

Internet Governance Forum 2024 | Regional Parliamentary Track alongside the AfIGF
Parliamentarians' Contribution to Effective Data Governance 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 public policy issues. This year, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia will host the United Nations 19th Internet Governance Forum (IGF 2024) under the overarching theme "*Building our Multistakeholder Digital Future*".

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 Parliamentary Track experiences at the African IGF in 2022 and 2023, dedicated sessions for [parliamentarians from across the African region](#) is to be held again this year in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, in the context of the 2024 AfIGF meeting. The overarching theme of the track is "*Parliamentarians' Contribution to Effective Data Governance on the African Continent*". The Track will be attended by 14 Members of Parliaments from various African countries and the Ethiopian Parliament will be invited to join the sessions.

DESCRIPTION

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 of 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 2024 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 digital future in the region. Highlight issues that need to be considered when legislation for the digital space is developed.
- 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 other UN flagship initiatives.

Collaborators

- The IGF Secretariat is collaborating on the regional Parliamentary Track with several partners, including the UN Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA), the Africa IGF Secretariat, the African Union, the GIZ, the African School on Internet Governance (AfriSIG), and the African Parliamentary Network on Internet Governance (APNIG).

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 2024 Parliamentary Track output. The regional perspectives will also be communicated in the activities of the annual IGF Parliamentary Track, to be held in December 2024 in Riyadh, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

FORMAT AND PROGRAMME

The Parliamentary Track at the regional IGF will include:

- Sessions dedicated to Members of Parliaments from 20 to 21 November, including a session in collaboration with the African School on Internet Governance.
- A dedicated session between Members of Parliaments and the African Youth on 21 November.
- The participation of MPs in other sessions of the AfIGF on 21 and 22 November.

The entire programme of the Africa IGF 2024 is available here: <https://afigf2024.sessionize.com>

REGISTRATION

Register for the Africa IGF here on INDICO: <https://indico.un.org/event/1013260/overview>

The regional Parliamentary Track alongside the Africa IGF is taking place at UNECA, Addis Ababa.

Sessions on Day-0, 20 November 2024, will take place in the Africa Hall. The session on Day-1, 21 November 2024, will take place in Conference Room 3.

CALENDAR OF ACTIVITIES Regional Parliamentary Track alongside the African IGF	
Date and Time	Focus
20 November 2024 (UNECA, Addis Ababa & online) Zoom link: https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_8yL7Qw-ORF298fSYI3M1Hw YouTube (Floor Channel): https://youtube.com/live/RB80gMvccglo YouTube (English Channel): https://youtube.com/live/WUK8Uyi_IVU YouTube (French Channel): https://youtube.com/live/xCa63FODiVA	
20 November 2024 09:30 - 10:00 local time Africa Hall	[Opening] Opening of the Regional Parliamentary Track and Welcome Remarks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chengetai Masango, Head of the IGF Secretariat (<i>online</i>) • Mactar Seck, UN Economic Commission for Africa • Negeri Lencho, Federal Parliamentary Assembly, Ethiopia • Adil Sulieman, Senior Policy Officer, Information Society Division, African Union Commission
20 November 2024 10:00 - 11:00 local time Africa Hall	[Parliamentary Session 1] Roundtable Discussion with Members of Parliament: Towards Effective Data Governance in Africa The regional Parliamentary Track will start with a roundtable discussion amongst all Members of Parliaments to explore the most pressing digital issues in African countries and regions, specifically regarding data governance. Members of Parliaments will share insights of existing regulatory frameworks in their countries, as well as current trends and prospective legislations. These priorities and insights will guide the discussions of the regional event and will inform deliberations at the global IGF Parliamentary Track, held alongside the IGF 2024 from 15 to 19 December in Riyadh, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tour de table of African Members of Parliament, including AfriSIG Member of Parliament attendees. • Regional Parliamentary Track partners
11:00 - 11:30	Coffee Break

<p>20 November 2024</p> <p>11:30 - 13:00 local time</p> <p>Africa Hall</p>	<p>[Parliamentary Session 2] The Impact of Artificial Intelligence on Democracy, Human Rights and the Rule of Law</p> <p>Through their legislative, oversight and representative functions, parliaments have a key role with regards to digital policymaking in the governance of digital. In October 2024, the resolution “The impact of artificial intelligence on democracy, human rights and the rule of law” was unanimously adopted by the 149th Inter-Parliamentary Union Assembly in Geneva. Before introducing the first-of-a-kind resolution by one of the co-rapporteurs of the text and Tanzanian Member of Parliament, Neema Lugangira, UNESCO will set the scene by presenting emerging approaches of Artificial Intelligence regulation across the world. This consultation paper was developed through discussions with Members of Parliaments in the lead up to the IPU resolution on AI, as well as through capacity building workshops and webinars organized by the IPU, UNESCO and the IGF earlier in 2024.</p> <p>Speaker:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gustavo Fonseca Ribeiro, Digital Policies and Digital Transformation Section, UNESCO <p>The co-rapporteur will then present the IPU resolution on the <i>Impact of Artificial Intelligence on Democracy, Human Rights and the Rule of Law</i> to Members of Parliament. The session will invite the African Parliamentary Network on Internet Governance (APNIG) and Parliamentarians to promote the resolution within their respective Parliament, establish linkages with relevant global initiatives and further focus attention on the responsible development, deployment, and use of AI. The session will also allow for an open floor discussion.</p> <p>Speaker:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Neema Lugangira, Co-Rapporteur of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) Resolution on AI, Member of Parliament from Tanzania <p>Moderators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emmanuel Vitus Agbenonwossi, Internet Governance and Digital Policy Specialist • Abigail Adu-Daako, Tech Global Institute
<p>13:00 - 14:00</p>	<p>Lunch Break</p>
<p>20 November 2024</p> <p>14:00 - 15:30 local time</p>	<p>[Parliamentary Session 3] Data as a Public Good</p> <p>The session will look at data as a public good and at access to data as an important component of access to information policy and implementation. Using elections as an example some recent research into access to data (ATD) and elections will be presented, looking at the case of Ghana as a specific example. Finally the session will look what role MPs can play</p>



Africa Hall	<p>in advancing access to data with relevance to AI, development and democracy in the region. The recently launched African Alliance on Access to Data and the resolution passed by the African Commission on Human and People's Rights will be shared followed by discussion on how MPs can participate.</p> <p><i>Collaborative session with the African School on Internet Governance and Research ICT Africa</i></p> <p>Speakers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guy Berger, Research ICT Africa, distinguished fellow (<i>online</i>) • Sandra Makumbirofa, Senior Economist, Research ICT Africa • Liz Orembo, Researcher, Research ICT Africa <p>Moderator:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anriette Esterhuysen, Association for Progressive Communications
15:30 - 16:00	Coffee Break
<p>20 November 2024</p> <p>16:00 - 17:15 local time</p> <p>Africa Hall</p>	<p>[Parliamentary Session 4] : Advancing Data Governance in Africa -Legislative Perspectives and Regional Collaboration</p> <p>This session will examine the role of legislators in harmonizing data governance frameworks across Africa, focusing on regional collaboration to support cross-border data flows and digital innovation. Panelists will discuss legislative priorities, key challenges, and the impact of initiatives like the Data Governance in Africa Initiative in advancing policy alignment.</p> <p>Multistakeholder panel including Members of Parliament, data protection representatives, DataCipation and the private sector.</p>
<p>20 November 2024</p> <p>17:15 - 17:30 local time</p> <p>Africa Hall</p>	<p>[Closing of Day-0] What is next? Closing of the Regional Parliamentary Track and Insights about the Global IGF</p> <p>By this time, the discussions at the regional Parliamentary Track will have drawn out the priority areas for parliaments to focus on. Members of Parliaments will be given insights on the IGF 2024 and its global Parliamentary Track, as well as upcoming activities during the IGF 2025.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Celine Bal, IGF Secretariat

21 November 2024 (UNECA, Addis Ababa & online) ZoomLink: https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_VFLkv10gTpW2XuJtwg-zvQ YouTube (Floor Channel): https://youtube.com/live/vhMRLQz11e0	
21 November 2024 09:00 - 10:30 local time Conference Room 3	<p>[Parliamentary Session 5] Leading the digital transformation journey: Dialogue with youth leaders on data governance</p> <p>As Africa continues to digitize at a rapid pace, the need for robust data governance systems is more urgent than ever. This session will explore the evolving landscape of data governance on the continent, with a particular focus on how it impacts young people. Challenges and opportunities will be examined that come with managing data in an era of technological growth, including privacy concerns, access to digital resources, and the role of youth in shaping data policies. By centering youth perspectives, the discussion will highlight the importance of empowering the next generation to participate in governance frameworks, ensuring that data practices align with their needs and aspirations. Panelists will share insights on how youth-driven initiatives and policy advocacy are contributing to a more inclusive, transparent, and equitable data governance ecosystem in Africa.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Johannes Wander, GIZ • John Kiarie, Member of Parliament, Kenya • Amina Ramallan, NCC Nigeria, Africa Youth IGF • Mariam Jobe, ICT Ministry, The Gambia, Africa Youth IGF <p>Moderator:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Saba Tiku, IGF Multistakeholder Advisory Group Member
10:30 – 11:00	Coffee Break
21 November 2024 11:00 – 13:00 local time	Opening Ceremony of the Africa IGF 2024 Zoom link: https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_8yL7Qw-ORF298fSYI3M1Hw
13:00 – 14:00	Lunch Break
21 November 2024 14:00 – 17:30 local time	Africa IGF Sessions Zoom link: https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_8yL7Qw-ORF298fSYI3M1Hw
22 November 2024 (UNECA, Addis Ababa & online)	
22 November 2024	Africa IGF Sessions Zoom link: https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_8yL7Qw-ORF298fSYI3M1Hw

09:00 - 10:45 local time	
10:45 – 11:00	Coffee Break
22 November 2024 11:00 – 13:00 local time	Africa IGF Sessions Zoom link: https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_8yL7Qw-ORF298fSYI3M1Hw
13:00 – 14:00	Lunch Break
22 November 2024 14:00 – 16:00 local time	Africa IGF Sessions and Closing Zoom link: https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_8yL7Qw-ORF298fSYI3M1Hw