

MEDIA STATEMENT

INFORMATION REGULATOR WELCOMES THE FOCUS ON DATA PROTECTION & TRANSPARENCY COMMITMENTS IN THE G20 LEADERS' DECLARATION

26 NOVEMBER 2025

The Information Regulator South Africa (Regulator) welcomes the G20 Leaders' Declaration adopted at the G20 South Africa Summit, held in Johannesburg, South Africa on 22 November 2025.

The Declaration rightfully recognises the importance of privacy, data protection, transparency, explainability, accountability, protection of human rights, and regulation, among others, in ensuring safe, secure, and trustworthy Artificial Intelligence (AI) development, deployment and use.

The Regulator resoundingly commends the G20 Leaders for recommitting their countries to the global development agenda by committing to "bridge digital divides, including halving the gender digital divide by 2030, and to achieve universal and meaningful connectivity for all, by supporting developing countries in expanding the development and deployment of affordable and secure digital infrastructure". We also support the renewed commitment to promoting and strengthening integrity, accountability and transparency.

Activities implemented by the G20 countries in pursuance of these commitments invariably touch on the work of the Regulator because transparency and data protection, as components of data governance, should be the bedrock of AI development, deployment and use. The same idea should hold for the design, construction and use of the digital public infrastructure. The Regulator will work to support the South African government in the development of the AI strategy and all enabling policies, and the digital public infrastructure that is compliant with data protection and transparency principles embodied in the Protection of Personal Information Act 4 of 2013 (POPIA) and the Promotion of Access to Information Act 2 of 2000 (PAIA).

We are also pleased that the Leaders' Declaration recognises the importance of information integrity in "building safety, resilience, security and trust and creating an enabling, open, fair, non-discriminatory and sustainable digital economy". These are some of the issues that the Regulator had tabled at several G20 consultative meetings that it had participated in as part of the work of the G20's Digital Economy Working Group (DEWG). When the Chairperson of the Regulator, Adv. Pansy Tlakula, addressed the G20's Task Force on Artificial Intelligence, Data Governance and Innovation for Sustainable Development, she had pointed out that data protection and access to information laws serve as pivotal legal frameworks for ensuring the protection of information rights (the right to privacy and right of access to information) and that these should be leveraged significantly to contribute to the elimination of information disorders in the digital economy and the nurturing of human rights-based, and people-centred, approaches to the development of AI the digital public infrastructure.

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