

**MINUTES OF THE AFRICAN ALLIANCE FOR ACCESS TO DATA HELD ON 29TH
JANUARY 2026 VIA ZOOM AT 12:00 PM SAST**

MEMBERS PRESENT

S/No.	NAME
1.	Guy Berger
2.	Hlengiwe Dube
3.	Ivy Gikonyo
4.	Belinda Matore
5.	Rosemary Okello
6.	Nnenna Nwakanma
7.	Athandiwe Saba
8.	Christopher Musodza
9.	Peace Oliver Amuge
10.	Taryn De Vega
11.	Viola Ochola
12.	Zoe Titus
13.	Marystella Simiyu
14.	Kwami Ahiabenu
15.	Mukelani Dimba
16.	Ompha Tshamano
17.	Tshepiso Hadebe
18.	Stephen E. Moore
19.	Mercy (AFIC)
20.	Gilbert Sendugwa
21.	Liz Orembo
22.	Janet Gbam
23.	Jean LeRoux
24.	Bulanda Nkhowani
25.	John
26.	Kehinde Adegboyega
27.	Lili Zhang

AGENDA

Chair: Hlengiwe Dube

1. Welcome, new participants' introduction, adoption of Nov 2025 minutes
2. Report back on UN's CSTD working group on data governance (Guy)
3. Report back on 620 Guidelines text v.43, translations issue, action plan (Pria, Tshepiso)
4. Upcoming events relevant to the Alliance
5. Ideas for the Alliance in 2026 (general discussion)
6. Volunteers to help fundraising
7. AOB and Closure

MIN 1/JANUARY: WELCOME AND ADOPTION OF MINUTES

The meeting was called to order at 12:03 PM by Hlengiwe Dube, the chair, who welcomed participants and introduced new members: Belinda Matore (CHR UP) and Raymond Amumpaire (Digital Rights Alliance Africa).

The minutes of the November meeting were reviewed and adopted as a true record.

MIN 2/JANUARY: REPORT BACK ON UN'S CSTD WORKING GROUP ON DATA GOVERNANCE

Guy noted that the 28 of January had been World Data Protection Day. [Figures](#) show that while 43 African countries now have data protection laws. This is an encouraging milestone, data access remains an area that still requires significant attention. Hence the importance of the Alliance.

He shared the recently published [G20 Guidelines on Access to Data](#), which have informed the forthcoming ACHPR Guidelines where a draft for the Commission's consideration is being developed by the Alliance.

Since 2024, the Alliance has rolled out a related programme through 11 virtual consultations, 14 in-person events and securing almost 250 responses to an online survey. In addition, once the draft ACHPR Guidelines were developed in 2025, two in-person meetings were organised, and another round of online consultations was organised.

Version 4 of the Guidelines is due to be submitted to the Rapporteur by 2 February.

It was further noted that the working group on data of the UN Commission on Science and Technology for Development (UNCSTD) will consider granting observer status to the Alliance. By the end of January, comments are still possible on synthesis notes [1](#), [2](#), [3](#), [4](#). The UNCSTD had added to its mailing list the names of the four African experts proposed through Alliance – Prof Laid Zaglami, Pria Chetty, Israel Olatunji Tijani and Olunifesi Suraj. Other Alliance members already on the UNCSTD mailing list in individual capacity, but are free to also contribute the positions of the Alliance to the process.

Action point: Members of the Alliance involved in UN CSTD activities/meetings in personal capacities are free to also participate on behalf of the Alliance.

MIN 3/JANUARY: Report back on 620 Guidelines text v.43, translations issue, action plan

Neither Pria nor Tshepiso was around to report. Consequently, the item was deferred to the next meeting.

MIN 4/JANUARY: UPCOMING EVENTS RELEVANT TO THE ALLIANCE

a. UNESCO [International Conference on Digital Platform Governance](#)

University of Pretoria, 13 February

Parallel Session (10:00–11:30)

- Guy explained that the Alliance was requested to convene a panel, which will include Gilbert, Alfred, Hlengiwe, and Zoe. Guy would enquire if it would be streamed.
- Mukelani noted that IRSA will be hosting a side meeting of SADC-based Data Protection Authorities (DPAs) and Information Commissions and intends to include the Guidelines on the agenda.

b. Closed Side Event: Consultation by the Rapporteur with Tech Companies on the Guidelines
Thursday, 12 February, 14:30–15:45

- Guy noted that Alliance members could signal interest in attending.

c. 2026 Africa Editors' Congress (23–24 February) and Africa Media Festival (26–27 February), Nairobi

- Hlengiwe and Guy requested members who will be attending the Congress to convene a side meeting at the AFC, liaising with Izak and Churchill..

d. Digital Rights and Inclusion Forum (DRIF)

- Hlengiwe noted that DRIF is still accepting session proposals. However, the Alliance has not yet secured support for participation. She invited members to suggest possible session proposals.

e. RightsCon (5-8 May) Lusaka

- Although the Alliance did not submit a proposal, Hlengiwe noted that even in the absence of a formal session, there may be opportunities for side engagements. Members were encouraged to consider possibilities. Attendees include Athandiwe, Nompilo, and Janet.

f. UNESCO World Press Freedom Day (4-5 May) Lusaka

- Hlengiwe indicated that she will reach out to UNESCO to request a session.

Action point: Alliance members to identify, propose, and share ideas for sessions, side events, and other engagement opportunities across the listed upcoming conferences and forums, including indicating availability to participate or convene side meetings.

MIN 5/JANUARY: IDEAS FOR THE ALLIANCE IN 2026 (GENERAL DISCUSSION)

Hlengiwe emphasised that, having been established in 2024, the Alliance now needs to focus on growth beyond event participation, building on its substantive achievements, including the successful adoption of the ACHPR 620 resolution, and the complementary 630 and 631..

Guy noted that members can take concrete steps within their own organisations to ensure the Guidelines have practical impact. He further highlighted that the Special Rapporteur will be undertaking a review of the Model Law this year, presenting an opportunity for the Alliance to offer meaningful engagement.

Mukelani proposed pairing Alliance members with information regulators in their respective countries to stimulate in-country collaboration, raise awareness of the Guidelines, and secure specific commitments.

Marystella shared that the International Press Institute (IPI) is developing Guidelines on Access to Information and the Environment, which will incorporate data access issues, and indicated that these would be shared once finalised.

Action point: Alliance members to generate and share ideas on how to strengthen the Alliance's growth, enhance the practical impact of the Guidelines within their organisations and countries, engage in the Model Law review process, and promote collaboration with national information regulators.

MIN 6/JANUARY: VOLUNTEERS TO HELP WITH FUNDRAISING

Hlengiwe requested members to explore avenues for mobilising financial support for the Alliance and to share ideas and proposals accordingly.

Action point: Financial Mobilisation

MIN 7/JANUARY: AOB AND CLOSURE

The meeting adjourned at 1:03 PM with Hlengiwe thanking members for their participation.