

Communiqué of the Inaugural Africa Editors Congress

Nairobi, Kenya | 28 February 2026

At a defining moment of profound transformation for journalism, democracy, and the global information ecosystem, editors and media leaders from across Africa convened in Nairobi for the inaugural Africa Editors Congress, organised by The African Editors Forum (TAEF). Bringing together editorial leadership from diverse regions of Africa and the world, markets, and media traditions, the Congress marked a significant step toward building coordinated continental responses to the structural challenges reshaping journalism and public-interest information ecosystems.

Participants acknowledged that African journalism is confronting a convergence of pressures: platform dominance, rapid technological disruption, shifting audience behaviour, and fragile business models. Deliberations addressed both the economics and the practice of journalism, recognising that financial sustainability and editorial integrity are mutually reinforcing foundations of credible public-interest media. A central focus of the Congress was the growing impact of artificial intelligence (AI) on journalism, and the urgent need to entrench ethical AI use in newsrooms while establishing fair and transparent compensation frameworks.

The Congress affirmed that independent journalism is an essential infrastructure for democratic and economic development. Markets, institutions, and public policy processes cannot function effectively without access to trusted information and data. The sustainability crisis confronting journalism, therefore, represents not only an industry challenge but a broader developmental risk for African economies and democratic processes.

Editors emphasised that rebuilding trust requires renewed commitment to strong professional practice alongside adaptation to a rapidly evolving information ecosystem. Participants recognised that public-interest content is increasingly produced beyond traditional newsroom structures, and that self-regulatory bodies should be broadened to include content creators committed to accountability, transparency, and accuracy while maintaining defined professional standards.

Participants expressed concern that existing copyright regimes were not designed for the large-scale extraction and use of journalistic content by generative AI systems. Discussions emphasised the need for rights-based approaches that secure equitable value for journalistic work, strengthen African agency within the global technology ecosystem, and address power imbalances between media organisations and dominant platforms. Competition-based remedies and coordinated regulatory approaches, such as the South African Competition Commission's Media and Digital Platforms Market Inquiry [report](#), were identified as important reference points for advancing sustainable outcomes in Africa.

Participants agreed that fragmented responses by individual African publishers or national markets are insufficient to address systemic challenges. Coalition-building and coordinated continental advocacy were identified as essential to shifting structural imbalances and

ensuring that African perspectives shape global debates on media sustainability, technology governance, and information integrity. These include advancing normative frameworks such as the [M20 Johannesburg Declaration](#) and Resolutions 620, 630, and 631 of the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights (ACHPR), which carry direct implications for the path of African media within shifting technology ecosystems. Enhanced collaboration in policy-making processes is fundamental to building the African media's agency in the global tech ecosystem and to strengthening public interest journalism on the continent. Delegates appreciate growing attention from the African Union (AU) on matters of media freedom, especially through the ACHPR, and propose more collaborative efforts between editors and the continental/regional and sub-regional mechanisms to promote media freedom and sustainability.

The Congress highlighted several areas of emerging consensus and ongoing work:

- Development of coordinated frameworks for collective engagement with global technology platforms, including approaches to fair compensation, bargaining power, and access to data.
- Advancement of public-interest-oriented regulatory frameworks aligned with digital realities and freedom of expression principles.
- Strengthening African editors' societies as key institutional pillars for advocacy, coordination, and professional solidarity.
- Expansion of collaborative editorial strategies to improve coverage of emerging economic domains shaping Africa's future, including technology and extractive sectors.
- Exploration of mechanisms to support small and community newsrooms through shared services, collaboration, and sustainable funding pathways.
- Continued dialogue on African-led funding approaches that reinforce editorial independence and long-term resilience.

Participants noted that existing continental mechanisms have not sufficiently prioritised coordinated responses to the structural challenges facing journalism. In this context, the Congress resolved that TAEF should be strengthened and properly resourced to serve as a central convening and coordinating platform capable of advancing shared priorities across the continent.

The Congress further resolved to:

- Strengthen cross-border collaboration among African newsrooms and ethical public-interest content creators.
- Advance rights-based approaches to media regulation that protect freedom of expression and access to information while addressing harms within digital information environments.
- Promote high standards of journalistic practice that contribute to informed public discourse, accountable governance, and inclusive economic development.
- Facilitate evidence-based research, knowledge exchange, and capacity-building initiatives driven by African leadership.
- Engage constructively with policymakers, regulators, civil society, and global partners to ensure African editorial perspectives inform governance debates shaping the future of information ecosystems.

- Journalism/media and communications training in colleges and universities should update and incorporate these resolutions into their professional training tool kit.

The inaugural Africa Editors Congress represents an important milestone toward building a unified, resilient, and forward-looking African public-interest media ecosystem grounded in collaboration, collective leadership, and shared responsibility for strengthening democratic and economic resilience across the continent.

Adopted in Nairobi, Kenya, on 24 February 2026

Endorsed by the following partners:

1. Media Leadership Think Tank, GIBS
2. Network of Independent Media Councils in Africa (NIMCA)
3. SOS Support Public Broadcasting Coalition
4. Wits Centre for Journalism, South Africa
5. Collaboration on International ICT Policy for East and Southern Africa (CIPESA)