MINUTES OF THE AFRICAN ALLIANCE FOR ACCESS TO DATA HELD ON 31ST MARCH VIA ZOOM AT 12:00 PM SAST

MEMBERS PRESENT

S/No.	NAME
1.	Guy Berger
2.	Hlengiwe Dube
3.	Ivy Gikonyo
4.	Edetaen Ojo
5.	Christopher Musodza
6.	Aurelia Ayisi
7.	Churchill Otieno
8.	Geereesha Topsy-Sonoo
9.	Gilbert Sendugwa
10.	Izak Minnaar
11.	Ompha Tshamano
12.	Peace Amuge
13.	Laeed Zaghlami
14.	Rosemary Okello-Orlale
15.	Taryn De Vega
16.	Alison Gillwald
17.	Tshiamo Motshegwa
18.	Kwami
19.	Irene Mwendwa
20.	Bulanda Nkhowani
21.	Angela Minayo
22.	Phillip Ayazika

Apologies: Anriette, Mukelani, Liz

AGENDA

Chair: Hlengiwe Dube, Centre for Human Rights

1. Welcome and new ACHPR resolution (see website) remarks by rapporteur Sonoo and discussion (10 mins)

2. Position paper on taking forward the ATD normative standards instrument (Gilbert)) (10 mins)

3. New participants and approval of previous minutes and follow up (10 minutes)

Quick follow-up issues to minutes (not covered later in the agenda):

a. Engagements on the upcoming joint statement of the Rapporteurs (Alfred)

b. Sessions featuring ACHPR resolution on ATD at OGP, DRIF, African Media Summit: Updates from (respectively Gilbert, Thobekile and John; Churchill).

4. Formalising the Alliance (As per this document) (15 mins) - (Chair)

5. Research and Fundraising update (5) – (Liz, Guy) (DRIF, Mozilla research, SA Renaissance fund) (5 mins)

6. Updated Calendar of events 2025 where ATD and the ACHPR Resolution could be advocated (5 mins) (Chair).

7. Aob (5 mins)

MIN 1/MARCH: WELCOME AND REMARKS BY RAPPORTEUR SONOO ON NEW ACHPR RESOLUTIONS AND DISCUSSION
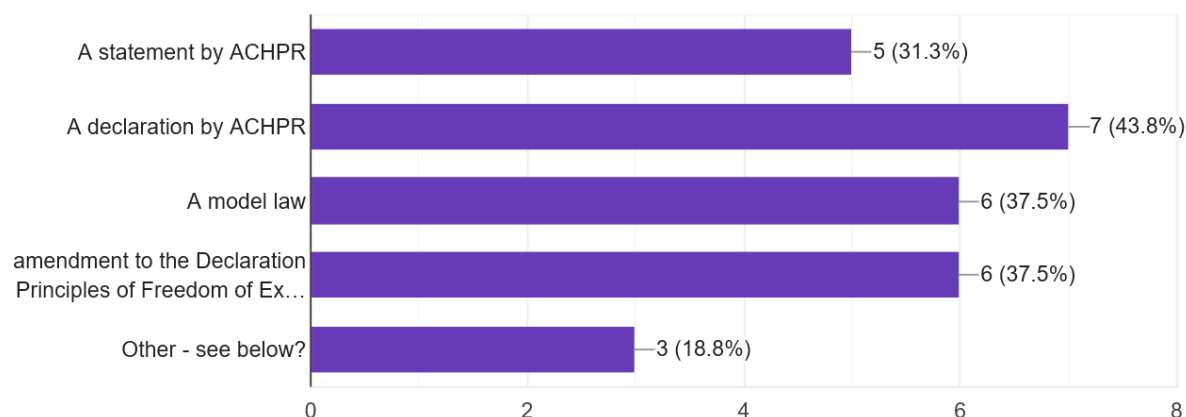
The meeting was called to order at 12:00 PM by Hlengiwe. After welcoming members, she invited Rapporteur Sono who shared on the recent ACHPR Resolutions on Public Interest Content and Information Integrity that she needs support to implement.

Izak, Alison, Tshiamo and Edet thanked the Rapporteur for the work on the Resolutions and for attending the meeting, and acknowledged that the Resolutions presented many opportunities to further the Alliance's Agenda through various activities. One suggestion given was to work on the Resolutions simultaneously because of the limited time involved. The G20 was suggested as one of the platforms to incorporate. The Rapporteur proposed to meet regularly on the issues.

MIN 2/MARCH: POSITION PAPER ON TAKING FORWARD THE ATD NORMATIVE STANDARDS INSTRUMENT

Gilbert, Maxwell and Anriette were to come up with a draft consultation note which has possible frameworks and advantages and disadvantages of each to assist in settling on one. The options narrowed down and reflected in a draft document are a Model law, Guidelines, a Treaty and a Declaration. Gilbert shared the original link where members had commented and ranked these.

[results as mid-April 2025 so far:

If you answered "Other", please elaborate below

3 responses

Guidelines can be used to address various issues relevant to ATD

Guidelines on Access to Data in Africa (guided by the 2013 ATI model law, the 2019 Declaration on Freedom of Expression and Access to Information and recent multilateral policy developments on access to data.

This depends perhaps on what is to be achieved. It could be one or more of the above. I would try to think of whatever is decided as part of a larger strategy.

Edet proposed the upcoming Internet Governance Forum, Lillestrøm, Norway, from June 23 to 27, 2025 as a good opportunity to have the discussion with the Commissioner. Likewise: UNESCO's West Africa Conference on Information Integrity in Praia, Cabo Verde, from September 3 to 5, 2025, and Open Government Partnership (OGP) Global Summit in Vitoria-Gasteiz, Spain, from October 7 to 9, 2025. Guy explained that as some members of the Alliance would be attending DRIF25 in Lusaka, more concrete planning could be held there with others joining virtually.

Rapporteur Sono addressed the suggestions and comments shared, thanked Gilbert for the work, and encouraged that moving forward included timeframes. She also noted that she would plan to be attending future meetings.

MIN 3/MARCH: NEW PARICIPANTS AND APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MINUTES

Irene Mwendwa explained that Pollicy was re-activating its AAAD membership. Prof Laeed Zaglami (Algeria) introduced himself. Ompha, who previously worked with the Centre for Human Rights was now joining as staff of Gibbs Media Leadership Think Tank.

Gilbert explained that he spoke to Sarah Wesonga of Article 19 and that she expressed interest in joining.

The minutes of the previous meeting were read and approved as accurate. Issues arising include:

    a. Engagements on the upcoming joint statement of the Rapporteurs (Alfred)

       This will be addressed at the next meeting when Alfred will be there.

    b. Sessions featuring ACHPR resolution on ATD at OGP, DRIF, African Media Summit: Updates from (respectively Gilbert, Thobekile and John; Churchill)

       Gilbert explained that at the OGP, they got to introduce the work of the Alliance. He suggested that countries yet to develop their OGP National Action plans should be targeted to include issues of access to data.

MIN 4/ MARCH: FORMALISING THE ALLIANCE

Guy shared updates on interested members for the Steering Committee. Edet suggested limiting the number of Steering Committee members to ensure it is manageable. Angela explained that Article 19 will be an international member. In discussion, the proposal for the Steering Committee was max 20 members who could vote at an AGM. The SC could be approximately 10 pan-African member groups, 5 individuals coming from different African regions, and 2 from host institutions. Other members, including individuals and international organisations, would be entitled to attend all meetings and to lead the work of subcommittees.

Guy asked participants to share their availability to be among the regional members of the Steering Committee, and any sub-committee they volunteered to lead. A form now exists online to this effect.

MIN 5/MARCH: RESEARCH AND FUNDRAISING UPDATE

Guy explained that the Alliance had received sponsorship from Luminate for 4 members to attend DRIF and those selected were founding participants: Hlengiwe, Churchill, Izak and Liz Orembo.

He also noted that the Alliance is working on a research funding proposal to Mozilla to convene focus group alongside Afrisig, and do key informant interviews in among others Kenya and South Africa. Interested members should reach out to him. Taryn and Irene indicated interest.

He further said that the Africa Renaissance Foundation of the South Africa international relations department is being asked to support convenings of the Alliance in conjunction with the G20 and a possible side events in Banjul.

Hlengiwe is working on a proposal for an Africa IGF session.

MIN 6/MARCH: UPDATED CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Guy shared and took members through the updated [calendar of events](). Participants suggested adding beyond the dates already noted in the meeting, also: Fifafrica, Digital media Africa (16-17 September Nairobi), Datafest in Kampala August 25.

MIN 7/ MARCH: AOB

It was noted that the Alliance is not just limited to engaging in events within Africa but is open to engagements in other continents as well subject to the availability of funding.