# Candidates for the 2025 AFIX Board Election

This document lists all candidates nominated for the Board of Directors of the African IXP Association. Each candidate was either nominated or self-nominated and provided supporting statements regarding their qualifications and intent.

Three (3) seats are available for this election. The seats up for election are currently held by:

- Darwin Da Costa
- Frank Habicht
- Jean-Francis Ahanda

Elected candidates will serve three (3) year terms.

Details about the voting system will be communicated soon.

## List of Candidates

The candidates are sorted by last name in alphabetical order. Click the name of any candidate to explore their submission details.

# Jean-Francis Ahanda

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| **Nominated By:** | Sylvain BAYA ABOKA |
| **E-mail:** | jean-francis@douala-ix.net |
| **Stated Affiliations:** | Douala-IX (DOUALA Internet eXchange) |
| **Statement of Intent:** | My name is Jean-Francis Ahanda, i have enjoyed serving during two years, in the first BoD (Board of Directors) of AFIX as a legally bound Org. After actively contributed to the transformation occurring within AFIX; where there is actually a transition from an ISOC's project to a community-driven Org. Now that the transition is almost done, my wish is to be part of the team which would have the opportunity to implement what have been already built the founding team.<br><br>I'm engaged both within the datacenter (ST DIGITAL) industry, the local NOG (cmNOG) and the local neutral IXP (Douala-IX); my willingness regarding BCOPs (Best Current Operational Practices) has been proven when, under my leadership, we ROA-ed INRs (Internet Number Resources) acquired from AFRINIC before even the network operators in Cameroon. That proactivity and taste of implementation (of recommended technologies) might be an interesting addition to the Af-IX's BoD (Board of Directors); imho.<br><br>The vision of the peering and interconnections, within the African region, i belong to is \*local\* and as simple as: "As far as possible, a town an IXP". That implies a more engaged collaboration with ccNOG. My contribution would focus, in particular, on these areas, if the opportunity is given to me; as the previous mandate served primarily for the structuration of AFIX, as an autonomous Org. I'm grateful for the confidence, proven by my last selection by peers. Let's peer domestically & sub-regionally asap ;-) |
| **Statement of Qualifications:** | • Jean-Francis AHANDA an engineer with a large experience in rollout and operation of networks; both for operators and vendors.<br><br>• He is currently General Manager of Datacenter Services, for a company that build and operate datacenters across Africa.<br><br>• He has a practical proven experience in managing teams and is comfortable engaging with diverse stakeholders. |

# Darwin Da Costa

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| **Nominated By:** | Self |
| **E-mail:** | dc@darwincosta.com |
| **Stated Affiliations:** | DE-CIX Management GmbH |
| **Statement of Intent:** | I have served the Board of the African IXP Association from 2023 until now. I would like to run again for the elections and keeping serving the African community with high sense of knowledge sharing when it comes to IXPs and interconnection related topics. |
| **Statement of Qualifications:** | Darwin holds a Master's in Internet Business and a Bachelor's in Business Information Science Specialist in matters such as: interconnection, peering strategy, submarine cables, RIRs, and IPv6 evangelism. Serves as Deputy Director of the AFRINIC Policy Development Working Group (PDWG), plus leadership roles at AONOG and advisory board member for the Angola ISPs association. Elected to the Board of the African IXP Association in 2023. |

# Caglar Dabanoglu

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| **Nominated By:** | Self |
| **E-mail:** | caglar.dabanoglu@gmail.com |
| **Stated Affiliations:** | Akamai Technologies |
| **Statement of Intent:** | I am writing this letter to express my strong interest and intent to join the Board of Directors for the African IXP Association. As an ardent supporter of fostering technological advancement and promoting internet connectivity across Africa, I am inspired by the crucial role Internet Exchange Points (IXPs) play in enhancing regional interconnection and driving digital development. <br><br> Over the past 20+ years, I have actively contributed to the technology and telecommunications sector, particularly focusing on internet infrastructure and networking solutions. I spent my last 13 years at Akamai helping to build Akamai's platform in emerging markets. <br><br> My qualifications and achievements include: Leadership Experience: I currently hold the position of Global Director of Network Architecture at Akamai, leading a team of 9 Senior and Principal Network Architects <br><br> Industry Involvement: I have actively participated in regional and international conferences, workshops in Africa.. I have served the AfPIF PC for a number of years and was part of the inaugural Board of Directors of AF-IX. <br><br> Advocacy and Collaboration: I have been an advocate for the importance of IXPs in promoting digital inclusion and economic growth in Africa. Through collaboration with various stakeholders, I have worked to raise awareness and foster partnerships that drive positive change. <br><br> I strongly believe that my background and expertise align closely with the African IXP Association's mission to promote efficient, localized internet traffic exchange across the continent. As a member of the Board of Directors, I would be fully committed to furthering the Association's goals, engaging in thoughtful decision-making, and collaborating with fellow board members to drive initiatives that benefit the African internet community. <br><br> I am eager to contribute my skills and passion to the collective effort of strengthening the internet ecosystem in Africa and making a positive impact on the lives of millions of people. It would be an honor to serve on the Board and play a part in shaping the future of internet connectivity on the continent. <br><br> Thank you for considering my application. I am eagerly looking forward to the opportunity to contribute to the African IXP Association and work alongside the esteemed board members. |
| **Statement of Qualifications:** | AfPIF PC Membership, Member of the inaugural Board of Directors at AF-IX, 20+ years of building highly scalable data networks, 13 years of experience in building the Akamai platform in the emerging markets. |

# Esther King

| Nominated By: | Self |
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| E-mail: | esthery19@gmail.com |
| Stated Affiliations: | AFPIF, WAPF, SIXP, QCELL GM, ISOC GM, GAMCHIX |
| Statement of Intent: | Esther is motivated to serve on the AFIX Board by her strong belief in the critical role IXPs play in improving connectivity, reducing latency, and enabling a more resilient and cost-effective Internet across Africa. Through her work with WAPF and AfPIF, she has already contributed to shaping Africa's interconnection ecosystem and now seeks to further that impact at the governance level.<br><br>Her vision for AFIX includes:<br><br>• Strengthening emerging IXPs by providing access to practical operational support, regional mentorship and advocacy.<br><br>• Enhancing technical capacity through structured training, resource development, and peer learning.<br><br>• Promoting inclusive participation, especially by increasing the engagement of women and young professionals in the Internet infrastructure space.<br><br>• Positioning AFIX globally as a leading voice in Internet governance and infrastructure development for the African continent.<br><br>By joining the Board, Esther aims to help AFIX evolve as a driver of innovation, collaboration, and meaningful change—supporting IXPs not only to operate, but to thrive and expand their value across Africa. |
| Statement of Qualifications: | Esther is a highly accomplished professional with over 15 years of experience in the private technology sector and a proven track record in Internet infrastructure development, Interconnection, and Community engagement. She is the co-founder and Chairperson of GAMCHIX-Women In Technology and currently serves on the West African Peering Forum (WAPF PC) Program Committee, the African Peering and Interconnection Forum Program Committee (AfPIF PC) and the Gambia Network Operators Group (GMNOG)— key regional and national initiatives dedicated to promoting collaboration and best practices among network operators and Internet exchange stakeholders.<br><br>Through these roles, she has contributed significantly to the design and delivery of programs that support knowledge sharing, capacity building, and technical coordination for IXPs in the region. Her work and passion aligns strongly with AFIX's mission to foster an enabling environment for Internet exchange point operators across Africa.<br><br>Key Qualifications & Expertise:<br><br>• 15+ years of professional experience in the private tech sector, with expertise in network operations, interconnection, and infrastructure deployment. |

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| | • Strong interpersonal skills with a proven track record of effective collaboration in team environments.<br><br>• Deep understanding of Internet exchange points (IXPs), peering ecosystems, and regional connectivity challenges.<br><br>• Active leadership in organizing and facilitating knowledge-sharing forums, including tutorials, technical panels, and case studies.<br><br>• Strong communication and collaboration skills, with a history of advocacy and engaging governments, regulators, and civil society to support IXPs.<br><br>• Dedicated advocate for Women in Technology, committed to gender inclusion and diversity in technical fields.<br><br>• Deep commitment to the objectives of AFIX, including supporting operational excellence, promoting the establishment of new IXPs, and representing African IXPs on global platforms.<br><br>Her regional impact, hands-on technical experience, and passion for inclusion and collaboration make her exceptionally well-suited to serve on the AFIX Board of Directors. |