



FRIENDS OF A FREE INTERNET

for mahala & for freedom

8 Mzala street
Khayelitsha
Cape Town
8000
South Africa

Email: friends@freeinternet.africa
Phone: +27 72 724 9601
Online: www.freeinternet.africa

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Two years of broken promises, now a campaign for internet access to launch on Human Rights Day

Sunday 17 March marks the second anniversary of the historic ICASA spectrum auction when the government gave R14.4 billion worth of our national airwaves to the cell phone companies. President Ramaphosa told Parliament this “will bring us closer to our vision of affordable, high-speed Internet access for all”. Two years later no progress has been reported. Data prices remain stubbornly high.

The [auction terms](#) required MTN, Vodacom, Telkom and CellC to extend network coverage to 97% of the population, connect over 32,000 public buildings (like schools and clinics) to high-speed broadband, and make all the mobile content on nonprofit and government websites free to visit.

South Africa has a long history of missed connectivity targets and cell phone companies opting to pay fines rather than expand network access. Without public pressure, the commitments made in the 2022 Spectrum Auction will become just more broken promises.

Friend of a Free Internet is launching a public awareness campaign to demand the government force cell companies to deliver the internet access South Africa’s democracy and economy need to flourish.

The media are invited to attend and cover the campaign launch on Human Rights Day at the Constitutional Court:

- DATE: Thurs 21 March 2024
- TIME: 11h00 - 12h00
- VENUE: Human Rights Festival, Constitutional Hill, Hillbrow, Jo’burg
- ONLINE: www.freeinternet.africa/thief-launch

For comment contact:

- Andrea Boesak, organiser@freeinternet.africa, +27 63 215 2713

- Mark Weinberg, mark@yetu.coop, +27 66 557 1443
- Tshiamo Malatji, malatji@protonmail.com, +27 67 427 2554

About Friends of a Free Internet

Friends of a Free Internet (FoFI) is a civil society alliance launched in July 2022 to unite over 100 civil society organisations ([see list](#)) to advocate for free online expression and universal access to a user-owned, affordable, secure communication network. FoFI is convened by the [Peoples Media Consortium](#) and [Yetu Infotech Collective](#). For more information visit www.freeinternet.africa.

STATEMENT ONLINE: <https://freeinternet.africa/broken-promises-2024/>