



You are invited to a SAHA dialogue forum

SOUTH AFRICA'S RIGHT TO KNOW?

REVIEWING THE POWER OF PAIA AS AN AGENT FOR CHANGE

DATE: 26 September 2012

TIME: 8:30 for 9am - 3pm

VENUE: Women's Jail at Constitution Hill, 1 Kotze Street, Johannesburg

RSVP: Email info@saha.org.za by 11 September 2012 (for catering purposes)

When the Promotion of Access to Information Act (PAIA) was introduced in 2000, it was heralded as representing a new gold standard in access to information legislation. However, more than a decade later, recognition and use of the right to information as an agent for change in South Africa remains worryingly low.

The implementation of the right has been hindered by a number of inter-related factors including the historical, cultural and socio-economic context, as well as the specific requirements of PAIA itself, while new legislation, particularly the Protection of State Information Bill (commonly known as the secrecy bill) threatens to further restrict the right. At the same time, the once unique aspect of the law – the right of access to information of private bodies – has largely been left unexplored. Furthermore, since the introduction of PAIA, legislative developments across the globe, and in particular on the African continent, have seen the introduction of more progressive laws, which, if introduced in South Africa, would arguably improve the realisation of the right to information.

As part of SAHA's series of events celebrating the 10th International Right to Know Day in September 2012, SAHA will be hosting a dialogue forum to discuss the implementation challenges associated with the right to know and consider what steps must be taken by government and civil society to transform the right from paper to reality.

Panellists include:

Mukelani Dimba – Open Democracy Advice Centre (ODAC)

Kathleen Hardy – Centre for Applied Legal Studies (CALs)

Jay Kruuse – Public Service Accountability Monitor (PSAM)

Dale McKinley – activist and independent researcher

Dario Milo – Webber Wentzel / Wits Law School

Alison Tilley – Open Democracy Advice Centre (ODAC)

Hennie van Vuuren – Fellow, Open Society Foundation for South Africa

For more information on this dialogue forum and other International Right to Know Day events

SAHA is hosting in September 2012, made possible through the generous funding of the Open Society Foundation for South Africa, please visit the [SAHA website](http://www.saha.org.za).