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A registry that is the only one in its region has concluded that it owns the region. The company sets out why a number in a record belongs to the network that runs on it

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For five years the phrase "IP for Africa" has been used to argue that the addresses AFRINIC registers belong to a continent and must not leave it. Cloud Innovation Ltd today set out the opposite reading, in a series of pages published in five languages and in a new Note by Lu Heng.

"We keep the slogan," a spokesperson for Cloud Innovation said. "IP for Africa means that an operator in Lagos, Bujumbura or Maseru owns the addresses it lawfully holds, has a vote in the registry that serves it and is free to leave. What those who control AFRINIC have made of it is Africa for AFRINIC."

The company's case rests on documents that are not its own:

- RFC 1366, the 1992 proposal for regional registries, gave its reason in one line: a registry near the networks "may be better able to serve the local community in terms of language and local customs". It asked for "just a single regional registry per geographical region", for efficiency. A convenience and a monopoly; no one was given a continent.

- AFRINIC states that the numbers it registers "are allocated to AFRINIC and the four other RIRs by Public Technical Identifiers (PTI)", the body that coordinates the internet's identifiers for the whole world.

- AFRINIC's Registration Service Agreement makes each network acknowledge that its addresses "are not property (real, personal or intellectual)", and limits AFRINIC's own liability to the greater of six months of fees or 100 USD.

- The transfer policy AFRINIC's Board ratified on 4 February 2026 says "AFRINIC-issued IPv4 cannot be transferred out of the region". AFRINIC's own assessment gives the reason: "AFRINIC will not lose its current resource members to other RIRs in outgoing transfers."

"A land registry records every deed and owns none of the land," the spokesperson said. "The office that issues number plates does not decide where the cars may be driven. Only here does the clerk say the ledger makes him the landlord."

The documents

- IP for Africa. Not Africa for AFRINIC: https://cloudinnovation.org/ip-for-africa/

- Own your IP: https://cloudinnovation.org/own-your-ip/

- Africa's IP addresses: https://cloudinnovation.org/africas-ip-addresses/

- Lu Heng's Note 78, IP for Africa, Not Africa for AFRINIC: https://heng.lu/ip-for-africa-not-africa-for-afrinic/

About Cloud Innovation

Cloud Innovation Ltd provides IPv4 addresses to the network operators and businesses that keep people online. Established in 2013 and registered in Seychelles, it has been a member of AFRINIC since 2013. It defends the rule of law, a democratic society, people's freedom and the constitutional separation of powers. https://cloudinnovation.org

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