



RIGHT²KNOW

Our Vision

“We seek a country and a world where we all have the right to know – that is to be free to access and to share information. This right is fundamental to any democracy that is open, accountable, participatory and responsive; able to deliver the social, economic and environmental justice we need. On this foundation a society and an international community can be built in which we all live free from want, in equality and in dignity.”

Our Mission

- To co-ordinate, unify, organise and activate those who share our principles to defend and advance the right to know.
- To struggle both for the widest possible recognition in law and policy of the right to know and for its implementation and practice in daily life.
- To root the struggle for the right to know in the struggles of communities demanding political, social, economic and environmental justice.
- To propagate our vision throughout society.
- To engage those with political and economic power where necessary.
- To act in concert and solidarity with like-minded people and organisations locally and internationally.

R2K Principles (“The Shalimar Principles”)

Preamble

We subscribe to the right to know, which is founded in the right to dignity and is realised through rights freely to access and share information.

We shall defend and advance the right to know, encouraged that it and its constituent rights were won through peoples’ struggles in South Africa and internationally, and are affirmed in the Constitution of South Africa, the African Charter on Human and Peoples’ Rights and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

We commit to the following principles, both in our own policies and practices and in the vision we propagate throughout society:

Principle 1: Access to Information

All people have the right to access information, and have it equally. This right has inherent value and enables many other democratic rights.

The right to access information must be defended and advanced in law, policy and practice as demanded inter alia by section 32 of the Constitution of South Africa.

Principle 2: Free Flow of Information

All people have the right to express themselves – that is to share information, including opinion – freely and equally. This right has inherent value and enables many other democratic rights.

The right to free expression must be defended and advanced in law, policy and practice as demanded inter alia by section 16 of the Constitution of South Africa.

Principle 3: Free and Diverse Media

The media have rights and corresponding duties to access and disseminate information, including opinion, freely and fairly, without fear or favour. These rights and duties are vital to the public's exercise of many other democratic rights.

Media freedom must be defended and advanced in law, policy and practice as demanded inter alia by section 16 of the Constitution of South Africa.

Media diversity must be extended so that everyone, in particular the socially and economically marginalised, shall have a voice.

Principle 4: Accountability and Transparency

Transparency, achieved through the right to know, holds power to account so that political, social, economic and environmental justice is realised.

Principle 5: Informed Public Participation

The right to know empowers all people to participate in democracy actively and effectively so that they can defend and advance their political, social, economic and environmental rights.

Principle 6: Truth and Quality of Information

The rights to access information must be served through the provision of information that is reliable, verifiable and representative of the data from which it is derived, and must include the right to access source data itself. Information must be provided transparently and equally, untainted by partisan interests.

Principle 7: Proactive Dissemination of Information

Public and private bodies must disseminate information proactively. Laws providing for access to information must not be used as a shield to obstruct its release.

Principle 8: Equality

All rights, including the rights here demanded like any other right, are equal to all people regardless of any human or social characteristic including class, race, gender, language or sexual orientation.

Principle 9: Community Involvement

The right to know is vital to the struggles of communities demanding political, social, economic and environmental justice. Campaign efforts rooted in communities and their needs are vital to the campaign's success and the realisation of a responsive and accountable democracy that can meet the basic needs of our people.

Principle 10: Solidarity

The full realisation of the right to know cannot be defined by individuals, organisations or borders. Our campaign is best served where we act in concert and solidarity with like-minded people and organisations locally and internationally.