
PANSY TLAKULA

PERSONAL DETAILS

Full Name: Faith Dikeledi Pansy Tlakula

Citizenship: South African

FIELD OF EXPERTISE

Human Rights and Democracy, Information Rights, Legal, Policy and Strategy development, and Leadership and Governance.

ACADEMIC QUALIFICATIONS

Vaal University of Technology:	Honorary Doctorate in Legal Studies, 2006
Harvard University, USA:	LLM, 1989
University of the Witwatersrand:	LLB, 1984
University of the North:	B.Proc, 1982

CERTIFICATES

The Gordon Institute of Business Science Board Leadership Programme: 2010

CURRENT BOARDS AND GOVERNANCE BODIES APPOINTMENTS

2023 - present: Executive Committee Member- International Conference of Information Commissioners (representing the Information Regulator)

2023 - present: Executive Committee Member- Global Privacy Assembly (representing the Information Regulator)

2021 - present: Board Member- Human Sciences Research Council

2019 - present: Founding Member, Interim Chairperson and Chairperson of the African Network of Information Commissioners (representing the Information Regulator)

2018 - present: Trustee of the African Policing Civilian Oversight Forum

WORK EXPERIENCE

INFORMATION REGULATOR

Period: 2016 to present

Position: Chairperson

Responsibilities:

I have had the privilege of serving as the first Chairperson of the Information Regulator (Regulator) since its establishment in 2016.

As the founding Members of the Regulator, we built the organisation from ground up. In the almost ten years of the existence of the Regulator, we have achieved the following: drafted and adopted governance policies, established governance committees, established the organisational structure, initiated the recruitment process, adopted a number of standard setting documents, and put in place processes and systems for the enforcement of the Protection of Personal Information Act (POPIA) and the Promotion of Access to Information Act (PAIA).

Within a relatively short space of time, the Regulator is a fully fledged organisation that is known in South Africa, on the African continent and globally as evidenced by the above-mentioned leadership positions it occupies. I can state without any fear of contradiction that the Regulator is one of the leading oversight bodies on the African Continent and often hosts study visits of other African oversight bodies.

SADC ELECTORAL ADVISORY COUNCIL

Period: 2023 - present

Position: Member

Responsibilities:

To advise SADC and its electoral institutions on all matters pertaining to electoral processes and the enhancement of democracy and good governance in SADC and report these matters to the Ministerial Committee of the Organ on Politics, Defence and Security Cooperation

UNITED NATIONS COMMITTEE ON THE ELIMINATION OF RACIAL DISCRIMINATION

Period: 2020 - present

Position: Member of the Committee

Responsibilities:

The mandate of the Committee is to monitor the implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination by State Parties to the Convention. The Committee examines reports submitted periodically by State Parties on the measures they have taken to implement the Convention. It also adjudicates complaints of violations of the Convention submitted against State Parties.

I was re-elected to the Committee for a four (4) year period at the meeting of State Parties convened by the Secretary General of the United Nations at it's in New York in June 2024.

AFRICAN COMMISSION ON HUMAN AND PEOPLES RIGHTS

Period: 2005 – 2017

Position: Commissioner, Chairperson and Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Expression and Access to Information in Africa (Special Rapporteur) of the African Commission on Human and Peoples Rights (Commission).

I was elected by the African Union Heads of State and Government as a Commissioner in 2005 for six (6) years. I was re-elected in 2011 for another six years. In November 2015, I was elected as the Chairperson of the Commission. I held this position until the end of my term in November 2017.

Responsibilities:

In addition to my duties as the Chairperson of the Commission, I was also responsible for the promotion of human rights in the following countries; Burundi, Lesotho, Mauritius, Swaziland, and Sierra Leone. As the Special Rapporteur, I promoted and monitored the right to freedom of expression and access to information in all State Parties to the African Charter on Human and Peoples Rights. I also led the drafting and subsequent adoption by the Commission of the Model Law on Access to Information in Africa. African Countries used the Model Law to draft their national access to information laws. The Model law increased the number of countries with access to information laws from five to twenty-five at the end of my tenure.

I was also appointed as the focal point between the Commission and the African Peer Review Mechanism to coordinate and enhance cooperation between the two institutions.

In December 2015, I led the Commission's fact-finding mission on human rights violations in Burundi at the request of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union.

ELECTORAL COMMISSION

Period: 2011 - 2014

Position: Chairperson

Responsibilities:

As the Executive Authority, I was responsible together with other members of the Electoral Commission, for leading the elections and providing strategic leadership and direction

Highlights:

I presided over the team that managed the 2014 National and Provincial Elections.

During my term of office, the Electoral Commission hosted several delegations on study visits from around the world including, but not limited to the following countries: Afghanistan, Iraq, Vietnam, Nepal, Indonesia, Palestine, Egypt, India, Mexico, Thailand, Malaysia, Nigeria, and Liberia for information sharing on the South African electoral model and systems.

Under my leadership the Electoral Commission also entered into electoral technical assistance agreements with several Election Management bodies from around the world including; Mexico, India, Palestine, the DRC and Madagascar.

I was elected as the President of the Electoral Commissions Forum of SADC Countries (SADC ECF) for two consecutive terms from 2011 – 2014 (representing the Commission).

In 2013 I was member of the Steering Committee that championed the revival of the Association of African Election Authorities (AAEA). The meeting was facilitated by the African Union.

In 2012 I was invited by the African Union (AU) to form part of their election observation mission to Kenya. I was in the team of the head of the African Union Observer Mission, former President Joaquim Chissano of Mozambique. I have also observed elections in numerous African and other countries.

ELECTORAL COMMISSION

Period: 2002 - 2011

Position: Chief Electoral Officer

Responsibilities:

I led the team that managed four national and provincial elections and two local government elections in South Africa.

Highlights:

In 2006, I led the team of the Electoral Commission that assisted the Democratic Republic of Congo with their first democratic elections in 40 years.

In 2006 I was a member of the African Union Election Experts that sought to develop sustainable electoral practices on the African Continent through the Establishment of the AU Electoral Assistance Unit.

In 2007 I was appointed by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) as one of the international technical advisers to the Independent National Electoral Commission of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (INEC) for the Presidential Elections of 2007.

I was later invited by the INEC as one of the experts that undertook a review of electoral legislation in Nigeria in 2008.

In 2010 I was one of the two experts appointed by the Commonwealth Secretariat on a scoping visit to the Interim Independent Electoral Commission of Kenya (IIEC) to identify the technical assistance needs of the Commission.

In 2009 I was invited by the Commonwealth secretariat to a working meeting of experts to conceptualize the formation of the Commonwealth Community of Election Management Bodies, now known as the Commonwealth Electoral Network

SOUTH AFRICAN HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

Period:1995 – 2002

Position: Commissioner

Responsibilities:

As one of the inaugural Commissioners of the South African Human Rights Commission, I assisted in the establishment of the Commission under the leadership of the then Chairperson of the Commission, Prof. Barney Pityana. I was part of the team that developed the mission, vision, organisational structure and systems of the Commission.

Having been designated as the National Commissioner for Equal Opportunities, I was responsible for all the projects and programmes relating to the elimination of racism and racial discrimination including public enquiries into racism in South African public schools, university residences and some places of detention.

Highlights:

I served as the co-convenor of the 1st National Conference on Racism that was convened by the Commission on behalf of the Government of the Republic of South Africa in preparation for the World Conference Against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance (WCAR). The conference was held in the Sandton Convention Centre, Johannesburg in September 2000.

I was part of the South African Government's negotiating team at the World Conference Against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance that was held in Durban in August – September 2001

BLACK LAWYERS ASSOCIATION

Period: 1994 – 1995

Position: Executive Director

Responsibilities:

The centre provided continuing legal education for practicing attorneys and advocates, operated a placement scheme for candidate attorneys and provided free litigation services for indigent communities.

Highlights:

I provided strategic leadership and was also responsible for raising funds for the organisation.

**NORTH-WEST UNIVERSITY (FORMER UNIVERSITY OF
BOPHUTHATSWANA)**

Period: 1988 - 1993

Position: Lecturer and Senior Lecturer (1991), Department of Private Law.

Responsibilities:

I taught and supervised student research projects in Family Law, Law of Contract, Property Law and the Law of Delict

UNIVERSITY OF CORNELL, USA

Period: 1989-1999

Position: Visiting Scholar, sponsored by the South African Career Development Internship Program of an American based civil society organisation called AFRICARE.

Responsibilities:

I was a researcher in International Environmental Law. I conducted research and prepared reading materials for graduate students in the following areas; Transport of Hazardous Waste, the “Greenhouse” effect and the Ozone Layer.

I also conducted seminars for graduate students in Comparative Family Law

NORTH-WEST UNIVERSITY (FORMER UNIVERSITY OF BOPHUTHATSWANA)

Period: 1985 – 1988

Position: Lecturer, Department of Private Law

NORTH-WEST HIGH COURT (FORMERLY BOPHUTHATSWANA HIGH COURT)

Period: 1984 -1985

Position: I was admitted as an advocate of the North-West High Court and was appointed in the office of the State Law Advisor in the legislation drafting section.

PAST BOARDS AND OTHER GOVERNANCE BODIES APPOINTMENTS

2010 - 2014: Chancellor - Vaal University of Technology

2005 - 2014: Independent Non- Executive Director - The Bidvest Group

2006 - 2011: Chairperson of the Board - National Credit Regulator

1998 - 2002: Member and Chairperson - Council of North-West University

AWARDS

Celebrating Excellence in Organizations (CEO) Magazine Award

Most Influential Woman in Business and Government

2007 / 2008

Rapport / City Press Prestige Award

One of the most inspirational women Achievers who makes a difference with
(their) Vision, Perseverance and Courage

2006

Black Business Executive Circle

Excellent Management of Elections

2004

Vaal Achievers' Award

Community Leader

2003

South African Career Development

Internship Program, USA

1989

Harvard / SA Fellowship

Attorneys' Fidelity Fund Award

1988