

October 28, 2025

Honorable Minister Mário Augusto da Silva Oliveira
Ministry of Telecommunications, Information Technologies, and Media
Luanda, Angola

Hand-delivered and sent via email to: geral@minttics.gov.ao; joao.demba@minttics.gov.ao

Dear Minister Augusto da Silva Oliveira,

We, the undersigned press freedom and human rights organizations, write to urge you to amend the draft law on the Dissemination of False Information on the Internet and to ensure that any future proposed legislation is compatible with Angola's constitutional protections for freedom of expression, as well as with [international](#) and [regional human rights instruments](#) to which Angola is a party.

We commend the draft law's recognition of the need to promote inclusion in internet access, particularly by addressing gender and regional inequality as well as eliminating barriers faced by individuals with special physical and cognitive needs. However, we share the concerns outlined in legal analyses by human rights advocacy organizations [Pro Bono Angola](#) and [Friends of Angola](#), which find that the draft law is unconstitutional and, if enacted in its current form, could "easily be used to censor criticism of the government under the pretext of combating disinformation."

The draft law fails to precisely and narrowly define key concepts, including "false information," a term that is unclear and appears to be used interchangeably with "disinformation" and "fake news." This lack of clarity gives the draft law an overbroad scope and creates the potential for it to be used as a tool for censorship.

If enacted, the bill could subject individuals to prison sentences of up to 10 years for disseminating false information, while companies could face closure for up to 130,000 days, effectively a permanent ban. This would exacerbate regressive provisions already present in Angola's legal framework. Stipulating prison time for the dissemination of false information that injures the "honor and good name" of others amounts to the criminalization of defamation. Angolan journalists [already face](#) the constant [fear](#) of being [deprived of their liberty](#) or disruption of their work through [criminal defamation suits](#), as [reported](#) by the Committee to Protect Journalists.

Angola's [Penal Code](#) also outlines criminal penalties of up to six months for "continuous dissemination of false information" and "the intentional publication of false news," and up to six years for sharing "false statements" or "distort[ing] true facts" that disrupt or are intended to hinder military actions. Rather than expanding such laws, Angola should be repealing them, in line with international standards on freedom of expression, including those established by the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights. The commission [has called](#) on states to [repeal laws that criminalize](#) insult, defamation, and the publication of false news, describing them as "serious interference with freedom of expression" that foster fear and self-censorship. The United Nations Human Rights Committee has also [urged](#) states to "avoid excessively

punitive measures and penalties” for defamation, while international experts on freedom of expression [have stated](#) that “all criminal defamation laws should be abolished and replaced, where necessary, with appropriate civil defamation laws.”

We [acknowledge](#) the importance of transparency, rigor, and accountability in content moderation by social media platforms. However, the bill’s provisions requiring companies to establish “structures dedicated to combating disinformation in Angola” raise concerns. Broad and vague definitions — such as “application provider” and “social networks” — make it unclear which types or sizes of media companies or platforms would be subject to these requirements. We are concerned that the draft law would effectively outsource censorship to social media platforms, without providing clear legal recourse for those affected. For instance, while the bill authorizes the statutory communications regulator (ERCA) to receive complaints from the public about online content, it provides no details on the procedures the ERCA would follow to review and adjudicate those complaints.

The draft law’s extraterritorial scope that applies to individuals deemed to have shared “information that has an impact on Angola” adds to our concerns by potentially restricting access to international sources of information and criminalizing the work of foreign-based journalists.

Given the serious threat this draft law poses to freedom of expression and democratic values in Angola, we strongly urge your office to reconsider it. We remain available for further discussions on this draft, and broader matters concerning freedom of expression.

Sincerely,

1. Access Now
2. Article 19 Eastern Africa
3. Associação Pro Bono Angola
4. Association for Media Development In South Sudan (AMDISS)
5. Association of Freelance Journalists
6. Bloggers Association of Kenya (BAKE)
7. Bloggers of Zambia- BloggersZM
8. Cartoonists Rights Network International
9. Centro de Estudos Ufologos para a Boa Governação
10. Centro PEN Guiné-Bissau
11. Collaboration on International ICT Policy for East & Southern Africa (CIPESA)
12. Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ)
13. Congress of African Journalists (CAJ)
14. Eastern Africa Editors Forum
15. Friends of Angola (FOA)
16. Human Rights Foundation
17. Human Rights Network for Journalists-Uganda (HRNJ-U)
18. International Press Institute
19. JamiiAfrica
20. Karapatan Alliance Philippines
21. Kenya Correspondents Association (KCA)

22. KICTANet
23. MISA Angola - Media Institute of Southern Africa
24. MISA Mozambique - Media Institute of Southern Africa
25. Mosaiko Instituto para a Cidadania
26. NMT Media Foundation
27. Organisation Tchadienne Anti-Corruption (OTAC)
28. Pan African Lawyers Union (PALU)
29. PEN International
30. Robert F Kennedy Human Rights
31. Sindicato dos Jornalistas (SJ - Portugal)
32. Sindicato dos Jornalistas Angolanos
33. Sindicato dos Jornalistas e Técnicos de Comunicação Social da Guiné-Bissau - SINJOTECS
34. Somali Journalists Syndicate (SJS)
35. Somaliland Journalists Association (SOLJA)
36. The Africa Editors Forum
37. Union Burundaise des Journalists (UBJ)
38. Vuka Coalition for Civic Action