



**African Library and Information Associations and Institutions (AfLIA)**  
**Association Africaine des Bibliothèques et des Institutions d'Information**  
**Associação Africana de Bibliotecas e Instituições de Informação**

## **AfLIA's Statement on Freedom of Access to Information and Freedom of Expression**

The African Library and Information Associations and Institutions (AfLIA) supports the right to seek, receive and impart information and ideas, either orally, in writing or in print, in the form of art, or through any other form of communication as enshrined in the African Commission on Human and People's Rights Declaration of Principles on Freedom of Expression in Africa.

AfLIA recognizes the importance of Freedom of Access to Information and Freedom of Expression as a vital and a critical tool for democratic involvement and monitoring of governance and also as a fundamental and inalienable human right.

AfLIA affirms that information as one of the factors of production is the foundation for good decision making and good governance that leads to national development.

AfLIA recognizes that a well-informed society brings forth an enlightened and a developed economy and society.

AfLIA believes that lack of legislative instruments in most African countries restricts access to public information which are sometimes treated as state secrets.

AfLIA asserts that giving the Principle of Freedom of Access to Information and Freedom of Expression a legislative endorsement will enable sharing of ideas among citizens, as well as assisting people to make informed decisions that will go a long way to strengthen Africa's democracies. This will lead to national cohesion and development.

AfLIA encourages all African governments without the Right to Information Law to take urgent steps to do so in line with Article 16 of the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights and Section IV of the African Commission on Human and People's Rights Declaration of Principles on Freedom of Expression in Africa.

AfLIA as the continental Library Association in Africa, urges all governments in Africa that its citizens have a right to access information held by public bodies, subject only to clearly defined rules established by law.