

## Internet Governance Forum 2025 | Regional Parliamentary Track alongside the AfIGF

### *Parliamentarians Empowering Africa's Digital Future*

#### *Summary report*

## INTRODUCTION

---

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. Ahead of its annual global Forum, which takes place in Norway from 23 to 27 June 2025 under the overarching theme "*Building Digital Governance Together*", the [African IGF](#) (AfIGF) met from 29 to 31 May in Tanzania.

Building on Parliamentary Track experiences at the African IGF since 2022 and under the overarching theme "*Parliamentarians Empowering Africa's Digital Future*", five sessions dedicated to [parliamentarians from across the African region](#) were organized at the regional Forum.

The Track and the Africa IGF was attended by over 20 Members of Parliaments from 16 African countries, including from the Tanzanian Parliament.

The entire programme of the Africa IGF, as well as summary reports and the Africa IGF Declaration, are available on the official [Africa IGF website](#). The programme of the regional Parliamentary Track is in the annex of this summary report.

Pictures of the Africa IGF, including of the regional Parliamentary Track, are available here ([Day 1](#) | [Day 2](#) | [Day 3](#)).

Recording of the Africa IGF Parliamentary Track sessions are available here ([Day 1](#) | [Day 1 Youth-MP Session](#) | [Day 2](#) | [Day 3](#)).

## SUMMARY REPORT

---

The African Internet Governance Forum (AfIGF) parliamentary track opened in Dar es Salaam on 29 May. The head of the IGF Secretariat, the African Union Commission, the head of cooperation at the German Embassy and the Tanzanian Deputy Minister for Communication and Information Technology welcomed participants, emphasizing:

1. the alignment of the event with the African Digital Compact and the need for a balanced approach to digital technology.
2. a stronger intra-African coordination and collaboration to address global Internet governance challenges and to serve the needs of people across the continent.
3. the significance of African voices in global digital governance and encouraging the active participation of regional stakeholders in the upcoming WSIS+20 review process.

The day's program included sessions on safeguarding democracy in the digital age, legislative priorities, and policy pathways in Africa, as well as a roundtable discussion and an intergenerational dialogue with African youth, with particular focus on Africa's challenges and opportunities in Internet governance.

**[Parliamentary Session 1] Safeguarding Democracy in the Digital Age: Legislative Priorities and Policy Pathways in Africa**

The session featured Catherine Mumma, Senator from Kenya, Rachel Magege from Pollicy and Lyndcey Oriko, from the National Cohesion and Integration Commission in Kenya and was moderated by Lillian Nalwoga, Director at CIPESA.

While digital technology can enhance electoral processes, speakers agreed that technologies are also being used to distort information and threaten democratic spaces, particularly affecting female politicians. The discussion also touched on emerging issues such as the legal recognition of digital assets and the potential for new legislative frameworks to address information integrity in electoral processes. Insights were shared on the challenges posed by technology, highlighting the need for a multistakeholder approach involving government, legislators, civil society, the private sector and technical community, as well as fostering transgenerational dialogues in bridging gaps between different age groups.

African Members of Parliament were strongly encouraged to:

- review and update electoral laws to address misinformation, disinformation, and malinformation in digital spaces, while ensuring that policies balance freedom of expression with protection against harmful online content,
- consider creating specific laws addressing technology-facilitated gender-based violence and develop safe digital spaces, particularly for women and minorities,
- establish, together with governments, multistakeholder partnerships to develop national guidelines on hate speech, disinformation, and misinformation for social media users and tech companies,
- incorporate digital literacy and digital governance education into school curriculums,
- actively participate in the consultations and 20-year review process of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS+20) to elevate local needs to global processes.

**[Parliamentary Session 2] Roundtable Discussion with Members of Parliament: Towards Effective Digital Governance in Africa** followed by **[Parliamentary Session 3] Striking the Balance: Upholding Freedom of Expression in the Fight Against Cybercrime**

The roundtable discussion, moderated by Margaret Nyambura, focused on digital governance challenges in Africa, particularly on online mis- and disinformation, and freedom of expression. Members of Parliament shared their legislative frameworks and efforts to address these issues, including the need for legislative updates in some countries. Participants highlighted the need for an overhaul of laws to regulate digital platforms, while emphasizing the importance of reviewing laws across sectors to adapt to technological advancements. The discussion underscored the necessity for clear, fair, and future-proof regulations to safeguard freedom of expression while preventing the spread of harmful misinformation.

The subsequent session on *upholding freedom of expression in the fight against cybercrime* focused on cybersecurity challenges in Africa, featured Tari Wills from the Luminare Group, Vusumuzi Moyo, Member of Parliament from Zimbabwe and Mactar Seck, Head of the Innovation and Technology Section from UNECA. The session was moderated by Ernest Mafuta, Expert Member from the Zambia National Standardization Technical Committee.

The session highlighted the need for adequate regulatory frameworks and expert personnel to harness digital opportunities. Participants discussed the importance of harmonizing cyber laws across the continent, addressing issues like cyberbullying, misinformation, and the weaponization of information. They emphasized the role of Parliament in understanding these challenges and the necessity of collaboration between African countries to enhance cybersecurity. More specifically, Parliamentarians suggested to:

- work on harmonizing cyber laws across the continent to address common threats, but also review and update existing cyber laws to address emerging technologies,
- consider sector-specific digital laws (for instance, under a labor law),
- collaborate on data governance frameworks and implement data protection measures,
- invest in capacity building in training and retaining cybersecurity experts to address the skills gap, as well as in literacy programs to sensitize users on cybersecurity laws,
- hold large private sector companies accountable for their operations in Africa and explore similar regulations from other regions,
- encourage the development and implementation of digital ID systems to enhance security and ease of movement across borders.

Partners of the Africa IGF Parliamentary Track, including the UN Economic Commission for Africa, were encouraged to provide training programmes for parliamentarians on digital transformation and emerging technologies.

#### [Parliamentary Session 4] **Intergenerational dialogue on digital cooperation for Africa's future - road to WSIS+20**

This joint intergenerational session brought together legislators, a few representatives of Africa's early engagements in the WSIS process, and a new generation of young Internet leaders for an open and forward-looking conversation. The dialogue revisited some of the founding principles of multi-stakeholder cooperation that shaped Africa's early role in WSIS, while exploring how intergenerational alliances can build inclusive and resilient digital institutions for the future.

Through moderated exchanges and two collaborative breakout discussions, participants co-developed a shared roadmap focused on policy priorities, partnership models, and capacity building to carry Africa's digital cooperation into the next twenty years.

#### **Key Discussion Points**

- Reflection on Africa's legacy and contributions in WSIS and internet governance forums.
- The urgent need for cross-generational cooperation to address evolving digital challenges.
- Recognition of youth as central to innovation, policy advocacy, and community-centered digital development.
- The importance of creating meaningful spaces for youth in parliamentary and policy-making processes.

#### **Recommended Actions**

1. Integrate Technical Competence into Parliamentary Processes:
  - Encourage the establishment of youth and technical advisory committees within parliaments to ensure more informed digital decision-making.
2. Support Youth Innovation and Inclusion:

- Develop and resource innovation hubs, particularly in rural communities.
  - Involve youth in the design and implementation of digital policies and programs.
3. Institutionalize Youth–Parliament Engagement Channels:
- Formalize youth engagement in legislative consultations to ensure laws and regulations reflect the realities and needs of local communities and all young people.
  - Promote sustained dialogue platforms, similar to the IGF, to build trust and bridge generational gaps.

#### [Parliamentary Session 5] **Building Truly Inclusive AI Governance Practices in Africa**

In collaboration with Research ICT Africa, the regional Parliamentary Track featured a session on building inclusive AI policies in Africa. Mpho Moyo and Liz Orembo, senior researchers at Research ICT Africa, addressed challenges on systemic digital inequalities, data exploitation, and the need for scalable AI systems and legal frameworks that consider diverse African contexts. More specifically, session discussions suggested to:

- set up an interest group to disseminate research findings and recommendations on inclusive AI policies to policymakers,
- parliamentarians to review existing legislations and consider drafting an Artificial Intelligence Bill to regulate the use of AI and prevent potential harms,
- parliamentarians to explore creating policies that encourage data sharing between government ministries and agencies to improve AI development and digital services.
- invite national bureaus of statistics to reimagine data collection tools and indicators to capture more comprehensive and inclusive information about African populations,
- strongly encourage African tech experts to focus on developing innovations aimed at reducing the cost of Internet access in Africa, such as affordable smartphones.

Support documents are available here:

1. [PowerPoint presentation](#) on *Building Transformative AI Policies in Africa*
2. [Key Transformative AI Policy Recommendations](#) (one pager)
3. Towards Substantive Equality in AI: Transformative AI Policy for Gender Equality and Diversity (full report) [in English](#) | [en Français](#)

#### [Parliamentary Session 6] **What is next? Closing of the Regional Parliamentary Track and Insights about the Global IGF**

The African IGF closed with a short presentation on what to expect at the global Internet Governance Forum taking place from 23 to 27 June in Lillestrøm, Norway, and its Parliamentary Track.

Parliamentarians were encouraged to:

- share key outcomes of the Africa IGF and African perspectives at the global Parliamentary Track to feed into global digital policy discussions,
- engage with national and sub-regional IGF initiatives and develop dedicated parliamentary activities as part of the local Forums.



More information can be found in the [presentation](#), as well as on the [IGF Parliamentary Track webpage](#).

**Annex:** Programme of the Africa IGF Parliamentary Track

CALENDAR OF ACTIVITIES Regional Parliamentary Track alongside the African IGF	
Date and Time	Focus
<b>29 May 2025 (Julius Nyerere International Convention Centre, Dar Es Salaam &amp; online)</b>	
29 May 2025 09:00 - 09:45 local time <i>Workshop Room 4 (Mikumi)</i>	<p><b>[Opening] Opening of the Regional Parliamentary Track and Welcome Remarks</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Eng. Maryprisca Winfred Mahundi Deputy Minister for Communication and Information Technology, Tanzania</li> <li>● Chengetai Masango, Head of the IGF Secretariat (<i>online</i>)</li> <li>● Adil Suleiman, Senior Policy Officer, African Union Commission (<i>online</i>)</li> <li>● Julia Kronberg, Head of Cooperation, German Embassy, Tanzania</li> </ul>
09:45 - 10:30 local time <i>Workshop Room 4 (Mikumi)</i>	<p><b>[Parliamentary Session 1] Safeguarding Democracy in the Digital Age: Legislative Priorities and Policy Pathways in Africa</b></p> <p>This session brings together a legislator and a civil society and private sector representative to highlight policy pathways, legislative priorities in Africa and guide discussions of the regional Parliamentary Track. Considering the overarching theme of the African IGF Empowering Africa's Digital Future, the Track's programme will start with a fireside chat on safeguarding democracy in the digital age. While trust is deteriorating with the rapid spread of misinformation through digital technologies, citizens need to have confidence in the system and institutions of democracy, including electoral processes. Members of Parliament will subsequently exchange good practices on strengthening institutional resilience against misinformation and lessons learned from diverse regulatory approaches to preserve information integrity.</p> <p><b>Speakers</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Catherine Mumma, Senator, Kenya</li> <li>● Rachel Magege, Pollicy</li> <li>● Lyndcey Oriko, Program Officer at the National Cohesion and Integration Commission, Kenya</li> </ul> <p><b>Moderator:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Lillian Nalwoga, Director, CIPESA</li> </ul>
10:30 - 11:00	Coffee Break

<p>29 May 2025 11:00 - 12:00 local time <i>Workshop Room 4 (Mikumi)</i></p>	<p>[Parliamentary Session 2] <b>Roundtable Discussion with Members of Parliament: Towards Effective Digital Governance in Africa</b></p> <p>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 mis- and disinformation and freedom of expression. Members of Parliaments will share insights of existing regulatory frameworks in their countries, as well as current trends and prospectives 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 2025 from 23 to 27 June in Lillestrøm, Norway.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tour de table of African Members of Parliament</li> <li>• Regional Parliamentary Track partners</li> </ul> <p><b>Moderator:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Margaret Nyambura Ndung'u, Digital Policy Specialist</li> </ul>
<p>29 May 2025 12:00 - 13:00 local time <i>Workshop Room 4 (Mikumi)</i></p>	<p>[Parliamentary Session 3] <b>Striking the Balance: Upholding Freedom of Expression in the Fight Against Cybercrime</b></p> <p>With the increase in scope and sophistication of online criminal activities, efforts to combat cybercrime continue to evolve. Recent legislative trends to address cybercrime, focus on laws targeting misinformation and other misconduct online. Rules on content regulation, surveillance, and platform liability can, however, pose serious risks to freedom of expression and access to information. Various experts and Members of Parliament will provide a holistic view of this complex policy landscape and explore how policymakers can navigate the delicate balance between ensuring cybersecurity and upholding fundamental human rights, especially the right to freedom of expression.</p> <p><b>Speakers</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tari Wills, Luminate Group</li> <li>• Vusa Moyo, Member of Parliament, Zimbabwe</li> <li>• Mactar Seck, Head of the Innovation and Technology Section, UNECA</li> </ul> <p><b>Moderator</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ernest Mafuta</li> </ul>
<p>13:00 - 14:00</p>	<p>Lunch Break</p>

<p>29 May 2025 14:00 - 15:00 local time <i>Ruaha Hall</i></p>	<p>[Parliamentary Session 4] <b>Intergenerational dialogue on digital cooperation for Africa's future - road to WSIS+20</b></p> <p>This session unites the architects of Africa's early engagements in the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) with today's youth changemakers to reflect on our shared journey and chart the path forward. We'll revisit the founding principles of multi-stakeholder cooperation established at WSIS, then dive into an open dialogue on how intergenerational alliances can build resilient digital institutions across the continent. Through moderated panels and youth-led breakout labs, participants will co-design a roadmap of priority spanning policy, partnership models, and capacity building to carry Africa's digital cooperation into the next twenty years.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Open Dialogue with Members of Parliament and youth</li> </ul> <p><b>Moderator</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mariam Jobe, African IGF Youth</li> <li>• Kuku Sam, GIZ</li> </ul>
<p>15:00 - 15:30</p>	<p>Coffee Break</p>
<p>29 May 2025 15:30 - 16:30 local time <i>Workshop Room 4 (Mikumi)</i></p>	<p>[Parliamentary Session 5] <b>Building Truly Inclusive AI Governance Practices in Africa</b></p> <p>This roundtable aims to have an open dialogue with Members of Parliament to advance the adoption of truly inclusive AI development and governance practices tailored to the unique needs and challenges of Africa. As the continent rapidly embraces AI technologies, it is crucial that these innovations drive inclusive economic and social development, ensuring that AI ecosystems are responsive to local contexts, priorities, and the diverse needs of African communities.</p> <p>Amongst other, the session will highlight how multistakeholder collaboration can drive AI governance in Africa that is participatory, just, and globally representative. It will also examine how to ensure that AI policies reflect the continent's diverse local realities and priorities. By exploring real-world examples, participants will discuss actionable steps for translating inclusive AI governance from principles to practice across Africa. Additionally, the conversation will strengthen the capacity for policy impact, empowering African governments, civil society, private sector, and academic institutions to collaborate effectively.</p> <p><b>Speakers</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mpho Moyo, Research ICT Africa</li> <li>• Liz Orembo, Research ICT Africa</li> </ul>

<p>29 May 2025 16:30 - 17:00 local time <i>Workshop Room 4 (Mikumi)</i></p>	<p>[Parliamentary Session 6] <b>What is next? Closing of the Regional Parliamentary Track and Insights about the Global IGF</b> 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 2025 and its global Parliamentary Track, as well as upcoming activities during the IGF 2025.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Carol Roach, Chair of the IGF Multistakeholder Advisory Group, Under-Secretary, Government of The Bahamas</li> <li>• Celine Bal, Associate Programme Officer, IGF Secretariat</li> </ul>
---	---

**Annex to African IGF Parliamentary Track: Suggested African IGF Sessions**

<p><b>30 May 2025 (Julius Nyerere International Convention Centre, Dar Es Salaam &amp; online)</b></p>	
<p>30 May 2025 10:00 - 12:00 local time <i>(Selous Room   Plenary room)</i></p>	<p>[Opening] <b>Opening Ceremony of the African Internet Governance Forum</b></p>
<p>30 May 2025 14:00 - 15:30 local time <i>Workshop Room 4 (Mikumi)</i></p>	<p>[Training] <b>AI Sprinters Course: Capturing the economic opportunity of AI in emerging markets</b></p> <p>This session is a collaborative capacity-building initiative by ECA and Google, aimed at advancing digital skills across the African continent in emerging technologies. The course is designed to equip participants with essential knowledge in AI, cloud technologies, and policy development tailored to the African context, and to introduce the AI Sprinters Framework. The course aims to empower policymakers, policy leaders and governments across Africa with the knowledge and skills necessary to understand, develop and implement effective AI policies and solutions to harness the economic potential of these technologies while addressing Africa’s unique development challenges.</p> <p>Key components:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unlocking AI Opportunities for Africa</li> <li>• Crafting AI Policies for Progress</li> <li>• Enhancing Government Efficiency with AI</li> <li>• The AI Policy Blueprint</li> </ul> <p><b>Speakers:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• UpSkilling Universe</li> </ul>

<p>30 May 2025 14:00 - 15:30 local time (Meru   workshop room 5)</p>	<p><b>[Africa IGF Session] Toward a Trusted Pan-African Data Space: Aligning Regional Frameworks for Cross-Border Governance</b></p> <p>As Africa accelerates its path toward a digital single market, data governance has emerged as a foundational enabler of trusted cross-border digital trade, regional innovation, and inclusive development. The African Union Data Policy Framework (AU DPF) offers a visionary blueprint for interoperable, rights-based, and development-focused data ecosystems across the continent. Yet the real test lies in implementation – particularly in moving beyond fragmented national approaches toward collaborative, regionally harmonized governance models.</p> <p>This session brings together representatives from the East African Community, Southern African Development Community, and Economic Community of West African States, with contributions from the AfCFTA Secretariat, alongside voices from civil society and policy research, to examine how Regional Economic Communities are translating the AU DPF into actionable, region-specific instruments that respond to real-world data flows, innovation needs, and human rights obligations.</p> <p>The discussion will centre on the urgent need to move beyond siloed data sovereignty and rigid protectionist regimes, toward cooperative, trust-based governance anchored in shared norms, policy interoperability, and inclusive, adaptive regulation that enables both innovation and accountability.</p>
<p>31 May 2025 08:00 - 09:00 local time Workshop Room 4 (Mikumi)</p>	<p><b>[Africa IGF Session] Towards an Afro-feminist Approach to Gender Equality in Data Governance and Policymaking</b></p> <p>Across Africa, there is growing recognition of the dimensions of data governance, with the African Union's Data Policy Framework (AUDPF) serving as a continental guidepost for the development of national and regional data strategies. However, as governments race to implement the AU DPF, a crucial question persists: are these data governance processes inclusive, gender-responsive, and rooted in the lived experiences of African communities?</p> <p>Despite advancements in digital infrastructure and data availability, governance models still often replicate colonial, technocratic, and patriarchal systems that overlook the needs and voices of women, girls, and gender-diverse populations, especially those further marginalized by class, geography, disability, or age. There is an urgent need to challenge dominant models and build new paradigms grounded in justice, care, and community agency.</p> <p>This session, convened by Pollicy explores an Afro-feminist approach to gender equality in data governance and policymaking in Africa, including how such an approach can support the domestication of the AU DPF. Afro-feminist data governance prioritizes consent, accountability, equity, and representation, and calls for dismantling extractive systems in favor of people-centered, culturally resonant, and intersectional data practices. It acknowledges that data is not neutral and that governance must grapple with power, identity, and historical injustices.</p>

	<p>Crucially, as AI continues to become popular and central to decision-making systems from social protection to law enforcement, it is vital to ensure these technologies are not reinforcing existing biases. Gender data, if robust and ethically collected, can be a transformative tool in shaping equitable AI systems. However, current gender data ecosystems in Africa are fragmented, underfunded, and underutilized. This session will as well consider how the proposed Afro-feminist principles can inform Data and AI policy, auditing, and regulation, ensuring that technologies serve, rather than harm, gender justice goals.</p> <p>The session will gather diverse voices: policymakers, feminists, data scientists, technologists, community advocates, and researchers to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Share strategies for domesticating the AU DPF through feminist frameworks.</li> <li>• Present models for feminist data stewardship and participatory governance;</li> <li>• Identify opportunities for integrating AI fairness, gender equity, and data ethics into national digital strategies</li> </ul>
<p>31 May 2025 09:00 - 10:30 local time (Selous   Plenary room)</p>	<p><b>[Africa IGF Session] Aligning National Data Policies with the AU Data Policy Framework: Best Practices and Lessons Learned</b></p> <p>In 2022, the African Union Commission (AUC) adopted the African Union Data Policy Framework (AU DPF) as a continental guide to help Member States establish coherent, inclusive, and rights-based data governance systems. The AU DPF addresses key challenges such as data protection, privacy, ethical data use, cross-border data flows, and data sovereignty, while promoting digital innovation and economic integration across the continent. It provides a common vision and principles for Member States to develop and harmonise national and regional data governance frameworks aligned with Africa's development priorities, including Agenda 2063 and the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA). To support implementation and domestication of the AU DPF, the "Data Governance in Africa Initiative" has been assisting African countries in developing data policies that are context-specific but aligned with the AU DPF.</p> <p>This session at the Africa Internet Governance Forum (AFIGF) will focus on the experiences, lessons and best practices related to three interrelated areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aligning National Data Policies with the AU Data Policy Framework</li> <li>• Utilising Multistakeholder, participatory and inclusive Approaches in Data Policy Development.</li> <li>• Fostering effective Interorganisational Collaboration for the effective development of Data Policies.</li> </ul> <p>The panel will bring together representatives from governments, data protection authorities, civil society, the private sector and project implementation partners to share insights on the policy development process, practical experiences in aligning with the AU DPF, and the challenges encountered. It will examine how national governments are adapting AU DPF principles to their local contexts.</p>



	<p>A key focus will be the importance of multistakeholder approaches in shaping inclusive, transparent, and effective data policy development. Engaging a broad spectrum of actors—ICT ministries, regulators, private sector, academia, civil society, and affected communities—ensures that data policies are not only technically sound but also socially relevant and widely accepted.</p> <p>The session will also explore how interorganisational cooperation is essential to harmonisation. Examples will be drawn from countries that have initiated collaborative structures or policy dialogues to align their frameworks with the AU DPF.</p> <p>Participants will gain:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Practical insights on aligning national data policies with the AU DPF</li> <li>• Lessons on inclusive policy development through multistakeholder processes</li> <li>• Strategies for effective coordination across institutions</li> <li>• This session will contribute to building a unified and resilient data governance landscape in Africa—one that balances innovation, economic growth, and the protection of rights in the digital age.</li> </ul>
<p>31 May 2025 14:00 - 15:00 local time (<i>Selous   Plenary room</i>)</p>	<p><b>[Main Session] Shaping Africa's Digital Future: Strategic Governance and Leadership for Continental Integration</b></p> <p>As Africa advances the development of its Digital Single Market and scales up Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI) including digital identity systems, interoperable cross-border payment platforms, and regional data exchange frameworks – the governance of data has emerged as a defining pillar of the continent's digital transformation. Data now underpins public service delivery, economic growth, artificial intelligence, innovation, digital trade, and regional integration. Yet, in the absence of coherent, trusted, and harmonized data governance frameworks, Africa's ability to fully realize its digital potential remains constrained. Fragmentation across national laws, regulatory regimes, and institutional capacities—further complicated by concerns over sovereignty and uneven political will—continues to hinder the establishment of secure, interoperable cross-border data flows.</p> <p>This high-level panel will convene senior leaders and experts from governments, regional bodies, international organizations, civil society, and academia to examine what effective, inclusive, and future-oriented data governance should look like for Africa. The session comes at a pivotal moment, as ongoing developments—including the domestication of the AU Data Policy Framework, implementation of the AfCFTA Digital Trade Protocol, and regional initiatives in ECOWAS, SADC, and EAC—present unprecedented opportunities for regulatory coherence and multilateral cooperation.</p> <p>Panelists will explore how African institutions can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Design governance systems that protect digital rights and ensure equitable access to data.</li> <li>• Redefine data sovereignty to enable secure and interoperable cross-border data flows,</li> <li>• Foster innovation, economic resilience, and sustainable digital development, and</li> </ul>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Address the growing influence of emerging technologies such as AI, on the data governance landscape and the African data ecosystems.</li> <li>• Drawing on national, regional and continental experiences, the panel will engage with the following key questions:</li> <li>• What does “good data governance” look like in the African context?</li> <li>• How can data governance frameworks embed inclusion and representation, particularly for marginalized groups and communities?</li> <li>• In what ways can institutions safeguard data sovereignty while enabling cross-border data flows?</li> <li>• What forms of continental leadership and coordination are needed to harmonize frameworks across diverse legal, political, and economic landscapes?</li> </ul>
<p>31 May 2025 16:20 - 17:20 local time (Selous   Plenary room)</p>	<p>[Closing] <b>Open Microphone and Closing Ceremony of the African Internet Governance Forum</b></p>