



Invitation: Conference

The Centre for Human Rights at the Faculty of Law, University of Pretoria cordially invites you to a conference on Soft Law and Human Rights: The Impact of the Model Law on Access to Information for Africa.



UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA

9 December 2015

www.chr.up.ac.za

The conference will have in attendance academics, practitioners, activists, advocates, civil society organisations, lawyers, and policymakers working on access to information and other closely related fields, from across the continent.

In particular individuals and organisations that have collaborated with the Special Rapporteur under her on-going project on the 'implementation' of the Model Law and all others with first-hand knowledge of the impact of the Model Law in any Member State or on the development, adoption, review or implementation of legal frameworks on ATI and other relevant soft law standards will participate.

Date 9 December 2015
Time 08:30 to 16:00
Venue Senate Hall,
Hatfield Campus,
University of Pretoria,
Pretoria, South Africa

RSVP Kindly confirm your attendance at the conference no later than Thursday 2 December 2015, via email to lola.shyllon@up.ac.za

Enquiries Ms Lola Shyllon
(012 420 4199 / lola.shyllon@up.ac.za)

GPS 25°45'19.7"S 28°13'33.2"E

No registration fee is charged but pre-registration via RSVP is compulsory.

About the Conference

In November 2010, the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights (African Commission) adopted resolution 167 (XLVII), Resolution on Securing the Effective Realisation of Access to Information in Africa. By this resolution, the African Commission decided to begin the process of developing a model access to information legislation for Africa, led by its Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Expression and Access to Information in Africa. On 23 February 2013, the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights adopted the Model Law on Access to Information for Africa (Model Law).

Though non-binding, the Model Law was developed as a tool to assist African States in the development of new or amendment of existing access to information laws in compliance with regional and international instruments imposing an obligation to adopt such laws. Since the publication of the first draft of the Model Law in April 2012, the access to information landscape on the continent has improved significantly, with the increase of African States with access to information (ATI) laws from 5 to 16, and a noticeable trend of strengthened normative content of ATI laws on the continent. While the direct influence of the Model Law in fast-tracking the development of ATI Bills or adoption of ATI laws is on record in some cases, in other instances, the role of the Model Law has been evident only by virtue of obvious similarities between the text of the Model Law and newly developed ATI Bills or adopted ATI laws.

The conference thus seeks to examine as far as possible with reference to concrete examples and empirical data, the impact of the Model Law on the adoption, review and implementation of access to information laws in Africa. In doing so, the conference aims to create a forum to share opportunities, experiences, challenges of utilising the Model Law in the development and review of access to information laws, and drawing from these discussions, formulate new strategies to ensure the increased adoption, review and effective implementation of ATI laws in Africa and the broader implementation of similar emerging soft laws standards within the African human rights system and the African Union.

