



**AFIC Statement in response to the report of the Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Expression and Access to Information in Africa at 52<sup>nd</sup> Ordinary Session of ACHPR, Yamoussoukro, Cote d'Ivoire**

Madam Chairperson  
Hon Commissioners,  
State delegates,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

The Africa Freedom of Information Centre (AFIC) and its members appreciate the opportunity to address the 52<sup>st</sup> Session of the African Commission on Human and People's Rights.

We appreciate the leadership of the Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Expression and Access to Information and the African Commission in general in the advancement of the right of access to information and reiterate our support the mandate.

**Madam Chair,**

Over the past twenty five years, the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights has made important strides in advancing the right to information by adopting Principles of Freedom of Expression in Africa, drafting the Model Law on Access to Information and adopting key resolutions and recommendations.

The positive engagement of the Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Expression and Access to Information working closely with CSO groups as well as the cooperation of State Parties has resulted in the adoption of national right to information laws by ten countries including South Africa, Angola, Zimbabwe, Uganda, Ethiopia, Liberia, Niger, Nigeria, Guinea Conakry and Tunisia.

It has also resulted in the increase in ratification and domestication of the six African Union treaties that guarantee the right to information, namely the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights, the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance, the African Union Convention on Preventing and Combating Corruption, the African Union Youth Charter, the African Charter on the Values and Principles Public service and Administration as well as the African Statistics Charter.

## **Chairperson and Commissioners;**

We are concerned however, that the majority (81%) of African Union member states are yet to adopt and implement specific national right to information laws.

We are also concerned with the lack of ratification of regional treaties promoting the right to information including the African Charter on the Values and Principles Public service and Administration as well as the African Statistics Charter that are yet to come into force.

AFIC welcomes the Open Government Partnership (OGP), a global initiative that aims at promoting the right to information, fiscal transparency, citizen participation and use of information and communication technologies.

We appreciate the decision of the Governments of South Africa, Kenya, Tanzania, Ghana and Liberia who have joined the Open Government Partnership. We are concerned however, that out of the nearly 50 OGP members only five are in Africa.

We call upon ACHPR to urge:

1. All African Union member states to embrace the Open Government Partnership and those that are already members but do not have access to information laws (Kenya, Tanzania and Ghana) to adopt and fully implement access to information laws.
2. All African Union member states to urgently ratify and domesticate regional treaties that guarantee the right to information including the African Charter on the Values and Principles Public service and Administration as well as the African Statistics Charter.

Thank you for your kind attention

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