



United for a Better Digital World

MEDIA ADVISORY

South Africa to host one of the world's largest gatherings of Media, Digital and Information Regulators to advance human rights-based governance of digital platforms

06 February 2026

Pretoria, South Africa -Media, digital and information regulators from over 50 countries will convene in Pretoria on 12–13 February 2026 for the International Conference on Digital Platform Governance, one of the most significant global gatherings focused on strengthening the accountability, transparency, and human rights governance of digital platforms.

The conference is co-hosted by the Information, Communication, Technologies and Media Regulators Forum of South Africa and the Social Media 4 Peace South Africa (SM4PSA) coalition, with the support of UNESCO, the African Network of Regulatory Authorities, The Francophone Network of Regulatory Authorities, the I4T Knowledge Network, the South African National Commission for UNESCO, the European University Institute, and the European Union.

The conference will conclude with the presentation of the Pretoria Action Plan on Digital Platform Governance, a regulator-led, multi-stakeholder agenda that commits authorities to coordinated action grounded in international human rights standards, transparency, accountability, due diligence, and user empowerment. The Action Plan responds to growing concerns over opaque platform governance, diverse online harms such as disinformation, hate speech and algorithmic manipulation, and uneven protections for freedom of expression and access to information across regions.

Regulators, civil society organizations, researchers, electoral management bodies and international organizations from Africa, Latin America, Asia and Europe will exchange strategies and good practices for addressing online harms while safeguarding freedom of expression, cultural diversity and information integrity.

Key themes of the conference include:

- The impact of algorithmic curation including recommending systems and generative AI on freedom of expression and cultural diversity
- Protecting children and young people from online harms and developing media and information literacy programs.
- Strengthening the resilience of information ecosystems during crises and electoral periods
- Advancing cross-border regulatory cooperation and multistakeholder oversight of digital platforms

The conference will also serve as the second annual gathering of the Global Forum of Networks (GFN), following its launch at the inaugural International Conference on Digital Platform Governance in Dubrovnik in 2024.

"The Pretoria Action Plan, developed through direct engagement with regulators and partners, is designed to translate shared principles into concrete action. It provides a practical tool for members to identify priorities, choose strategic areas of intervention, and operationalize cooperation within their own institutional contexts. Most importantly, it helps every actor—regulators, civil society, academia and platforms—understand where to begin, how to collaborate effectively, and how to reduce the real-world impact of platform non-responsiveness." Tawfik Jelassi, Assistant Director-General for Communication and Information, UNESCO

As regulators, we can no longer act in isolation, and this conference signals a collective commitment and South Africa's role in shaping the global ICT and media governance. The Pretoria Action Plan will reflect our shared resolve to turn global principles into coordinated regulatory action that delivers real protection, accountability, and trust for users across borders", said Tshiamo Maluleka, Chairperson of the South African ICT and Media Regulators Forum

EVENT DETAILS

Dates: 12–13 February 2026

Venue: Future Africa Campus, University of Pretoria, Pretoria

Time: Opening Ceremony – 12 February, 08:45–09:30

The full conference programme is available on [here](#).

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All media enquiries should be directed to:

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Notes to the Editor

The International Conference on Digital Platform Governance brings together regulators, governments, platforms, civil society, academia and international organizations to advance human rights-based and multistakeholder approaches to platform governance, and to assess progress in implementing the UNESCO Guidelines for the Governance of Digital Platforms.

Through UNESCO's Internet for Trust initiative, governments and regulators worldwide are increasingly shifting toward systemic, inclusive governance approaches that address platform design, algorithms, and monetization models while safeguarding freedom of expression.

The Pretoria Conference builds on the momentum of previous global efforts and positions Africa as a central convening space for shaping the future of digital platform governance.

Global Forum of Networks

Created following the first International Conference on Digital Platform Governance, held in Dubrovnik in 2024, [the network](#) brings together 7 networks of regulatory authorities from around the world, including REFRAM and ACRAN, which cluster the majority of regulators from the African Continent. These two networks, as members of the Global Forum of Networks, are supporting the organization of the Pretoria Conference.

South African Information, Communication, Technology and Media Regulators Forum

Four South African regulators have come together to create the Information, Communication Technologies and Media Regulators Forum of South Africa. The Forum includes the Independent Communications Authority of South Africa (ICASA), the Information Regulator, the Domain Name Authority (.ZADNA), and the Film and Publication Board (FPB). The Regulators Forum is the co hosts of the International Conference on Digital Platform Governance, Pretoria 2026.

Social Media 4 Peace South Africa

SM4PSA is a multistakeholder coalition supported by UNESCO that aims to counter online harmful content while protecting freedom of expression in South Africa. It is composed of 11 CSOs and media associations from South Africa.