



# **ADAMA SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY UNIVERSITY**

## **School of Electrical Engineering and Computing**

### **Department of Software Engineering**

**Course: Ethics and Professionalism in Computing (SEng5203)**

### **Individual Assignment**

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# 1. International Information Laws

Key principles are derived from treaties, regulations, and conventions, such as:

## a) Right to Access Information

- Recognized globally by instruments like the **Universal Declaration of Human Rights (Article 19)** and **International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (Article 19)**.
- Encourages governments to provide access to public information and transparency.

## b) Data Protection and Privacy

- Frameworks such as the **EU General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)** and **Convention 108** set standards for personal data protection, limiting the misuse of personal information.
- Principles include:
  - Consent-based data processing.
  - Right to be forgotten.
  - Cross-border data transfer rules.

## c) Freedom of Expression

- Governed under various international charters, allowing individuals to freely express opinions within limits that respect public order, health, or morals.

## d) Cybersecurity and Cybercrime

- The **Budapest Convention** sets standards to combat cybercrimes, focusing on legal, procedural, and enforcement mechanisms.

## e) Intellectual Property Rights

- Managed through the **World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO)** and treaties like TRIPS, safeguarding the balance between innovation and public access.

## 2. Ethiopian Information Laws

Ethiopia's framework involves national legal provisions, some aligned with international norms but tailored to local contexts. Key legislations include:

### a) Freedom of the Mass Media and Access to Information Proclamation (Proclamation No. 590/2008)

- Ensures citizens' right to access information from public offices.
- Stipulates obligations for public bodies to disclose information unless restricted by law (e.g., national security).

### b) Computer Crime Proclamation (Proclamation No. 958/2016)

- Defines and penalizes cybercrimes such as hacking, phishing, and dissemination of false information.
- Aims to secure digital platforms while addressing misuse.

### c) Personal Data Protection

- Ethiopia lacks a standalone, comprehensive data protection law comparable to GDPR. Data protection provisions are scattered across other laws and regulations.

### d) Freedom of Expression

- Protected under **Article 29** of the Ethiopian Constitution, which guarantees freedom of thought, opinion, and expression.
- Limitations include restrictions related to hate speech and public order.

### e) Intellectual Property

- Governed by proclamations such as the **Copyright and Neighboring Rights Protection Proclamation** and **Patent Proclamation**.
- Ethiopia is a signatory to WIPO agreements, promoting local innovation.

## 3. Comparisons and Gaps

Aspect	International Standards	Ethiopian Standards	Analysis
Access to Information	Comprehensive and rights-based	Codified in Proclamation No. 590/2008	Ethiopia aligns but faces enforcement gaps.
Data Protection	GDPR offers strict, clear guidelines	Fragmented; no unified law	Significant gap; room for improvement.
Freedom of Expression	Broad but with exceptions for hate speech	Article 29 of Constitution	Alignment but stricter in practice.
Cybersecurity	Budapest Convention as a global standard	Proclamation No. 958/2016	Ethiopia progressing but needs updates.
Intellectual Property	WIPO-backed treaties	Governed by localized proclamations	Fair alignment with WIPO standards.

## 4. Recommendations for Ethiopia

1. **Adopt Comprehensive Data Protection Laws:** Introduce GDPR-style legislation to improve privacy protections.
2. **Enhance Access to Information Framework:** Strengthen enforcement and digital platforms to promote transparency.
3. **Accede to International Treaties:** Ratify conventions like the Budapest Convention to combat cybercrime effectively.
4. **Develop Digital Rights Awareness:** Conduct national campaigns to educate citizens on their rights to access and protect information.
5. **Modernize IP Laws:** Streamline intellectual property processes to foster innovation and compliance with global trends.

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