge from the regional Parliamentary Track exchanges will be captured as the formal, action oriented regional IGF 2023 Parliamentary Track output. The regional perspectives shared at the symposium will also be included in the activities of the annual IGF Parliamentary Track, to be held in October 2023 in Kyoto, Japan.

FORMAT AND PROGRAMME

The Parliamentary Track at the regional IGF will include:

- Activities in collaboration with the African School on Internet Governance on 18 September 2023.
- A dedicated session between Members of Parliaments and the African Youth.
- Special sessions dedicated to Members of Parliaments on 19 September.
- A parliamentary roundtable during the AfIGF meeting, on 20 September.
- The participation of MPs in other sessions of the AfIGF.

CALENDAR OF ACTIVITIES

Date and Time	Focus
Parliamentary sessions 19 September 2023 (Transcorp Hilton, Ogun Room, M2 floor, Abuja & online)	
09:00 – 09:15 WAT Ogun Room, M2 floor	<p>Welcome and introductions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sen. Salisu Shuaibu Afolabi, Chairman Senate Committee on ICT & Cyber-Crime, Senate of Nigeria • Mactar Seck, United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (TBC) • Adil Suleiman, African Union (TBC) <p>Moderator:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Celine Bal, UN IGF Secretariat
09:15 – 10:45 WAT Ogun Room, M2 floor	<p>[Parliamentary Session 1] Contributing to Internet governance processes: The key role of parliamentarians in shaping the digital space</p> <p>As the internet continues to grow and new challenges emerge, the governance mechanisms and processes involved adapt to address these issues. The discussion brings speakers together to inform members of Parliaments on current and future Internet governance processes, such as the Global Digital Compact to be agreed at the UN summit of the Future in 2024 or the outcome review process of WSIS+20 in 2025. The session will put a spotlight on the key role that parliamentarians play in contributing to internet governance processes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ What major Internet governance processes are currently ongoing? What are the milestones to focus on? ✓ How do these processes intersect, and why do governments need to prepare for them? ✓ How can Parliamentarians actively contribute to these processes? <p>Speakers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nnenna Nwakanma, Board Member, international Digital Health & AI Research Collaborative • Yaovi Atohoum, Director, Stakeholder Engagement & Operations, ICANN -Africa • Mwende Njiraini, DiploFoundation, Africa initiative coordinator (<i>remote</i>) • Mary Uduma, West Africa IGF Coordinator

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sarah Kiden, Public Interest Technologist and Design Researcher working at the intersection of technology and society, Dynamic Coalition on Internet of Things <p>Moderator:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Josephine Miliza, UN IGF MAG Member
10:45 – 11:00	Break
19 September 11:00 – 12:30 WAT Ogun Room, M2 floor	<p>[Parliamentary Session 2] From local to global: Setting the scene for the annual IGF by including an African perspective</p> <p>In the run-up to the annual IGF, this session intends to explore the regional perspective around the theme of the Parliamentary Track at the IGF 2023 in Kyoto: <i>Shaping Digital Trust for the Internet We Want</i>.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the current situation in the region as we witness an increasing lack of public trust around privacy, security, consumer and human rights protection? • What are the main challenges that policymakers face to help shape a trustworthy digital space in the region? • How can Parliamentarians best benefit from the regional IGF? What are they expecting from the annual IGF? <p>Speakers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr. Kunimitsu, Former MP and Vice-Minister from Japan Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications (video) • 'Gbenga Sesan, Executive Director of Paradigm Initiative and UN IGF Leadership Panel Member (<i>remote</i>) • Hon. Nthati Moorosi, Minister Of Information, Communications, Science, Technology And Innovation, Lesotho (<i>remote</i>) • Hon. Alhagie Mbow, Member of Parliament, the Gambia, UN IGF MAG Member • Lilian Nalwoga, AfIGF MAG Chair • Maarten Botterman, GNKS Consult Director and independent strategic advisor on IG and related issues (<i>remote</i>) <p>Moderator:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Margaret Nyambura Ndung'u, Independent Consultant/Africa IGF Secretariat
12:30 – 14:00 WAT	Lunch Break

19 September 14:00 – 15:30 WAT	<p>[Parliamentary Session 3] Artificial Intelligence offers benefits: How parliamentarians can build responsible AI approaches in Africa</p> <p>While artificial intelligence holds immense potential for our economies and societies, the fast pace of digital technology development can challenge our governance systems to ensure the safe and responsible use of AI technologies. As governments need to react fast to avoid an increasing gap between innovation and governance, this session aims at bringing expertise together and sharing best practices and establishing common principles and standards.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ How can cooperation be strengthened within the region across Governments, industry and experts to elaborate and implement norms, guidelines and principles relating to the responsible use of AI? ✓ How can policymakers engage in regional cooperation to address global challenges related to AI. ✓ How can policymakers ensure that the design and use of AI aligns with universal human rights and is safe, fair, accountable, and transparent? <p>Speakers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prateek Sibal, Programme Specialist, UNESCO • Anne Rita Ssemboga, International Telecommunication Union (<i>remote</i>) • Tana Pistorius, University of Auckland (as independent) (<i>remote</i>) • Alex Nyingi, Government Affairs & Public Policy, Public Affairs Manager for the Emerging Markets (EM) at Google • Wilfred Mamah, Partner and Leader of EY's Digital Transformation practice for the West Africa region • Yuliya Shlychkova, Public Affairs Director, Global, Kaspersky (<i>remote</i>) <p>Moderator:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bram Fudzulani, UN IGF MAG member
15:30 – 15:45 WAT	Break
19 September 15:45 – 17:15 WAT	<p>[Parliamentary Session 4] Countering misinformation and disinformation in fast-growing online communities</p> <p>Countries and regions struggle to combat misinformation and disinformation, while ensuring that freedom of opinion and expression are protected and respected. Addressing misinformation and disinformation requires a multi-faceted approach involving various stakeholders, including governments, technology platforms, media organizations, and the civil society. This session explores how parliamentarians can help tackle the surge of disinformation and misinformation in the digital space.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ How does dis- and misinformation in online spaces affect the region?

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ What challenges do policymakers face when developing legislations? ✓ How can countries effectively address online dis- and misinformation? <p><u>Speaker:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fargani Tambeayuk, Head of Public Policy, Francophone Africa, Meta • Hon. Sam George, Member of Parliament, Ghana • Guy Berger, independent media and Internet expert <p><u>Moderator:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kehinde Adegboyega, Executive Director and Human Rights Journalists Network Nigeria
19 September 17:15 – 17:30 WAT	Closing remarks
19 September 18:00 – 20:00 WAT	Welcome Reception <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shehu Musa Yar'Adua Centre

Parliamentary Roundtable | 20 September 2023 (Transcorp Hilton, Ogun Room, M2 floor, Abuja & online)

20 September
10:30 – 12:00 WAT

[Parliamentary Roundtable] **Strengthening Cybersecurity Governance: Navigating Regulatory Frameworks for a Secure Digital Africa**

Speakers:

- **Hon. Modestus Amutse**, Member of Parliament, Namibia
- **Hon. Alhagie Mbow**, Member of Parliament, the Gambia
- **Jamila Akaaga Ade**, Head Cybercrime Unit, Federal Ministry of Justice, Nigeria
- **Abdul-Hakeem Ajijola**, Chair (AUCSEG)-African Union Cybersecurity Expert Group (TBC)

Moderator:

- **Nnenna Ifeanyi-Ajufo**, University of Bradford/AUC Cyber Security Experts Group

MPs are also encouraged to actively participate in all other regional IGF sessions taking place from 19 to 21 September and contribute their views and experiences to the discussions. The overall programme will be made available in due time.