

Excerpts on Access to Information in IAPA Reports, 2022 - 2001

78th General Assembly, Spain, October 27-30, 2022

Canada

A culture of unwarranted classification of information of public interest still persists in government, while the Anti-Terrorism Act, in effect since 2015, expanded the authority of government agencies to share information about individuals.

<https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1215473-canada>

Colombia

Eight journalists denounced obstacles to access information in the Attorney General's Office.

Since March, there have been.... 34 cases of denied access to information

<https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1215476-colombia>

El Salvador

The government neutralized the Institute of Access to Public Information and the laws governing transparency on the use of public funds.

Data regarding the use of public funds and any purchases or investments made by the government since 2020 is being systematically withheld for a period of seven years. <https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1215512-el-salvador>

Honduras

The legislation, passed in 2014, prevented citizens from finding out about government purchases carried out with neither transparency nor public bidding. It also hindered access to public information, as it allowed more than 20 ministries and government offices to classify information as restricted, confidential, secret and top secret for periods of 5, 10 and up to 25 years. <https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1215478-honduras>

Panama

The National Authority for Transparency and Access to Information (ANTAI) penalized the digital media laverdadpanama.com and journalist Amanda Alvarado for allegedly violating a new data protection law. It later reconsidered and put a hold on the fine. The interpretation given by ANTAI could imply that a publication on a topic of public interest,

supported with official or public documentation, could be subject to a complaint by the affected party for violating the data protection law.

<https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1215485-panama>

Paraguay

In May, the Society of Journalists of Paraguay denounced to the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) the lack of transparency and compliance with the Law on Access to Public Information by the binational company Itaipu.

<https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1215486-paraguay>

Puerto Rico

Access to public information continues to be a serious challenge for citizens and the press - requiring the use of legal action to assert the right to access government-held information.

<https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1215449-puerto-rico>

Venezuela

On June 27, Journalist's Day, the National Union of Press Workers (SNTP) revealed that the main obstacles to journalistic activities are the scant access to information, the lack of sources of employment due to the disappearance of the media and low salaries. It also pointed out censorship and that journalists are intimidated, threatened, assaulted and detained while covering the news.

<https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1215487-venezuela>

Mid-Year Meeting, virtual, April 19-22, 2022

Colombia

Another issue is the presidential objection to bill 473 on the repeal of term extensions to meet requests for information. For FLIP, the objection of the Presidency is a serious violation of access to public information, which is detrimental to press freedom and the exercise of investigative journalism - since journalists cannot access this type of information in a timely manner. The issue is pending reconsideration in the House

<https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1215063-colombia>

Honduras

This period press freedom was affected during the November elections due to the lack of transparency regarding the funds used in the political campaign, despite the existence of a Clean Politics Office or Unit - which requires pre-candidates to report on the resources used in the political campaign.

President Xiomara Castro had promised in her political campaign to make several changes to combat corruption and promote transparency, such as eliminating the Secrecy Law - which shielded officials from disclosing their administrative decisions, bids and budgets.

<https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1215066-honduras>

Peru

The Vigilantes platform - led by Transparencia and integrated by civil society organizations such as the Peruvian Press Council (CPP) to monitor the performance of the rule of law and democracy in the government of Pedro Castillo - has pointed out that out of the seven points it evaluates in terms of freedom of expression and press, four are considered to be on very serious alert: guaranteeing and strengthening the independence of the Peruvian Institute of Radio and Television; guaranteeing transparency and publication of government advertising contracts; not limiting, restricting or prohibiting journalists from freely seeking, receiving or expressing information; and not using the judiciary or political power, directly or indirectly, to intimidate/harass journalists and media outlets critical of the government.

<https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1215088-peru>

Costa Rica

Restrictions on access to public information continued during this period. There were tense situations between the government and journalists due to restrictions on information about the pandemic.

Official secrecy continued despite an injunction filed by Diario Extra. The Constitutional Chamber determined that it is not obligatory for a public official to give explanations during an interview, allowing the option for the official to respond in writing.

<https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1215067-costa-rica>

Puerto Rico

During this period, several bills have emerged that seek to rectify the flaws in the laws on access to public information, in particular, the "Transparency and Expedite Procedure for Access to Public Information Act" - No. 141-2019, and the "Puerto Rico Government Open Data Act" - No. 122-2019 - both approved by the ousted governor, Ricardo Rosselló. <https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1215092-puerto-rico>

Cuba

Access to official information is very limited. The government publishes brief statistics and its officials publish messages praising the regime on social networks and the official media continue their propaganda. <https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1215111-cuba>

Dominican Republic

There have been complaints from the media due to the reluctance of public officials or institutions to disclose information of public interest - which is formally requested pursuant to Law 200-04 on Free Access to Information. <https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1215065-dominican-republic>

Paraguay

In November, the Human Rights Commission of the House of Representatives gave a favorable opinion to the bill "For the protection of journalists, communicators and human rights defenders," promoted by deputies Roya Torres and Esmérita Sánchez (PLRA) and Rocío Abed (ANR) - to provide communicators with an adequate legal framework for their profession. <https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1215096-paraguay>

77th General Assembly, virtual, October 19-22, 2021

Costa Rica

The lack of access to public information was constant during this period - with ministers and officials refusing to issue statements on matters of public interest.

Due to the government's defensive attitude, some media have turned to the courts ("Sala IV") to have the justices force the government to provide information. As part of the actions filed during the last six months, the court forced the president of INCOFER to provide railroad information, as well as the president of the Water and Sewer Department to provide

information on the activities of that entity.

<https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1214770-costa-rica>

Ecuador

During this period, there were concerns about limitations to access public information. The Comptroller General's Office denied journalists from El Universo access to sworn statements regarding the assets of a group of officials. <https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1214789-ecuador>

El Salvador

In July, the Executive presented the Legislative Assembly with 11 reforms to the Law on Access to Public Information (LAIP). It seeks to classify as secret any information on illicit enrichment of public officials, official traveling or public contract data, lists of advisors in government offices, and salaries of public employees. One of the reforms allows government offices to declare under "reserve" or hide 25 types of information that until now had to be made available to citizens without a specific request. Another reform indicates that there will be penalties for any person who breaches the LAIP - something that until now only applied to civil servants due to its nature as a regulatory institution.

<https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1214769-el-salvador>

Honduras

President Juan Orlando Hernández Alvarado has not yet responded to the request made by different sectors to reform the "Law for the Classification of Public Documents Related to National Security and Defense," given that the "Law of Secrets" - as it is popularly known - violates the right of access to public information and the principle of transparency.

The Official Secrets Law - approved on January 24, 2014 - is considered an obstacle to access public information, because it shields documents related to more than 20 ministries and government departments as reserved, confidential, secret and top-secret for 5, 10 and up to 25 years.

<https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1214748-honduras>

Panama

The lack of access to information on the use of public funds during the pandemic also continued - ignoring the obligations demanded from officials and institutions under the Transparency Law of the National

Authority for Transparency and Access to Information (ANTAI). In August, the Ministry of the Presidency approved Resolution 71 - which declares the minutes, notes, files and other records of discussions or activities of the Cabinet Council, the president or vice-president as restricted information. These documents may not be disclosed for a period of 10 years. <https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1214778-panama>

Paraguay

There have also been several episodes of non-compliance with the Law on Access to Public Information - especially by the binational entities Itaipú and Yacyretá. This conflicts with an April resolution by the Senate which requests the Comptroller General's Office to audit the use of funds in these companies. <https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1214759-paraguay>

Peru

Pedro Castillo's government limits the access of journalists, media and citizens in general to public information.

<https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1214779-peru>

Puerto Rico

The characteristic ambivalence of the government regarding transparency and the right of access to public information persisted during this period. While progress was made at the legislative and municipal levels for the disclosure of information on salaries, wages, and government purchasing and bidding processes, petitioners continue to resort to the courts.

<https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1214749-puerto-rico>

Mid-Year Meeting, virtual, April 20-23, 2021

Costa Rica

During this period, no efforts have been made by the national government in favor of speedy processes of transparency and accountability - which resulted in a series of complaints to the Presidential House by journalists from different media due to the lack of a free-flowing relationship with the press.

The media have endured difficulties due to the lack of adequate means to obtain clear, accurate and timely information - and there were no regular

press conferences on matters of public interest.

<https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1214508-costa-rica>

El Salvador

The Committee for the Protection of Journalists (MPP) denounced 94 cases of restrictions in the first quarter of 2021 - including stigmatizing statements, blocking access to public information, digital harassment, verbal threats, physical aggressions, sexual harassment and threats to life.

<https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1214470-el-salvador>

Guatemala

Political party leaders in Congress attempted to create a National Office of Access to Public Information, which would put at risk the access that currently exists by compromising autonomy - since those in charge of the office could be appointed or removed by a simple majority in Congress. The initiative did not prosper due to complaints from various sectors.

<https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1214446-guatemala>

Honduras

The Official Secrets Law - approved on January 24, 2014 - is considered an obstacle to access public information, because it shields documents related to more than 20 ministries and government departments as reserved, confidential, secret and top secret for 5, 10 and up to 25 years.

<https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1214425-honduras>

Mexico

The lack of transparency regarding official advertising spending has only resulted in a discretionary distribution in favor of media that he considers allies. <https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1214426-mexico>

Panama

Several pending requests for information on the use of public funds during the pandemic, reiterate the need to improve awareness on the Transparency Law among officials and institutions by the National Authority for Transparency and Access to Information (ANTAI).

<https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1214487-panama>

Paraguay

In this period of social crisis and protests due to the lack of response by the government to the demands of the citizens in the face of the pandemic, aggressions and attacks against journalists continued in the midst of requests by the media and press associations for greater transparency in government agencies.

<https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1214506-paraguay>

Puerto Rico

This period saw the inauguration of a new government with promises of greater government transparency.

However, the stumbling blocks continue in cases of access to information - forcing the press and citizens to resort to the courts to obtain official information. In several cases the Government has reached agreements with the petitioners or was forced to hand over what was requested.

<https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1214443-puerto-rico>

76th IAPA General Assembly, virtual, October 21-23, 2020

Brazil

On October 6, civil society entities, including the Brazilian Association of Investigative Journalism (Abraji) and Article19, denounced during the 177th hearing period of the Inter-American Commission for Human Rights (IACHR) violations of freedom of expression and freedom of the press and of the law of access to information in Brazil, including intimidation, defamation, verbal aggression and other attacks on journalists and communicators, apart from disinformation campaigns by the Federal Government. <https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1214122-brazil>

Canada

Citizen and media group access to public information is often mired in labyrinthine systems, strangling bureaucracy, or obfuscation. Often, police forces and court systems seem reluctant to offer basic information.

<https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1214119-canada>

Costa Rica

The petition to the judges seeks an order requiring the administration to adopt a comprehensive, effective, and transparent information system,

with no limitations or restrictions on access to information and the ability to ask questions and obtain answers from public officials dealing with the subject of the pandemic. <https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1214136-costa-rica>

El Salvador

In one of the latest attempts to intervene in one of the institutions that guarantee access to state information and the fight against corruption, the government appointed a former official as a "representative of journalists" in the Institute of Access to Public Information (IAIP).

<https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1214157-el-salvador>

Honduras

President Juan Orlando Hernández Alvarado has not responded to the petition to reform the "Law for the Classification of Public Documents Related to National Security and Defense," because the "Law of Secrets," as it is popularly known, violates the right of access to public information and the principle of transparency.

The law - in force since January 24, 2014 - is considered an obstacle to access public documents pertaining to more than 20 ministries and government departments, since it protects information considered reserved, confidential, secret or ultra-secret for 5, 10 and even 25 years.

<https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1214126-honduras>

Panama

The Supreme Court of Justice did not admit a habeas data action requesting information on the use of public funds during the pandemic. Due to this decision, the media entities expressed their concern about the lack of compliance with the Transparency Law, and about the performance of the National Authority of Transparency and Access to Information (ANTAI). <https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1214155-panama>

Puerto Rico

Press freedom problems in this period were marked by decisions and delays on access to public information and lack of transparency.

In another case, after the uproar caused by the discovery of a warehouse with supplies not distributed to victims of disasters, Governor Wanda Vázquez Garced ordered a "thorough investigation" into the allegations of

mishandling of supplies. The media asked for its release, but the requests were denied. The Puerto Rico Journalists Association (ASPPRO) and the Center for Investigative Journalism (CPI) sued the Department of Justice over the document. <https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1214130-puerto-rico>

Dominican Republic

The new government headed by President Luis Abinader promised to respect the free access of the press to sources of public information. In the two months that he has been in office, the President opened a dialogue channel with the directors of newspapers, radio, television and digital media producers, to verify if his instructions for information transparency are being followed.

<https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1214124-dominican-republic>

Venezuela

The "Shadow Report" on freedom of expression, freedom of the press and access to information, published in July by the Voices of the South alliance, denounces the systematic abuse of state power, violent aggressions, attacks and threats, disinformation, lack of transparency and censorship, making 2019 the worst year for journalism. 642 alerts were issued - 228% more than the previous year.

<https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1214129-venezuela>

Mid-Year Meeting, virtual, March 28, 2020

Brazil

On March 6 17 bodies of the Brazilian civil society denounced the Bolsonaro government in the 175th meeting of the Inter-American Council on Human Rights (IACHR), held in Haiti, of making systematic violations of freedom of expression in the country, attacks on the press, censorship of artistic and cultural freedoms, stifling of spaces for social participation and access to public information. <https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1213755-brazil>

Canada

During this period, although the Justin Trudeau government open new spaces to citizen's right to know, there is still a generalized perception of a lack of transparency on certain issues, the matter of shared surveillance,

border security and the possible violation of individual liberties through use of digital information on cellphones and other electronic devices by citizens crossing to and from the United States continues to be a delicate issue. <https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1213756->

Jamaica

The Gleaner newspaper said in an editorial "What the Government was proposing goes against international standards and norms where the move is to increase access. In some countries, there is what is called a 30-year rule, which relates to the release of archival records when they are 30 years old." <https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1213835-caribbean>

Costa Rica

It was made difficult to have access to information in public offices. The officials tend to disrespect the times of response and order that the questions be in writing and thus they avoid journalists.

<https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1213767-costa-rica>

El Salvador

Media are facing a growing blockage of access to public information in various institutions. The government named an official of its confidence as head of the Institute of Access to Public Information (IAIP) who had to resign after receiving criticisms.

The IAIP blocked more cases of requests for access to public information and in the face of access by media and citizens it has sought protections in courts serving as shields of governmental institutions in order to continue denying information. The El Diario de Hoy newspaper and other independent media continue suffering the discrimination of officials of the Presidency for making questions in Presidency press conferences.

<https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1213771-el-salvador>

Honduras

There has remained unalterable the Law for the Classification of Public Documents Related to Security and National Defense, due to the fact the "Secrets Law," which breaches the right to access to public information and the principle of transparency, and the Cybersecurity Law, which will limit freedom of expression on social media, remain pending being dealt with in Congress. <https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1213742-honduras>

Nicaragua

The Violeta B. de Chamorro foundation made a study of the Law on Access to Public Information in 65 state institutions; 57 have their Web site, but only 26 have a linkage to the Office on Access to Information. There were made 57 requests for information online and only three received a response. Of 31 physical requests only four received a reply. It was observed that party propaganda is the most notable of these Web sites and they lack information.

<https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1213743-nicaragua>

Puerto Rico

Law 122-2019 adds obstacles to journalists and citizens in the access to public information. The "Transparency Law" establishes the new process required for requesting public information which allows the government to postpone the delivery of public documents for about two months.

In order to implement that law on March 2 the Justice Ministry issued a document with guidelines to the heads of public agencies and corporations on regulations and administrative orders concerning public information.

The document contains bigger obstacles to access to public information and inconsistency with the requirements of the Transparency Law and public policy of openness and transparency that the government proclaims. It creates bureaucratic layers and additional processes absent from the Transparency Law that have to be complied with in order to receive public information that the government has in its custody.

<https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1213746-puerto-rico>

7th General Assembly, Coral Gables, USA, October 4-7, 2019

Brazil

The political party Rede Sustentabilidade filed lawsuits for unconstitutionality with the Federal Supreme Court (STF) against the provisional measures that eliminate the publication of balance sheets and bidding documents. The National Association of Newspapers (ANJ) participates in these actions, as amicus curiae.

Basically, both lawsuits state the following: the urgency of the provisional measures is not justified; considering that the president's real intention - made publicly - is to harm the press; considering that Congress recently approved a transition from print to digital publication of balance sheets - sanctioned by the president; considering that Congress is also debating a transition to the publication of bidding documents; and finally that both measures undermine the transparency of information of public interest. The Supreme Court has not yet ruled on this issue.

<https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1213412-brazil>

Canada

With the heightened crisis faced by the Liberal Government as it dealt with its former Attorney General, Jody Wilson-Raybould and former Liberal Member of Parliament Jane Philpott in the wake of the SNC-Lavalin corruption investigation, there were several pleas for greater transparency and access to the information that was being discussed at the higher levels of government. Then came the positions of the government regarding the scandal, which then led to a perception that it needed an urgent Democratic Reform and a stronger stance in the Legislative and Judicial Branches in the contemplation of Accountability of government authorities.

As a "historic" victory for freedom of the press is consider the September 27th Supreme Court ruling which set aside a disclosure order issued by the Superior Court of Quebec that would have forced the Radio-Canada journalist, Marie-Maude Denis, to disclosure her source. The highest court said that the protection of the sources is important and it has to be in the highest public interest to force a journalist to reveal their sources.

The upcoming Federal Election on the 21st of October 2019, the debate about the transparency of the government has acquired a life of its own, as it becomes the fodder for political manipulation and heated promises of a constitutional reform. <https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1213383-canada>

Jamaica

There have been some whispers that the proposed Data Protection Act will return to parliament imminently for debate. Hopefully the requested exclusions for media/journalism have been strengthened as per the lobby of the media and press associations.

There has been no further development on the Broadcasting Commission of Jamaica's urging the Government to increase its oversight responsibility beyond free-to-air electronic media to policing social media platforms.

The media and press associations have called for the abolition of a provision in the Criminal Justice and Administration Act which prohibits still photography or sketches of defendants on courthouse premises. Penalties for breaching this provision include fines and imprisonment. This troubling element of the law returned to the spotlight as parliament sought to modernize fines associated with breaches of the act. During this general process, the fine for this infraction was raised to the near equivalent of 10,000 US dollars.

<https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1213413-caribbean>

El Salvador

In June, the Institute for Access to Public Information (IAIP) confirmed the appointment of Javier Portillo as executive director. As former advisor to the Transparency Department, he was known for defending secrecy in several areas related to the Presidential House, including travel information, travel allowances, advertising expenses and internal audit of the administration of former president Mauricio Funes – now prosecuted for the diversion of 351 million dollars and nationalized in Nicaragua. Portillo resigned from the IAIP.

<https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1213431-el-salvador>

Honduras

President Juan Orlando Hernández Alvarado has not responded nor reacted to the petition of various sectors for amendment of the "Law for the Classification of Public Documents Related to Security and National Defense," due to the fact that the "Law on Secrecy," as it is popularly known, violates the right to access to public information and the principle of transparency. <https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1213420-honduras>

Nicaragua

There continues unchanged in this period, since the government was installed in 2007, official secrecy regarding public information, where only First Lady and Vice President Rosario Murillo is authorized to speak, which goes against the Law on Access to Information approved in 2007. The government maintains its communication predominance through an

oligopoly of television, aggravated by the close down of television channel 100% Noticias and of all the opinion programs of Canal 12, as well as the close down of Confidencial. It in addition maintains discrimination in official advertising, which it gives exclusively to media of the Ortega family. <https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1213422-nicaragua>

Panama

The EPASA Group has repeatedly stated that it is under pressure from the Public Prosecutor's Office and denounced that said institution is carrying out an information blockade by denying access to public information. In particular, recently, they denounced that they had received information that their facilities would be raided by a group of prosecutors. They have publicly questioned the failure of the Public Prosecutor's Office to respond to their requests for information. After publication of the denunciation, the Public Prosecutor's Office issued a statement denying the raid and accusing EPASA of disinforming in order to damage the image of the institution. The journalistic and media guilds issued a statement saying they considered "the approach of the Public Prosecutor's Office to be correct" in denying the search, and that "freedom of expression and information is an inalienable right of every human being, and they will always be vigilant so that nothing or no one attempts or violates this right." <https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1213469-panama>

Paraguay

During this period, journalistic practice has been affected by isolated events such as a bill which, even though aimed at protecting personal information, could in practice limit free access to public information; and by corruption involving the media and journalists.

<https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1213423-paraguay>

Peru

In the area of transparency and access to public information the Ministry of Justice and Human Rights has - since the end of 2018 - promoted the creation and formation of various entities such as the National Authority for Transparency and Access to Public Information and the Tribunal for Transparency and Access to Public Information, the last at the national level. In 2018 the three members of the First Chamber of the Court were

presented, and in mid-2019 the selection of members of the Second Chamber began. <https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1213424-peru>

Puerto Rico

During this period the media and journalists were attacked and the public was denied information, whereas the government passed legislation that hinders and delays the right to access to public information.

<https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1213425-puerto-rico>

Dominican Republic

Several newspapers editorialized on the difficulties in receiving information from the Ministry of Public Health and the directors of state hospitals about fatal victims of the dengue epidemic that has plagued the country for the past three months - despite the existence of a law on access to public information. At the end of September, television commentator Marino Zapete, one of the strongest critics of the government, denounced the forced closure of his evening program on Channel 45 of Teleradio América. The journalist said that his departure was the result of a pressure exerted before his owners by the Attorney General of the Republic, Jean Alain Rodríguez, after revelations that his sister had allegedly benefited from contracts with the Ministry of Public Works for some 15 million Dollars. The sister of the Attorney General of the Republic summoned Zapete to present the evidence she claims to have on said contracts or to retract. The journalist presented at a press conference and on a television program the documents on which he relied to make the accusations.

<https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1213430-dominican-republic>

Mid-Year Meeting, Cartagena de Indias, Colombia, March 29-31, 2019

Canada

According to a survey conducted by Nanos Research for Canadian Journalists for Free Expression (CJFE), more than half of the population perceives that the democracy is under threat because of lack of transparency by the authorities in the handling of information released to the public. 67% of Canadians believe that journalists should not be required to provide police with their source material.

<https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1213058-canada>

Ecuador

Access to public information tends to be interrupted. On November 13 Quito journalists revealed via Twitter the restriction to enter the State Attorney General's Office in the capital to obtain information. On November 19 journalist Luis Muñoz complained on social media about the impediment that he had to carry out coverage outside the Social Rehabilitation Center (CRS) in Latacunga, this on the part of the National Police, a constant practice since the country's former Vice President, Jorge Glas, was hospitalized there, according to Fundamedios.

<https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1213064-ecuador>

Honduras

Serious is the deterioration in access to public information, limited by laws that violate international principles. There is maintained a marked interest on the part of the government in favoring lack of transparency in public affairs, weakening the principles of transparency and maximum dissemination. The government continues ignoring repeated calls by the international community that it adjust its legislation in this regard.

<https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1213067-honduras>

Panama

There continues pending in the Latin American Parliament (Parlatino), headquartered in Panama, a bill submitted by Ecuadorean Congressman Octavio Villacreces that seeks to enact a Communications Framework Law for the country members of the Parlatino "on the right to free access to communication" and to establish mechanisms of control on the part of the government in order "to monitor, warn and promote" concerning news media contents. <https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1213110-panama>

Paraguay

In February, Minister Karina Gómez – head of the National Department for the Administration of Seized and Commissioned Property (Senabico), the agency responsible for safeguarding and administering property confiscated by law, refused to provide the press with the information requested regarding the rental of the mansion of drug trafficker Javier

Cabaña, alias Cucho, violating Law 5282/14 on free access to public information and government transparency. After the publication of the case in the newspaper ABC Color, the National Anti-corruption Department recommended the publication of the information - including the rental contract. Gómez resigned her office this month. Carolina Llanes – ex-comptroller of the Ciudad del Este Municipality, accepted to assume as the new head of Senabico.

<https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1213070-paraguay>

Peru

At the same time, there is a lack of political will regarding transparency and access to public information, which has led to the shelving of bills that seek to strengthen the National Transparency Authority. In recent months, there have been new judicial proceedings against journalists as a direct consequence of the investigative work they do, the most well-known being the case against journalists Paola Ugaz and Pedro Salinas for their work on the alleged cases of abuse committed by members of the Sodalicio de Vida Cristiana. <https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1213071-peru>

Puerto Rico

There does not exist a law that regulates the right to access to information, although there do exist several laws that define the nature of what amounts to a public document, and/or that contain rules on how to ease or restrict their access.

There continue to be obstacles and battles (within and outside the courts) regarding access to public information.

<https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1213072-puerto-rico>

74th General Assembly, Salta, Argentina October 19-22, 2018

Costa Rica

Concerning legal matters, there currently exist two bills, for the Law on Freedom of Expression and of the Press number 20362 and the Law on Access to Information. In both cases there are sought limits on the practice of journalism. In the case of the access to public information the bill reiterates more than 30 rules in national juridical statutes and rulings by the Constitutional Court that restrict such access.

Under discussion is approval of a fiscal amendment under Law 20580 on the Strengthening of Public Finances, which exempted from payment of value added tax on advertising television and radio stations, but not print media.

The text includes value added tax on "services of telecommunications, of radio and television, independently of the media outlet or technological platform by means of which said service is provided," imposing higher tax rates and exonerating large corporations such as cooperatives and exporters. <https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1212735-costa-rica>

Honduras

Access to public information continues to be limited – generating opacity in public affairs and institutional weakening to fight corruption, despite the demands made by the IAPA and the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights.

Regarding a draft bill on cybersecurity, the UN and OAS Rapporteurs on Freedom of Expression asked the Legislative Branch to conform to international standards and "on how the restriction of freedom of expression obeys the three conditions established in Article 19.3 of the ICCPR and Article 13.2 of the American Convention." The request was due to the fact that the draft bill contains ambiguous and vague language.

The Mission of Support Against Corruption and Impunity in Honduras (MACCIH) filed a petition to amend the "Law for the Classification of Public Documents Related to National Security and Defense," because it violates the right of access to public information and the transparency principle. <https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1212750-honduras>

Uruguay

On July 31, in a parliamentary commission, Chancellor Nin Novoa referred to the Law of Public Access to Information – annoyed by the requests and the way it is being applied. "We have received requests for access to public information from people who want to do a doctorate. Well, let them look for it! We are not going to do the doctorate for them!"

The law was used by journalists from the weekly Búsqueda to find out about the personal expenses of the country's former vice president, Raúl

Sendic, using a credit card from the main state-owned company – which later led to his resignation. <https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1212748-uruguay>

Midyear Meeting, Medellín, Colombia, April 13-15, 2018

Argentina

The law on access to public information - enacted in 2016 and regulated a year ago, became operational last October with the implementation of the law and the appointment of its director through an open and transparent mechanism. This organization - the Agency for Access to Public Information - must deal with issues related to citizens' personal data. Among its areas of action is also the deletion of certain references from official databases, which are included on its website as "the right to be forgotten." While it refers to the power of any citizen to ask for the removal of his or her name from any public database in relation to credit information services after five or more years from delinquency, it is not the most appropriate for an agency in charge of promoting access to public information. <https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1212202-argentina>

Panama

In the Latin American Parliament (Parlatino), based in Panama, there continues pending a bill submitted by Ecuadorean Congressman Octavio Villacreces, who seeks to have a Communications Law for Parlatino member countries "on the right to free access to communication" and establish mechanisms of control by the government in order "to monitor and warn of" media contents.

<https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1212236-panama>

General Assembly, Salt Lake City, Utah, Oct. 27 -31, 2017

Argentina

The Law on Access to Public Information, passed last year, was an institutional milestone of the new administration and a major advance in freedom of expression. This law, however, was substantially amended by the recently issued regulations for its implementation.

<https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1211791-argentina>

Brazil

On September 28, the nongovernmental organizations Artigo 19, Transparency Brazil, the Brazilian Association of Investigative Journalism (ABRAJI), and the Public Transparency Program of the Getúlio Vargas Foundation issued an open letter highlighting the progress made in the five years since the Law on Access to Information was passed and calling for improvements, such as standardized enforcement of the law.

<https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1211793-brazil>

Costa Rica

The proposed law on access to public information proclaims good intentions but establishes exceptions to the right to access information in cases not currently exempted, such as monetary and fiscal policies "prior to implementation." It also allows for material to be removed from the public realm "due to a provision in a special law."

<https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1211796-costa-rica>

Cuba

Article 130 punishes anyone who may have investigated government secrets, and therefore any access to public information rests on the sole discretion of the State. Article 144.1 penalizes anyone who disrespects authority or public officials. Article 147 penalizes anyone who disobeys the orders of the authorities, and Article 204 punishes anyone who denigrates government institutions. <https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1211814-cuba>

Haiti

... Congressman Caleb Desrameaux said at that same meeting that in the Congress's Culture and Communication Committee he had begun to work on a bill on access to information for journalists and students.

<https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1211817-haiti>

Honduras

.. there remain in force laws that illegitimately restrict access to public information, including the "Law for the Classification of Public Documents Related to Security and National Defense" and the "National Intelligence Law," which contain regulations contrary to the principles of press freedom and access to public information and on the basis of which also there have been issued sentences issued by the Supreme Court of Justice,

as provided for under these laws to deny access to sources of public information. These laws demonstrate a clear tendency of the government to limit access to public information and to restrict the work of the press.

<https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1211818-honduras>

Nicaragua

... in May Governor Ricardo Roselló presented new a legislative bill to guarantee access to public information to journalists and members of the public, which would require the three branches of government – the Executive, Legislative and Judicial – to offer immediate information if it is accessible or, if necessary, within 10 days.

<https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1211810-puerto-rico>

Dominican Republic

The NGO Participación Ciudadana (Citizen Participation) complained that there are being imposed obstacles to compliance with the general law on free access to public information, which has been in effect for 13 years. It declared that no political party is complying with this law's mandate, many institutions do not publish the official personnel list in clear and up-to-date form, while the budgets and their execution are published in closed formats. It added that the public institutions limit information about the processes of purchases and contracting. It proposed the creation of an autonomous, independent body with special powers and competences so that it serves in the role of control, socialization and dissemination of the right of access to public information.

<https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1211823-dominican-republic>

Uruguay

... weekly Búsqueda published information, obtained under the Law on Access to Public Information, on expenses paid for by Sendic with the Ancap credit card for personal purchases in clothing, jewelry, furniture stores and supermarkets. Sendic rejected the accusations, but resigned from the Vice Presidency under pressure from his own party for "unacceptable" handling of public monies. He is now at the disposition of criminal justice. <https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1211824-uruguay>

Midyear Meeting, Antigua, Guatemala, March 31 – April 3, 2017

Argentina

Approval of the law on access to public information in September was a relevant milestone for a country in which there had been systematically obstructed for more than a decade advances in this matter. This first step was complemented several days ago by its being put into effect on the part of the Executive Branch. <https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1211268-argentina>

Canada

During this period, there have been some changes and concrete violations on freedom of the press, regarding access to information, digital media and internet surveillance practices. <https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1211263-canada>

Costa Rica

Regarding access to public information the Constitutional Court rectified the ruling that supported the introduction of a secret password in an electronic file with data of public interest requested by the weekly newspaper El Financiero of the Banco de Costa Rica bank. According to the bank the requirement to give access to pieces of information of public interest was respected, because the institution delivered the files. <https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1211275-costa-rica>

Cuba

Concerning access to information the Penal Code and other regulations restrict the obtaining and publication of information. Those who work in institutions are clear that giving information to an independent journalist puts them at severe risk of being fired and police investigation. <https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1211274-cuba>

Honduras

Access to public information continues to be restricted by legislation such as the Law on Classification of Public Documents Related to National Security and Defense and the Law on National Intelligence. These laws contain arbitrary provisions that violate the public's right to information, but which have been upheld in multiple rulings by the Honduran Supreme Court. <https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1211279-honduras>

Nicaragua

The newspaper La Prensa runs the following statement: "Since January 10, 2007, it has now been 3,759 days since the unconstitutional President Daniel Ortega has given a press conference." The prevailing scenario is one of absolute secrecy, despite the Law on Access to Information. The Violeta Barrios de Chamorro Foundation found that only 32 of the 218 government entities bound by the law have public information offices, and their websites are out of date and contain copious partisan propaganda. <https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1211278-nicaragua>

Panama

The past six months have seen troubling developments affecting the freedom to practice journalism and the fulfillment of legal requirements related to freedom of information. <https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1211326-panama>

Peru

In January, pursuant to Legislative Decree 1353, an office described as "National Authority" was established in the Ministry of Justice and Human Rights (MINJUS) to deal with matters related to transparency and access to information, but this office was not given even the minimal powers that an entity of this nature needs. This measure would extend deadlines for answering requests and does nothing to counter criteria for classification and for confidential and reserved information. Nor does this measure address the secrecy that is ingrained in the defense sector. <https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1211281-peru>

Puerto Rico

In this period there continued the search to achieve a law on access to public information that the Congress keeps voting against. The Chamber of Representatives did not approve the bills that sought to establish the right of access to public information. One of the bills, which appeared to have the support of both main parties, was defeated by a few votes. <https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1211272-puerto-rico>

United States

...a lack of transparency has impeded news coverage of the Trump Administration and restricted the ability of journalists to report on policies

that directly affect citizens. <https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1211262-united-states>

Uruguay

The climate of press freedom was altered by a government decree that gives preference to the "duties of loyalty and secrecy of the public official" over the obligation of transparency and visibility to which government officials were committed. <https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1211286-uruguay>

72nd General Assembly, Mexico City, Mexico, October 13 – 17, 2016

Argentina

The delayed passage of a law on access to public information is one of the most noted novelties of the year regarding freedom of expression. After a decade and a half of delays, which turned the country into one of the three in South America that did not have a law of this kind, Congress approved a law with multiple virtues.

Recovered was fluidity and transparency in public information and eliminated were the arbitrary interventions in the elaboration of main indices that enable measurement of the results of the administration. <https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1210726-argentina>

Canada

Access to information held by the federal government has not yet been reinstated, and Canada's access to information (ATI) system is broken. While the federal administration of Justin Trudeau won office on the promise of greater transparency and more open government, it has stumbled in taking its first steps in that direction. <https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1210770-canada>

Haiti

In its 2016 edition of the world press freedom classification Reporters Without Borders placed Haiti in 53rd place among 180 countries. The organization concluded that Haitian journalists lack financial resources and access to information is difficult for them. <https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1210731-haiti>

Honduras

There remain in effect laws and official regulations that restrict access to public information, there being denounced an infinity of situations in which information is denied to news media on the argument of "national security" or similar other subterfuges.

... in this country there is in effect since November 2006 and maintained in full force the "Law for the Classification of Public Documents Regarding Security and National Defense," which contains dispositions contrary to the principles of freedom of information, access to public information and, as a result, an impediment to the fight against corruption.

<https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1210771-honduras>

Nicaragua

Not only is there no access to public information but the few independent media have not been allowed to cover parades on public holidays and there are no longer press conferences being given by any state body. All officials, including members of Congress of the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN), are prohibited from speaking, making comments or answering questions about the purchase of 50 military tanks that the government allegedly purchased from Russia for \$80 million.

<https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1210732-nicaragua>

Panama

During the past six months, the free exercise of journalism and compliance with access to public information have remained stable.

<https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1210792-panama>

Paraguay

There have also taken place new attacks upon journalists and news media. Several members of the press have reported threats by government officials and political authorities, and there are obstacles to compliance with the Law on Access to Public Information.

Given a negative by the Military Forces Command which declared as "secret and reserved" the curriculum of General Luis González Garcete, commander of the Armed Forces, ABC Color reporter Mabel Rehnfeldt submitted on September 28, International Access to Public Information

Day, a formal complaint against this military chief.

<https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1210765-paraguay>

Peru

On a positive note the political parties included references to transparency, the right to access to public information and freedom of expression and of opinion. Summoned by the Peruvian Press Council candidates Keiko Fujimori of Fuerza Popular, Veronika Mendoza of Frente Amplio and Pedro Pablo Kuczynski of Peruanos por el Cambio signed the document titled "The Principles of Lima. Access to Information in the Hands of the Government." <https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1210772-peru>

Puerto Rico

There should be mentioned, however, failed attempts by the Legislative Assembly to create a law on access to public information, which is sought in the draft bill on Transparency and protected under the Constitution.

<https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1210733-puerto-rico>

United States

At the initiative of the Society of Professional Journalists (SPJ) a letter was sent in September to White House Press Secretary Josh Earnest in which 40 organizations, including the IAPA, declared that the federal government's level of transparency had worsened. The note responded to an op-ed article by Earnest published in The New York which highlights supposed advances in the matter of transparency and says the media should recognize these efforts. The organizations signing the note replied that transparency has in fact deteriorated. They give details, for example, of the fact that being blocked are requests by journalists to talk to White House staff, that there are excessive delays in responding to requests for interviews and that the federal agencies exclude critical reporters, among other points. <https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1210735-united-states>

Midyear Meeting, Punta Cana, Dominican Republic, April 8 – 11, 2016

Argentina

One of the great unresolved issues inherited from the past government that has been put on the agenda is the enactment of a Law on Access to Public Information. The government has drafted a bill, based on the OAS

model law, to be passed by the Congress and taken up by the three branches of government. <https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1210073-argentina>

Bolivia

Parliament still has not passed the proposed Law on Transparency and Access to Information. <https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1210074-bolivia>

Canada

PEN Canada has also urged the government to strengthen access-to-information legislation. <https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1210075-canada>

Cuba

Shortly before the presidential visit, on March 18, Reporters Without Borders (RWB) asked Obama to make the problems related to press freedom and access to information a priority in his conversations with the Cuban government. Cuba ranks 169th out of 180 countries in RWB's 2015 World Press Freedom Index. <https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1210134-cuba>

Honduras

A number of laws and regulations limiting access to public information remain in effect, and countless incidents have been reported in which information is withheld on the grounds of "national security." Such has been the case with Radio Progreso during its coverage of the Honduran Congress. <https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1210128-honduras>

Nicaragua

Access to public information is completely lacking, despite the existence of a law intended to provide such access. Government agencies do not allow independent journalists to attend press conferences and official events, and public officials are dismissed from their positions if they provide statements to independent media outlets.

<https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1210085-nicaragua>

Panama

In the past six months, journalists' ability to work freely and access to public information have been maintained, and the National Assembly has turned back a proposed law on journalism that would have been very

harmful to press freedom and freedom of expression.

<https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1210135-panama>

Paraguay

As a result of pressure from the public and the press, there has been progress in terms of access to information.

As of March 18, all public entities are required to use the Unified Portal for Access to Information, a website that provides information on such entities in compliance with Law 5282 for Freedom of Access to Public Information and Government Transparency, passed by President Horacio Cartes on September 18, 2014. This law requires government entities and officials to provide information requested by the public on salaries, official travel, contracts, and other unclassified information.

<https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1210103-paraguay>

Puerto Rico

Although during this period a climate of press freedom prevailed the deepening of the fiscal, economic and social crisis accentuated government obstacles to access to information.

Access to official information sources is a constant complaint of the media, especially on information regarding the historic fiscal crisis, added to which is a public debt of more than \$70 billion.

<https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1210114-puerto-rico>

**71st General Assembly, Charleston, South Carolina, United States,
October 2 – 6, 2015**

Argentina

Argentina does not have a law on access to public information nor regulations governing the distribution of official advertising.

<https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1209912-argentina>

Canada

Canada adopted its Access to Information Act over 30 years ago, making the country a world leader in this right but decades later it had stagnated and left the country far behind countries like India, Mexico, South Africa and Slovenia, declared Center for Law and Democracy Executive Director Toby Mendel. Added Vincent Gogolek, Executive Director of Freedom of

Information and Privacy Association: "The black holes in the Access to Information Act have to be closed."

<https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1209909-canada>

El Salvador

Access to public information has become a serious problem for press freedom in El Salvador during this period.

The Institute for Access to Public Information (IAIP) reports that it has received 172 appeals for cases in which government entities have refused to release or have concealed information — most particularly the Defense Ministry, the Legislative Assembly, the Office of the Public Prosecutor, and the Comptroller's Office. Most of these refusals have been unjustified, according to the IAIP. <https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1209902-el-salvador>

Haiti

A group of 25 journalists from both countries gathered in Port-au-Prince in May to seek a common understanding, and they signed a commitment to work in a climate of fraternity and understanding. The document states that "as journalists we defend the right to freedom of expression and freedom of information," and it rejects "the expressions of intolerance and incitement to violence that do not reflect the general opinions of media outlets and journalists." <https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1209899-haiti>

Honduras

There continue in force a number of laws and official regulations that limit access to public information, "national security" being the argument. Several cases have been presented in which government offices have denied information to watchdog bodies such as the Accounting High Court or the Access to Public Information Institute.

<https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1209898-honduras>

Jamaica

Although there is the Access to Information Act of 2004, the exemptions under the Act make it a challenge to get all the information requested. Weighing the public's right to information and the disclosure of sensitive information that could compromise national security, agencies often hide behind the exemption clauses, denying the information, without proper cause. <https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1209908-caribbean>

Mexico

The law proposed by Governor Roberto Borge seeks to regulate "access to sources of information," with the entrance to public events only being for "duly accredited journalists" and "once there are covered all the previously established requirements for their admission."

<https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1209897-mexico>

Nicaragua

The government maintains absolute limits on official information to the media that it does not control. The government does not comply with Law 621 (Law on Access to Public Information), the state institutions Web sites are out of date, or unavailable, or full of political propaganda.

The forms of indirect censorship are many that the regime practices systematically, whether by putting officials who dare give an opinion on trial, or preventing journalists having access to information or to official public events, or through expulsion from the country of foreign journalists and human rights defenders. <https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1209896-nicaragua>

Panama

...we continue to monitor the commitments assumed publicly by the government, principally as regards the free practice of journalism, compliance with legal requirements of access to public information and unrestricted respect for the privacy of people's communications, safeguarded by the Constitution. <https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1209895-panama>

Paraguay

In September, the Paraguayan Supreme Court created the Office of Transparency and Access to Public Information, which will be responsible for implementing Law 5282/14, "On Free Public Access to Public Information and Government Transparency."

<https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1209894-paraguay>

Puerto Rico

Puerto Rico is going through the most devastating economic and fiscal crisis in its history, which is the result of the government's irresponsible

practices and lack of transparency. The press is waging a unremitting battle for access to government information.

<https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1209892-puerto-rico>

Uruguay

The efforts of the Archiving and Access to Public Information Center (CAinfo), first through the Access to Information Law and – after its failure – then to achieve that the judiciary require the Interior Ministry to explain the functioning of the program, its extent and, above all, that the controls and guarantees for the pieces of information thus gathered cannot be used in an arbitrary manner clashed with the refusal of the authority. Finally the courts rejected the request, on the understanding that what concerns the functioning of the Guardián is "clearly covered by secrecy."

<https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1209890-uruguay>

Venezuela

The United Nations Human Rights Committee on access to public information declared that there exists a restrictive legal framework that is affecting six sectors of national public life – The Law of the Central Bank of Venezuela establishes that its director has discretionary power to determine the confidentiality of any information tat he may consider a threat to security and monetary stability.

<https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1209889-venezuela>

Midyear Meeting, Panama City, Panama, March 6 – 9, 2015

Chile

The new constitutional text must guarantee freedom of expression without limit, direction, nor prior censorship; professional secrecy and the right to access public information. <https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1209872-chile>

Costa Rica

Political forces have made some attempts to curtail press freedom, especially as it relates to freedom of information.

In one such case, Justice Minister Cristina Ramírez Chavarría denied the request of La Nación journalist David Delgado for information on

overcrowding in Costa Rican prisons. The Constitutional Court granted Delgado's appeal for relief and ordered Ramírez to provide the information to him. <https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1209860-costa-rica>

El Salvador

While a law encourages transparency and free access to information the government raises obstacles to the work of investigative journalism. For example, the Presidency has declared "for reasons of national security" details such as those of the costs of trips abroad by former president Mauricio Funes. The leading news media insisted on the request, to the point that the case came to be "tried" by the Access to Information Institute. At the hearing – in which access by journalists was sought to be denied – it was decided that it was classified information, due to reasons of national security. <https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1209858-el-salvador>

Nicaragua

The government continues to use secrecy. No minister or official is authorized to give information of any kind to media that are not allied to the government. The law on access to information is not being complied with. All ministers and autonomous agencies are prohibited from placing advertisements with media that are not allied with the government. Since he took office eight years ago President Daniel Ortega has not given even one press conference. <https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1209852-nicaragua>

Panama

The government has also made commitments for compliance with legal requirements concerning access to public information and unrestricted respect for the privacy of people's communications.

<https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1209864-panama>

Peru

... the Peruvian Press Council noted the setback regarding the right to public information during this period and the non-compliance with commitments assumed by the Peruvian government before the Alliance for an Open Government linked to transparency, accountability and the people's participation in public affairs.

<https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1209863-peru>

Puerto Rico

The government has maneuvered to deny journalists access to information of importance to the public.

... on December 4, 2014 the Association of Journalists of Puerto Rico (ASPPRO) and the digital publication Sin Comillas sued the Secretary of the Treasury and the Commission on Financial Institutions after fruitless requests for a report from KPMG on the country's tax system, to be used as the basis for a new tax reform being discussed in the legislature.

According to those bringing the suit, the government of Alejandro García Padilla had used an executive order to call for the need for transparency of public documents; nonetheless, that has not been the case with the KPMG report. <https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1209862-puerto-rico>

Venezuela

Almost non-existent is access to information in the hands of the government, as it is reduced to what is declared without questioning, verification or checking by officials of the regime.

There are two kinds of censorship of information – prohibition of access to official information imposed by government officials or heads of supposedly independent media, and the recent purchase by anonymous shareholders.

On December 2 the Constitutional Tribunal of the Supreme Court denied the request for access to information by the Ombudsman's office on the state of sexual and reproductive health in the country, requested by the NGO Espacio Público (Public Space) and human rights organizations Provea and Acción Solidaria. The Tribunal declared in regard to another Espacio Público petition that information concerning telecommunications is a state secret.

70th General Assembly, Santiago, Chile, October 17 - 21, 2014

Argentina

The climate of press freedom continues to be adverse. There has been no end to official and semi-official attacks on those who engage in criticism, abuse in the placement of official advertising, lack of access to public information and regulatory and administrative bias.

The law on access to public information continues to be pending.

<https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1209773-argentina>

Canada

Another bill before Parliament could amend the current legislation with the aim of improving what is seen as the impossibility of access to the information system and increasing government transparency. The government should be "open by nature" and allow few exceptions to the Access to Information Act, says the proposed amendment.

Ecuador

Days before the Ambassador of Ecuador in Washington, Nataly Cely also denied access to the contractual information signed by her under delegation of authority. The firm was retained by 6.4 million dollars to undertake communication and image studies and strategies.

<https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1209788-ecuador>

Honduras

Public authority provisions and resolutions limiting access to public information are still in force, thus weakening the efforts to achieve greater degree of transparency of public issues.

<https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1209783-honduras>

Mexico

Regarding legal restrictions, on July 31 the Sinaloa Congress passed an initiative sent by Governor Mario López Valdez to amend Article 51-B of the Attorney General's Office Organic Law, in which it is established that news media may only have access to information about investigations through press releases of the Access to Public Information Unit.

In addition, reporters would be denied access to places where crimes are committed and banned would be the recording, videoing or photographing of people involved in a criminal act, as well as restricting publication of information related to public security or the Attorney General's Office. <https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1209782-mexico>

Nicaragua

The government does not respect the Law on Access to Public Information and is not keeping updated the Web sites of government bodies which

rather are full of partisan political propaganda.

<https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1209781-nicaragua>

Panama

Noteworthy is also the public commitment to comply with the legal provisions regarding access to public information and unrestricted support to privacy of communications between citizens.

<https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1209780-panama>

Paraguay

In September President Horacio Cartes enacted Law No. 5,282 "On People's Free Access to Public Information and Governmental Transparency," which requires government bodies and officials to divulge information requested by any citizen about salaries, official trips, contracts and other data not defined as secret. The law will go into effect in 2015.

<https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1209779-paraguay>

Perú

We have recorded a significant setback in connection with the citizen's right of access to public information. For example, until three months ago the transparency websites of the Executive Power were not updating on a quarterly basis the basic information established in the Act on Transparency and Access to Public Information. In October, none of the websites had updated the information. The Executive Power failed to respond to the request of access to public information submitted by the civil society organizations which activities are of public interest.

<https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1209778-peru>

United States

The U.S. Congress has the opportunity to address this issue with the FOIA Improvement Act of 2014. The bill would address the excessive use and misuse of Exemption Five and would instate a public interest balancing test for assessing whether information should be released. It remains to be seen whether Congress will act on the bill.

<https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1209786-united-states>

Midyear Meeting, Bridgetown, Barbados, Bridgetown, April 4 – 7, 2014

Argentina

A law on access to public information continues to be an aspiration expressed in projects ignored by those in government.

<https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1209823-argentina>

Bolivia

There are dozens of cases in which access to official information is impossible.

The government is studying a bill for a Law on Transparency and Access to Information. However, the Legislature has set 13 concrete exceptions, which go further than the logics that have to do with national security. Even more serious, it would empower the Executive, Legislative, Judicial and Electoral branches, the Armed Forces and the Police to create new exceptions according to their own criteria.

<https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1209824-bolivia>

Colombia

A major advance was the enactment in March of Law 1712 of 2014 by President Juan Manuel Santos "by means of which there is created the Law on Transparency and the Right of Access to National Public Information and other regulations are delivered." This law originated in a bill by several organizations, based on recommendations and standards accepted by Colombia's Constitutional Court.

<https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1209829-colombia>

Guatemala

Press freedom and the practice of journalism, especially in the interior of the country, are facing threats by groups linked to organized crime and the illicit drug trade, pressures from local politicians, mayors and legislators aimed at censoring and harassing, and denial of access to public information by media and journalists regarded as critical.

The IAPA also called on the government to strengthen mechanisms of transparency and access to public information, as established in the law since its entry into force in 2009, and to create and ensure transparent and technical mechanisms for the distribution of official advertising. Along those lines the delegation expressed to the government its concern at the abrupt cut-off of official advertising to elPeriódico.

<https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1209821-guatemala>

Honduras

The government continues to issue arbitrary instructions restricting access to public information, now exacerbated by the passage on March 7 of the Law for the Classification of Public Records Concerning National Security and Defense, which violates principles on transparency and access.

<https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1209819->

Nicaragua

The Law on Access to Public Information passed in 2007 is not complied with, except by the Central Bank, the National Assembly and Enatrel (the entity administering electrical transmission lines). The investigator of this law, Guillermo Medrano, said that the Web sites of the state bodies, including mayors' offices governed by the FSLN (Sandinista National Liberation Front), "are full of political information and little institutional information," they being used for political propaganda.

<https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1209818-nicaragua>

Paraguay

In a positive development, a freedom of information bill was passed by the Senate in December.

A proposed law to regulate access to public information is on the verge of being passed by Congress. The bill was submitted in December 2013 by a group of senators representing the major political parties, such as the Colorado Party and the Authentic Radical Liberal Party. Also supporting the bill is the left-leaning Progressive Democratic Party.

<https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1209833-paraguay>

Uruguay

On December 17th Congress amended the Access to Public Information law and introduced new limits which were voted on in the Senate, also by the opposition National Party. Government party Senator and President Mujica's wife Lucía Topolansky was the promoter of these changes to the law, although she clarified that the government's intention "is not to restrict access to information."

<https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1209810-uruguay>

69th General Assembly, Denver, Colorado, United States, October 18 – 22, 2013

A law on freedom of information remains a mere aspiration in bills that have gone systematically ignored in Congress. For journalists and the general public alike, access to public information continues to be controlled by the government. This is a grave matter in a country where government statistics are manipulated and where hefty fines are levied against those who release alternative statistics, although government officials do not enforce these sanctions consistently.

<https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1152140-argentina>

Canada

The Ottawa-based Canadian Committee for World Press Freedom (CCWPF) called on the government to “dismantle its culture of secrecy” surrounding access to information. It complained of growing wait times, drastically increased exemptions, and fewer records being created. Canadian Journalists for Free Expression (CJFE) also called for changes to the Act, saying in a report titled A Hollow Right: Access to Information in Crisis that without urgent reforms the access to information system “could soon become dysfunctional.” <https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1152176-canada>

Colombia

A special bill to regulate the right to request information (House Bill 227 of 2012; Senate Bill 65) was approved in the final round of debate on June 13. This bill contains provisions that contradict the newly passed Law on Transparency and Access to Public Information, in such matters as confidentiality and procedures for accessing information. <https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1152185-colombia>

Costa Rica

Public officials, national and international experts, and representatives of academia and civil society participated in a workshop on freedom of information in September. Costa Rica has no specific law on access to public information, and the administration has stressed the need to pass a law to guarantee this right. No progress has been made in the Legislative Assembly on an initiative to decriminalize acts of defamation. <https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1152136-costa-rica>

Ecuador

Within the hostile environment the press is subjected to it is very difficult, if not impossible, to apply the 2004 Law on Transparency and Access to Public Information. Being extended to practically all levels of government, whether federal or local, is the practice of rewarding or punishing media in the placement of advertising and the provision of information.

<https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1152189-ecuador>

El Salvador

In these past six months there was set up the Access to Public Information Institute (IAIP), a body created under the Law on Access to Information in force since May 2012. The Institute is already handling its first cases, one of the most recent involving Congress, making it an emblematic case on access to information. <https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1152191-el-salvador>

Haiti

Another issue that is beginning to be discussed in the country is the lack of a law that guarantees free access to information, an obstacle for the work of journalists. <https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1152197-haiti>

Honduras

The government is maintaining in effect arbitrary instructions that restrict access to public information, particularly in the Security Ministry where information is denied and this is limited to occasional bulletins issued by the ministry's Public Relations Office.

<https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1152199-honduras>

Nicaragua

Lack of respect for the Law on Access to Public Information passed in 2007 is absolute. In the first part of this second stage, following the revolutionary dictatorship of the 1980s President Ortega devoted himself to attacking independent media in all his public appearances.

<https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1152203-nicaragua>

Panamá

There was an increase in hostility on the part of the authorities towards the free practice of journalism, evidenced in the discriminatory treatment of news media, in restrictions on access to information and in attacks, in

specific cases, upon journalists. <https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1152205-panama>

Paraguay

On October 15, in a ruling that sets a legal precedent on the matter of access to public information the Supreme Court decided that any citizen may have access to the list of officials of any public entity, with their respective salaries, despite the negative stance of the Chamber of Deputies and Senators. The Court established that the three branches of government must ensure access to the information.

<https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1152207-paraguay>

Peru

On April 4, the official government newspaper El Peruano published the regulations for Legislative Decree 1129, which governs the National Defense System approved by Executive Decree 037-2013-PCM. However, the direct link established in these regulations with the Law on Transparency and Access to Public Information is insufficient and, in practice, undermine the transparency-related progress achieved as part of the Humala administration's anticorruption efforts.

<https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1152209-peru>

Uruguay

On June 30 within the framework of the bill for a Law on Rendering of Accounts that the executive branch of government sent to Congress included were amendments to the Law on Access to Public Information passed in 2008. These presuppose major restrictions to requests due to the fact that they widen the reasons for denial that can be imposed by the agency that is required to provide information.

<https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1152215-uruguay>

Midyear Meeting, Puebla, Mexico, March 8 – 11, 2013

Argentina

Access by the press to official sources and data concerning government activity continues to be restricted.

Laws that regulate access to information and the distribution of official advertising continue to be pending.

<https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1127832-argentina>

Canada

The ability of the press to access public information has sharply deteriorated and legislation governing such right needs to be reformed. The system is in a deep crisis and without urgent reforms could soon become dysfunctional,” declared in January a report issued by Canadian Journalists for Free Expression (CJFE). It said that Canada’s 30-year-old Access to Information Act has failed to prevent growing delays in official agencies releasing documents, increasing redaction of information for what are claimed as national security reasons, and a general expansion of secrecy in government. <https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1127844-canada>

Colombia

Since 2012 Colombia has a freedom of expression and access to public information index. It is a quantitative tool developed by the Antonio Nariño Project (PAN), an inter-institutional alliance for the promotion of freedom of expression and access to information. Its members are the National Association of Newspapers of Colombia (Andiarios), the Foundation for Press Freedom (Flip), New Ibero-American Journalism Foundation (FNPI) and Friedrich Ebert Foundation in Colombia (Fescol). Through 42 variables this index provides a diagnosis of difficulties to reporting, differentiating between themes and the 32 regions of the country. It has four dimensions – access to information, the environment for freedom of expression, direct attacks, and impunity.

<https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1127853-colombia>

Ecuador

Government officials are reluctant to provide information that is requested by the public and journalists despite the fact that there exists the Law on Transparency and Access to Public Information.

<https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1127859-ecuador>

El Salvador

The aspect of press freedom of most concern is the attempt by several political parties to eliminate powers under the Law on Access to Public Information (LAIP), passed in May 2012.

Still awaited is for the President to name the Access to Information Institute office holders so that the law can enter into force.

<https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1127862-el-salvador>

Nicaragua

Secrecy and lack of access to public information continue to be the tone of the government of Daniel Ortega. Only official media, which call themselves of Citizen Power, may report on government matters – no minister or official is allowed to give interviews, answer questions or inform. <https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1127881-nicaragua>

Panama

The newspaper La Prensa has complained of limits or discrimination in access to public information that the government, in particular the State Communication Department, has imposed on it, in not having it take part or be invited to cover matters of public interest, and impeding the entry of its reporters. <https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1127884-panama>

Paraguay

Access to public information continues to be a problem in the country, a subject that has brought about a number of attempts at discussion in the Congress over the past decade, but which have never prospered.

<https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1127887-paraguay>

Puerto Rico

In January, leaders of several press organizations, among them the Association of Journalists of Puerto Rico (ASPRO), the Overseas Press Club of Puerto Rico (OPCPR) and the Association of News Photographers of Puerto Rico (AFPR), called on the new government to respect commitments on transparency and access to public information.

<https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1127893-puerto-rico>

Venezuela

Regarding harassment, threats and discrimination by sources, access to public information has become more difficult, reporters with independent

media continue to be given restricted access to government offices and official events, and there continues to be a lack of punishment in cases of attacks on journalists. <https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1127902-venezuela>

68th General Assembly, São Paulo, Brazil, October 12 – 16, 2012

Canada

Passage in June of amendments in Newfoundland and Labrador province to the Access to Information and Privacy Act created several new ways for the government to refuse or further delay requests for official information and was seen as a further setback to the press obtaining such information. <https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1127769-canada>

Colombia

Senate bill No. 156 of 2011 contains important content regarding access to public information, although it has some items that are a cause for concern for the practice of journalism, such as censorship of information, documents, databases and contracts concerning national defense and security, public order and international relations; the possibility for agencies to deny documents when there is a public interest higher than that of providing information; or documents that contain the opinions or points of view that form part of the deliberative process of public servants. <https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1127778-colombia>

Ecuador

The Ecuadorian Constitution establishes that every citizen has the right to request information from public officials. There is also the Organic Law of Transparency and Access to Public Information that determines how to make requests. <https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1127787-ecuador>

El Salvador

On another matter, several organizations have called for the implementation of the Access to Information Institute and the naming of those in charge of it. This Institute was created under the Access to Public Information Law, in effect since May 8. <https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1127790-el-salvador>

United States

The fight for access to information on public records and to courts proceedings in Guantanamo, were the major issues this period. In an important decision for transparency in government and media access to court proceedings, a Delaware law allowing judges to preside over secret arbitration in business disputes was declared unconstitutional by a federal judge in August. <https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1127793-united-states>

Haití

Violence against the press and the lack of access to public information continue to be the greatest obstacles to press freedom.

<https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1127799-haiti>

Nicaragua

Secrecy and a lack of access to public information continue presenting great difficulties. The government only reports through what it has called citizen-powered communication media, a conglomerate of government and family-owned media. <https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1127808-nicaragua>

Panama

A report on the status of freedom of expression by the Forum Foundation of Journalists for Freedom of Expression and Information stated that 82.8 per cent of journalists consider that freedom of expression has worsened over the past three months. Seventy-seven per cent state that they have been denied access to public information and 62 per cent that they are aware of veiled or direct threats against journalists.

<https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1127811-panama>

Uruguay

The Archives and Access to Public Information Center (CAinfo) echoed several denunciations and reported that “various bodies have declared as reserved a good part of the information regarding their conduct, interpreting in an indeterminate way some exceptions established under the Law on Access to Public Information.

<https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1127826-uruguay>

Midyear Meeting, Cádiz, Spain, April 20 – 23, 2012

Argentina

... enactment of a law on access to public information continues to be an unresolved matter. <https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1127682-argentina>

Colombia

A very positive development was the preparation of Bill 156/11, added to 146/11 Senate, “by means of which a law is created on transparency and the right of access to national public information, and other provisions.” Some aspects of the bill need to be revised for the purpose of avoiding interpretations that could affect journalistic activity.

<https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1127703-colombia>

Costa Rica

In terms of access to public information, the outlook for transparency has not been the subject of major changes, and as usual, requesting information from public offices is still a little easier for journalists than for the rest of citizens. <https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1127706-costa-rica>

Ecuador

The Law on Transparency and Access to Information is hardly respected by public servants. <https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1127742-ecuador>

Guatemala

The state of press freedom has not changed in the last six months, except for the intention of former president and Guatemala City mayor Álvaro Arzú to sue print media for what they have published, in addition to isolated incidents with journalists in the interior of the country during the presidential election campaign that was conducted late last year and attempts to change the Law on Access to Information by some Guatemalan political sectors. <https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1127751-guatemala>

Nicaragua

Secrecy and lack of access to public information continue to be strong. During presidential elections in November no action was taken that would physically affect any media, but the government candidate gave a constant refusal to grant interviews over discussions of government plans. <https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1127715-nicaragua>

Puerto Rico

There is also continuing an increasingly marked tendency in government agencies to deny media and journalists access to public information; also, selective political discrimination and obstruction are being applied against El Nuevo Día. <https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1127727-puerto-rico>

Venezuela

There also continues to be abuse of networks and problems with access to public information. <https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1127736-venezuela>

67th General Assembly, Lima, Peru, October 14 – 18, 2011

Brazil

A bill of law, which would regulate the constitutional provision on access to public information (paragraph XXXIII of Art. 5 of the Federal Constitution), is before the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate where it awaits the opinion of the Relator, Senator Fernando Collor de Mello, and has so far received 16 proposals for change.

<https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1127616-brazil>

Canada

Access to government information has become a major issue in recent months, with several press freedom organizations finding that, despite a law providing for such access, Canadians are facing challenges when trying to get information in a complete and timely manner from various levels of government. <https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1127619-canada>

Costa Rica

Access to information from government agencies continues to be difficult for the press.

In terms of access to public information, the outlook for transparency has not been the subject of major changes, and as usual, requesting information from public offices is still a little easier for journalists than for the rest of citizens. <https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1127631-costa-rica>

Dominican Republic

Alfonso Crisóstomo, a legislator, has proposed amending the Freedom of Public Information Act, despite the wide repudiation to his proposal in the

press, the lower house of parliament and party caucuses.

<https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1126434-dominican-republic>

Guatemala

The law on access to information in Guatemala, focused on access to information by the population, has been distorted by some public servants who have used it to delay giving information to the press, which by national law has access to sources of information without prior request.

<https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1127646-guatemala>

Nicaragua

Secrecy and lack of access to public information is such that the Secretary of Communications and Citizenship and Head of the Sandinista Front Campaign for National Liberation, Rosario Murillo, received complaints at a meeting on June 13 with “journalists of the Citizen Power media,” who spoke up about the blockage they also face in dealing with state institutions. <https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1127658-nicaragua>

Puerto Rico

Regarding access to information of public access the government has brought about a selective obstruction of media and journalists whose watchdog role has not been to the liking of key officials in the government. <https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1127670-puerto-rico>

Dominican Republic

... news media are waiting for the National Congress to take up five new communications sets of regulations and probable amendments to the Law on Access to Public Information that could affect the level of restriction on reports or data that are considered to be important for national security.

<https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1127673-dominican-republic>

Uruguay

In Uruguay there is a Law on Access to Public Information and its governing rules require public bodies to demonstrate what harm they could suffer (in this case a loss of competitive advantages), it being more harm than the citizenry is subjected to on being deprived of information of public interest. <https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1127676-uruguay>

66th General Assembly, Merida, Mexico, November 5 – 9, 2010

Canada

... in its annual report on the health of free speech in Canada the organization Canadian Journalists for Free Expression gave what it called a failing grade to the federal government for hurdles it has raised to accessing information. The report, issued on World Press Freedom Day in May, said there continued to be discontent over the government's lack of transparency and official agencies' invocation of national security to restrict dissemination of vital information to journalists.

<https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1127468-canada>

Guatemala

There are cases of abuse in which officials cite the Law on Access to Information to delay giving information to reporters, despite the fact that the Constitution provides for free access to sources of information and that no authority may limit this right.

<https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1127495-guatemala>

Honduras

The actions of the executive and legislative branches of government show a clear disregard of the Law on Transparency and Access to Public Information and of court rulings on the subject.

<https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1127501-honduras>

United States

Reuters had made a request based on the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) for the video, but it was never granted. The group Reporters without Borders, which defends freedom of the press, said that if the Obama government does not grant its request based on the FOIA, it will be once again ignoring its promises of greater transparency and accountability. <https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1127492-united-states>

Uruguay

On October 26 a report by Cainfo, an NGO devoted to making access to public information transparent, said that half of the government offices are still not informing the public about the salaries, compensation and assignment of budgets and audits carried out in their departments, thus failing to comply with the law on access to public information passed in 2008. <https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1127525-uruguay>

Midyear Meeting, Oranjestad, Aruba, April 6 – 9, 2010

Argentina

... it was learned, through the newspaper La Nación, that the government refused in writing to disclose the costs of official advertising, arguing that such information involved “personal details” and therefore is exempted from the access to public information law.

<https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1126443-argentina>

Bolivia

Despite these and other laws described by the government as aimed at generating transparency in public administration, decrees have been issued that shut the doors on access to public information, denying the people and journalists the possibility of investigating details of the assets and earnings of officials, unless there is a legal order issued in due process.

In April 2009, the government issued a Supreme Decree that requires the legislative and judicial branches of government to provide access to information, the 2005 Supreme Decree having referred only to the executive branch. In practice, however, few agencies fulfill their obligations, due to the lack of any entity of enforcement in case of a failure to comply. <https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1126449-bolivia>

Chile

Negative reaction to the magistrate’s decision caused it not to be carried out. Law No. 20,285 on Transparency in Public Duties and on Access to Government Administration Information, published in the Official Gazette on August 20, 2008, went into effect on April 20, 2009. In November, its having been in existence for six months, it was clear that major progress had been made concerning transparency, but there are still shortcomings and an obvious gap between the possibilities provided for under the law and their effective use by the people.

<https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1126461-chile>

El Salvador

The bill for a Law on Access to Public Information introduced in Congress in October 2008 is currently under debate in one of the legislative committees. Some workshops have been held in conjunction with

members of Congress and journalists in favor of such a law and some institutions are conducting a campaign seeking its approval.

<https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1126476-el-salvador>

Dominican Republic

Journalists and the media remain vigilant to avoid and modification of the Law on Free Access to Public Information, a valuable instrument of transparency for the press and also for citizens in general.

<https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1126509-dominican-republic>

United States

Proposed legislation in some states would limit free access by the media to 911 calls. Bills in Ohio, Alabama, Wisconsin and Florida limit the media's access to emergency-call recordings in a battle between transparency to monitor public agencies and protection of the privacy of individuals.

<https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1126479-united-states>

Uruguay

... the law on access to public information, which went into effect in 2008, is not being respected by the agencies of the State, which are obligated thereby to provide information requested by the press or ordinary citizens. <https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1126512-uruguay>

65 General Assembly, Buenos Aires, Argentina, November 6 – 10, 2009

Argentina

Remaining in effect are limits placed on the decree on access to public information issued by the federal government and a lack of adequate regulation for the distribution of official advertising, a matter that has also been left out of the Law on Communication Services.

<https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1126371-argentina>

Brazil

On May 13, 2009, the President signed a message to the National Congress about a bill on access to public information. The initiative results from a claim made by a number of entities, but the actual access of citizens and the press to public information still depends on its passage by the National Congress, and after that, on the creation of mechanisms that

guarantee compliance, especially at the state and municipal levels.

<https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1126380-brazil>

Chile

The new law of transparency and freedom of information approved in August, 2008 went into effect in April. It provides for a Transparency Council, a specialized technical body, with broad supervisory oversight powers that will consider and rule on cases in which officials refuse to provide information. To comply with the requirement of “active transparency,” the administration is updating information on its Web pages. Compliance is more difficult in local governments, although by September they had all fulfilled their obligation to put up a Web page.

<https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1126212-chile>

Ecuador

On May 25 journalist Rubén Morocho of Radio Visión in the city of Cuenca complained that his access to public information had been curtailed as a reprisal for his investigating alleged wrongdoing in the municipal government. <https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1126398-ecuador>

El Salvador

A bill for the Law on Access to Public Information sent to Congress in October 2008 has yet to be passed. <https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1126401-el-salvador>

México

With respect to access to government information, Jacqueline Peschard, president of the Access to Public Information Institute, reported publicly that there are sectors in the government of President Felipe Calderón that resist transparency. <https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1126416-mexico>

Panama

There continues to be a confused legal picture with the implementation of the new Penal Code, which while protecting freedom of expression and access to information has barely been applied.

<https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1126422-panama>

Paraguay

Some restrictions on freedom of the press have been placed by certain judges, whose rulings have resulted in the imposition of absurd punishments on journalists or restriction of access to information.

<https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1126425-paraguay>

Puerto Rico

Access to public information, treatment of reporters and photographers in coverage of protests and incidents and the absence of a satisfactory solution to a long-standing federal case of attacks on journalists are matters that have been of concern to the press during these last six months. <https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1126431-puerto-rico>

Uruguay

On October 19, the Executive Branch approved a decree “exhorting” public agencies to obey the freedom of information law. According to the decree, the agencies must practice “active transparency” and publish information on salaries, costs, public bidding, awards and officials, among other items. <https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1126437-uruguay>

Midyear Meeting, Asunción, Paraguay, March 13 – 16, 2009

Argentina

One of the most serious problems is the lack of political will to move forward with a freedom of information act. Nonetheless, President Fernández de Kirchner announced plans to amend the Radio Law at the start of a special session of Congress on March 1, triggering considerable controversy and suspicion. <https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1126287-argentina>

Canadá

"Journalists rely on the Access to Information Act to gain access to government information in order to provide the public with information, commentary, and analysis of government policy and operations," says the organization. "Without the ability to request and receive information, they would be unable to perform this important public interest function."

<https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1126299-canada>

Chile

The Law on Transparency in Public Service and Access to Government Information, which was published in the Diario Oficial on August 20, 2008, is to go into effect on April 20, 2009.

<https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1126314-chile>

Costa Rica

... the free access to public information is restricted by governmental policies and a culture of obstruction within government entities.

<https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1126320-costa-rica>

Cuba

One year into the rule of Raúl Castro, expectations of change and promises of “deep structural transformations” have given way to stagnation, a recentralization of power in the hands of military leaders and longstanding figures of the Cuban bureaucracy, and tight control over the media and access to information. <https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1126323-cuba>

El Salvador

The freedom of information bill presented last October by the Salvadoran Foundation for Economic and Social Development (FUSADES) has not yet been taken up in Congress. <https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1126329-el-salvador>

Guatemala

In a positive development, the Freedom of Information Law (Decree 57-2008) will take effect on April 21. <https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1126335-guatemala>

Honduras

The Freedom of Information Law had been in effect for 14 months on November 9, but most of the population was unaware of it, and very few people--only 1,500--had made use of it. Of the 1,500 requests for information from several state agencies, 33 have been challenged.

<https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1126341-honduras>

Panama

Implementation of a new Penal Code, which literally promotes freedom of speech and information, still has not been applied consistently by the Public Ministry and the courts. <https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1126362-panama>

Uruguay

Parliament approved a freedom of information law which was an advance over the legal vacuum that existed on this subject. However, it put severe restrictions on the exercise of this right.

<https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1126353-uruguay>

64th General Assembly, Madrid, Spain, October 3 – 7, 2008

Argentina

... the broadcasting law cannot be revised unless it provides for freedom of information, decriminalization of insult (injuria) and libel (calumnia) and establishment of a legal framework to set guidelines to prevent official discretion in the distribution of advertising.

<https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1126197-argentina>

Chile

Most important was the approval in January of the Freedom of Information Law, which was enacted in August.

<https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1126224-chile>

El Salvador

Two draft bills on Freedom of Information have been presented. Contradictorily, the FMLN has presented the first to the El Salvador Parliament. The second has been supported by one of the most respected institutions in El Salvador, the Salvadoran Foundation for Economic and Social Development (FUSADES). <https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1126239-el-salvador>

Guatemala

Congress approved the Freedom of Information Law.

<https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1126245-guatemala>

Haití

... obstacles to access to government and public information – a key element in the effective exercise of press freedom – remain intact. Journalists and the media have been facing enormous difficulties to get government authorities to release information regarding public governance. Such behavior also puts a brake on efforts aimed at ensuring transparency and fighting corruption and other abuses.

<https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1126248-haiti>

Honduras

While the country now has a Law on Transparency and Access to Public Information, a valuable tool for journalists, its implementation has been left to the discretion of some public officials who obstruct access to official sources. For example, those in the president's office have blocked information about trips, advertising expenses and salaries.

<https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1126251-honduras>

Panamá

... there was a significant outcry from civic groups concerned about access to information, as the measure entailed the censorship of the dissemination of facts. <https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1126260-panama>

Peru

The Peruvian Press Council kept on reporting that the Parliament has stepped backward in implementing the Transparency and the Freedom of Information Law. In addition, the deputies refused to become accountable for their operational expenses, and a Board passed an agreement on September 24 to exonerate them. <https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1126266-peru>

Uruguay

Freedom of information seemed to move forward with the Senate's approval of a bill on July 17. But the bill, which has not yet been considered in the Chamber of Deputies, gives state agencies wide "exceptions" that negate this right and many specialists say that rather than improving the situation the law makes it worse.

<https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1126275-uruguay>

Midyear Meeting, Caracas, Venezuela, March 28 – 30, 2008

Argentina

The situation is aggravated by the failure to achieve two essential reform; press conferences in which all media outlets are equal, and a freedom of information law. <https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1126122-argentina>

Chile

The new law sets out the procedures for access to information and the sanctions for denying it. The most important change is the Transparency Council, a specialized agency empowered to impose penalties, whose purpose is to oversee compliance with the law and defend the right to access to government information. There are some doubts about the effectiveness of the new law because of its exceptions. While the constitution is unequivocal in requiring a special quorum to keep some information secret, the law is not as strict. It has general provisions that could permit the chief of a public agency to deny information.

<https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1126140-chile>

El Salvador

However, access to information at the Supreme Court has been irregular. General elections will be held in the first quarter of 2009.

<https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1126155-el-salvador>

Guatemala

President Colom announced that the military archives from the era of the internal armed conflict would be opened in the interests of justice and to reveal the fate of thousands of victims of the conflict. Not only does this represent a step forward in providing access to classified information, but it bodes well for human rights and may even usher in a law on freedom of information. <https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1126161-guatemala>

Honduras

... the Law on Transparency and Access to Public Information represents a major step forward, but one that should not be used as a political tool.

<https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1126167-honduras>

Nicaragua

On January 9, President Daniel Ortega published the regulations for the Freedom of Information Law, putting the law into effect. However, the

Freedom of Information Office provided for in the law has not been established, and there is no budget for that purpose.

<https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1126170-nicaragua>

Venezuela

The Chávez administration has repeatedly refused to disclose information to media outlets not under his control. Independent journalists are also denied access to government sources and events controlled by government entities. <https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1126191-venezuela>

64th General Assembly, Miami, Florida, October 12 – 16, 2007

Costa Rica

An April 27 ruling by the Constitutional Chamber clarified the balance between the right to privacy and the right to be informed. Invoking the presence of public interest and the defense of society's legitimate interests, the court's ruling concluded that the right to be informed took precedence in this case. <https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1125323-costa-rica>

Cuba

Journalism is at a crossroads, with inertia in the official media, repression of the independent press, an indolent attitude toward jailed and sick journalists, and government control at all levels of access to information. <https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1125326-cuba>

El Salvador

On the other hand, the Supreme Court, and especially its chief justice, Agustín García Calderón, are continuing the policy of not giving interviews or access to information. Paradoxically he had said publicly that he would change this position at the Hemisphere Conference on The Judiciary, the Press and Impunity that IAPA held in the Dominican Republic. <https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1125332-el-salvador>

Nicaragua

The Law on Access to Public Information was passed on May 16, and while the Violeta Chamorro Foundation of Nicaragua and the Carter Center of the United States described this law as positive overall, they criticized the last-minute additions to Article 46 imposing restrictions on the profession. <https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1125350-nicaragua>

Paraguay

A positive development was the visit of an IAPA delegation on August 14, which appeared in Congress to promote a debate about the need for a freedom of information law. <https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1125356-paraguay>

Uruguay

On September 17, David Rabinovich, editor of the newspaper San José Hoy in the department of San José (100 kilometers northwest of Montevideo), filed a complaint against the Uruguayan government with the Inter-American Commission of Human Rights (IACHR) of the OAS regarding a case involving freedom of information, after unsuccessfully trying to obtain records on the municipal budget. Rabinovich later appealed to the justice system, but his petition was twice rejected. <https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1125368-uruguay>

Venezuela

The Venezuelan constitution recognizes the right to freedom of information, but the government ignores this constitutional mandate every day, blocking journalists' access to government information. A survey of press and television journalists from independent and government media outlets throughout the country shows that 51% have been prevented from getting government information in the past 12 months. <https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1125371-venezuela>

Midyear Meeting, Cartagena, Colombia, March 16 – 19, 2007

Argentina

The daily *La Mañana* of Cordoba is still facing insults and restriction of access to news sources by the mayor of the capital who is angry about news of budgetary and administrative irregularities that brought to light serious failings in his administration. **Legislation on access to public information is still elusive.** <https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1125377-argentina>

Canada

There was a note of caution, however, from Freedom House. It reported that "Canada's Access to Information Act was once emblematic of how to

uphold press freedom through law now it is restricted by so much bureaucracy and anti-terror legislation that journalists have accused the government of violating press freedom outright.

<https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1125389-canada>

Costa Rica

Extensive case law from the Constitutional Court has firmly established that freedom of information must be upheld, but the process of considering requests for protection orders is too slow to meet the needs of journalism. Press offices and image consultants form barriers between the press and public officials who avoid making statements.

<https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1125401-costa-rica>

Guatemala

... problems related to freedom of information, especially since Guatemala lacks legislation on the matter. Most journalists complain that it is difficult for them to gain access to information.

<https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1125413-guatemala>

Honduras

... in January the Law of Transparency and Freedom of Information was enacted. <https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1125419-honduras>

Nicaragua

The Freedom of Information Law is still in the Justice Committee, but the committee's president, José Pallais, said it will be approved. However, several motions have been introduced.

<https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1125425-nicaragua>

Peru

In December, three months into the new administration, concern emerged about an apparent delay in implementing the Law on Transparency and Access to Public Information. The Peruvian Press Council said that the 27 of the 41 Web sites of agencies of the central government that it reviewed had not been updated as the law requires. One of these sites was that of the Office of the President, which had been under "maintenance" for several months.

<https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1125434-peru>

Uruguay

In an area that in previous administrations had unseemly, arbitrary, irregular and illegal conduct concerning the management of government funds, the first report on the current administration “revealed the lack of transparency in the placement of government advertising and obstacles to access to public documents.” <https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1125443-uruguay>

63 General Assembly, Mexico City, Mexico, Sept. 29 – Oct. 3, 2006

Argentina

... the controversial Freedom of Information bill, which substantially restricted that right and did not respect constitutional norms and international law, was shelved. <https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1125449-argentina>

Costa Rica

Government officials are blocking access to information, despite the guarantees in the Constitution and the American Convention on Human Rights. The Constitutional Division of the Supreme Court has created extensive case law on the need to uphold this basic right, but appeals for judicial protection are handled too slowly for the demands of journalism. <https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1125476-costa-rica>

Ecuador

On May 15, the daily El Universo filed a freedom of information request to the National Congress since it had not responded to the newspaper’s request for information about the Congress’s expenses and administrative matters. The Law of Transparency requires that this information be provided on its Internet page. <https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1125482-ecuador>

Honduras

Roberto Michelleti, president of the National Congress, announced that the third and last debate on the law on transparency and public information would be held the first week of October. <https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1125494-honduras>

Mexico

El Imparcial newspaper in Hermosillo said it had been sued by the governor of Sonora, Eduardo Bours, for news stories about his administration's reluctance to report on the use of public funds, which is required under the state freedom of information law.

<https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1125497-mexico>

Nicaragua

The Freedom of Information Law, which has been discussed for several years, has been approved by a legislative committee. It is now awaiting approval by the majority party of the National Assembly and the assembly's leadership to be included on the agenda of the full body. This has been postponed indefinitely. <https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1125500-nicaragua>

Paraguay

On August 30th the Chamber of Deputies permanently shelved the bill on freedom of information, which contained clauses contrary to freedom of speech. <https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1125506-paraguay>

62 General Assembly, Indianapolis, Indiana, United States, October 7 – 11, 2005

Argentina

... final passage of the Freedom of Information Act is still pending. The Chamber of Deputies approved the bill but has received more than ten amendment proposals from the Senate. These amendments would severely undermine the original intentions of the bill. These delays and setbacks continue to raise suspicions that the administration has no interest in this law. <https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1125527-argentina>

Canada

... the Canadian Newspaper Association challenged the government to repeal Section 4 of the Security of Information Act, which makes it a crime for a journalist to receive information that the government considers secret. <https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1125539-canada>

Chile

As a result of this decree, more than 60 decisions were issued that made it virtually impossible to gain access to information. Various public interest

organizations sought to have these regulations revoked, and Senators Hernán Larraín and Jaime Gazmuri introduced a bill on freedom of information on January 4, 2005. <https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1125545-chile>

Colombia

Another bill in committee ostensibly aimed at regulating freedom of information access actually restricts it. Five bills would amend a contracting law to allow the government to determine how government bids would be announced. <https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1125548-colombia>

Ecuador

This period featured, along with a change of administration, the passing of new regulations for implementing the Law on Transparency and Access to Public Information, as well as an end to the systematic attacks on the press by the executive and legislative branches. <https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1125557-ecuador>

Guatemala

The other bill involves a general Freedom of Information law, which was proposed almost four years ago and is still shelved in the Congress. No political group has shown any interest in debating and approving it even though there is a popular demand for greater openness and transparency in public information. <https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1125566-guatemala>

Honduras

In recent months a number of statements have been issued in favor of passing the Freedom of Information Act, which is pending in Congress. <https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1125572-honduras>

Paraguay

On April 29, a group of 23 civic organizations presented a freedom of information bill in the Chamber of Deputies. Journalist Benjamín Fernández Bogado, spokesman of the Group Supporting Freedom of Public Information (GIAI) said that for the organizations that sponsor the bill “open and transparent public information for all of society is the best

guarantee of a strong democracy.” <https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1125584-paraguay>

Peru

This legislation has been passed by Congress and is awaiting the president’s signature. It is designed to use a regular law to amend a law on constitutional rights, namely the Freedom of Information Act, in effect since 2003 based on an extremely broad and ambiguous concept of national security, which could be interpreted in such a way as to restrict the right to obtain information. <https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1125587-peru>

Midyear Meeting, Panama City, Panama, March 12 – 15, 2005

Argentina

... the long delayed Freedom of Information Law, slowly moving through Congress. It was not approved because of the changes in the criteria for the final text, which aroused suspicion that there was a lack of interest within the government party. The changes have made the public’s access more difficult rather than easing it, as should be done in accordance with republican norms and the principles of accountability and transparency. <https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1125824-argentina>

Bolivia

Currently there is a dispute between President Carlos Mesa's government and journalists, press workers' organizations and representatives of written and broadcast media about Supreme Decree No. 27239, called “On Transparency and Access to Information.” The media representatives have demanded changes in it “to end a series of excessive and arbitrary acts contrary to existing provisions and rights acquired by the Bolivian people concerning access to information.” <https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1125818-bolivia>

Chile

... with the October 4, 2004 statement by the Comptroller General for Chile calling for the review of all decisions issued by various state bodies in compliance with said norms, since in practice they created new hurdles to freedom of information. The Senate president has stated that pursuant to the provision “the bulk of public services declared virtually 80 percent of

information to be confidential or secret.”

<https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1125806-chile>

Dominican Republic

On February 28, the Executive Branch issued the regulations for the General Freedom of Information Law, which had been approved and enacted in July of 2004. <https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1125758-dominican-republic>

Ecuador

The regulations issued by the executive branch for the Law on Transparency and Freedom of Information, which had been considered a major achievement, have now come into question because they are viewed as an unconstitutional threat to freedom of information.

<https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1125794-ecuador>

El Salvador

The government has shown a lack of transparency in recent years concerning the status of public finances, specifically the budget deficit, which has been shown to be larger than in official figures.

<https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1125791-el-salvador>

Guatemala

A general freedom of information Law, proposed more than three years ago, is still shelved in Congress, and no political group has shown any interest in debating and approving it even though there is a demand for greater openness in public information.

<https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1125785-guatemala>

Puerto Rico

In the legislative arena, on January 10 José Aponte Hernández, presented a bill called the Law of Government Transparency, establishing that the media would have the right to attend government meetings, deliberations and policy-making sessions as well as meetings between public and private officials. <https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1125761-puerto-rico>

61st General Assembly, Antigua, Guatemala, October 22 – 26, 2004

Argentina

Unfettered access to public information is being debated in the Senate, where a variety of bills are now under consideration in several committees. <https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1125674-argentina>

Bolivia

Mesa considered it urgent and necessary that a Supreme Decree favoring government transparency and freedom of information be implemented. It intended to establish full disclosure of information as a basic principle in a nation marked by years by high incidences of corruption.

<https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1125668-bolivia>

Colombia

Congress has begun to consider a bill that would regulate access to information and establish the possibility of classifying certain information as confidential. This measure was not included in the law and may lead to restrictions on the free practice of journalistic activity.

<https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1125653-colombia>

Dominican Republic

The approval and enacting of the Free Access to Public Information Act was a positive development. On July 13, Congress approved the Act, subsequently enacted by the Executive Branch on July 28. The law was widely publicized throughout the country.

<https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1125608-dominican-republic>

Ecuador

Ecuador's "Transparency and Access to Information Law" was enacted May 18 of this year and represents a step forward in freedom of the press and freedom of expression. The main journalists' organizations have spoken positively about the new law, and in particular about the efforts by Congress and the President to ensure its passage.

<https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1125644-ecuador>

Honduras

There is a great deal of tension in the media due to the potential debate on the Freedom of Information Act being prepared by the National Anticorruption Council under the guise of preventing corruption. The

provisions of this bill place journalistic activity under the threat of prison terms and fines. <https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1125629-honduras>

Mexico

Currently, the principal cause of the backlog in freedom of information legislation is the reluctance of the legislative and judicial branches to permit greater accessibility. Nearly half the states of Mexico have no freedom of information laws. <https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1125626-mexico>

Panama

In fulfillment of an election promise, the current administration repealed the regulations for the Free Access to Information Public Act, which for all intents and purposes annulled the law.

<https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1125620-panama>

Peru

... there is much anticipation surrounding implementation of the Law of Transparency and Access to Information promulgated in August, 2002. While the law is not perfect, it does establish both administrative and criminal procedures for disciplining government employees who refuse to release public information not covered by non-disclosure laws.

<https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1125614-peru>

Midyear Meeting, Los Cabos, Baja California, Mexico, March 12 – 15, 2004

Chile

... as are some provisions on privacy that curtail the freedom to report and restrict access to public sources. This access had been established in law, but the provisions were distorted by the executive branch's interpretation of the law. <https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1125878-chile>

Mexico

Chief Justice Mariano Azuela Güitrón of the Supreme Court of Mexico agreed to regulate the courts' access to information, in response to allegations that the courts were not obeying the Law on Transparency and

Access to Public Information. <https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1125848-mexico>

Panama

Despite challenges that have been made to the regulations of the Law on Transparency and Freedom of Information, these regulations continue to be enforced in a manner inconsistent with the law, in what amounts to a peculiar irregularity of the legal system.

<https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1125842-panama>

60 General Assembly, Chicago, Illinois, United States, October 10 – 14, 2003

Brazil

Despite the constitutional right to access to public information and special laws on the subject, the country does not have specific legislation to regulate and guarantee the constitutional principles of transparency and publicity. <https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1125740-brazil>

Chile

Chile has no law guaranteeing access to public information. This deficiency was partially remedied by two provisions incorporated into the Public Administration Act (DFL no. 1/19.653), which require that authorities provide access to records upon request. However, public administration agencies can refuse to provide these records if it would interfere with their work or affect third parties. <https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1125725-chile>

Colombia

The IAPA asked the prosecutor's office for rigor and transparency in this process and expressed the fear that expression of opinion may become illegal in Colombia. <https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1125722-colombia>

Costa Rica

The country made progress during this period in terms of access to public information, thanks to a series of rulings by the Constitutional Court. Media outlets are still subject to a set of restrictive laws, but, in spite of new lawsuits filed under such laws, these cases do not involve public officials or figures. <https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1125719-costa-rica>

Ecuador

The proposed Freedom of Information Law proposed by AEDEP in September 2002 was approved during its first debate in Congress. In Ecuador, Congress must debate a bill twice before sending it to the president for his approval or veto. <https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1125713-ecuador>

El Salvador

In recent months, the number of cases in which reporters' and photographers' work has been blocked has not decreased compared with earlier periods, which implies that there has not been enough progress in press freedom and access to information.

<https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1125710-el-salvador>

Honduras

There is a great deal of tension in the news media over the potential discussion of the Law on the Right of Access to Public Information, which, under the guise of a preventive measure to combat corruption, is being discussed by the National Anti-Corruption Council, which is coordinated by Cardinal Oscar Andrés Rodríguez. The bill is based on a model law proposed to Central American countries by the Organization of American States (OAS). <https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1125701-honduras>

Mexico

The state of Coahuila is currently considering a similar bill. The Public Information Transparency and Access Act, whose initial push came in an IAPA-sponsored seminar in February 2001, was formally adopted in June 2002. This law met with favorable public reaction. Of the 32 states or federal entities in Mexico, 11 have passed laws on this issue, and similar bills are pending in 8 others. <https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1125698-mexico>

Nicaragua

Several news outlets and other organizations, along with the School of Communications at the University of Central America, sponsored by the Violeta B. de Chamorro Foundation, are promoting a freedom of information act in Nicaragua.

Panama

After many months of persistent efforts by Transparency International (Panama), the Foundation for the Development of Civil Liberty and other civic groups succeeded in reconciling the various bills pending before the Legislative Assembly on freedom of information. The bill was passed by ruling-party and opposition legislators and signed into law by President Mireya Moscoso on January 22, 2002.

<https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1125692-panama>

Peru

Finally, the report on the wiretapping of presidential communications was declared a “state secret.” This action was based on the controversial 2002 Law on Transparency and Access to Public Information, which many consider wrong. <https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1125686-peru>

Midyear Meeting, San Salvador, El Salvador, March 21 – 24, 2003

El Salvador

Regarding restrictions on access to public information, the newspaper El Mundo reported that 19 of its requests for information from a number of different government agencies were denied in the past six months.

<https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1125935-el-salvador>

Mexico

The country has a Federal Law on Transparency and Access to Public Information which was formally decreed last June. It was inspired by an IAPA seminar in February, 2001. Seven states have passed laws on this subject, and nine have similar bills pending.

<https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1125920-mexico>

Panama

President Mireya Moscoso’s decision in May to establish regulations restricting the Transparency Law, which guarantees access to public information to all citizens, is still being debated. Citizens have not been able to use the law as an efficient tool to obtain access to official information. <https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1125914-panama>

Peru

On February 4, the executive branch promulgated a regulation modifying the Law on Transparency and Access to Public Information which had sparked IAPA protests when it was implemented initially in August 2002. The amended version of the law now includes almost all the proposals of the Peruvian Press Council and the Ombudsman's Office concerning national security restrictions and officials' responsibility.

<https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1125908-peru>

59 General Assembly, Lima, Peru, October 25 – 29, 2002

Chile

In July, the president of the Chamber of Deputies established a system to regulate access to its facilities by journalists who were not permanently assigned to covering the legislature. This system required advance notice to the Chamber and prohibited access to certain places in the building, including the cafeteria. The National Journalists Association said such restrictions would jeopardize "the informative transparency of Congress" and threaten "freedom of information." The Congress modified the regulation. <https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1126024-chile>

Costa Rica

The new Criminal Code bill incorporates a number of rules of concern for press freedom, especially in the area of access to information.

<https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1126018-costa-rica>

Ecuador

On September 30, The Ecuadorean Association of Newspaper Publishers handed the president a bill for a Law on Dissemination and Access to Public Records, which seeks to put into practice the principle of transparency in government. The president pledged to support the bill.

<https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1126013-ecuador>

Mexico

The Mexican Congress on April 30 unanimously passed the Federal Law on Transparency and Access to Public Information, thus crowning a series of efforts that culminated in February 2001 when, under the auspices of the IAPA, a seminar was held in Mexico City on the issue of transparency in

government, with the main focus being the need for Mexico to have a law on the subject. <https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1125995-mexico>

Panama

After much effort and continuous pressure from organizations such as the Panama chapter of Transparency International, professional groups, human rights organizations and the media, several parties in the Legislative Assembly reached an agreement and passed Law 6 of 2002 about free access to public information. It was later approved by the president and published in the Official Gazette.

<https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1125989-panama>

Peru

... of great strides have been made in free speech legislation, especially in the area of constitutional reform and the recently enacted Law on Transparency and Access to Public Information.

<https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1125983-peru>

Midyear Meeting, Casa de Campo, La Romana, Dominican Republic, March 17 – 19, 2002

Aruba

... the government of the Dutch Antilles and Aruba passed a law calling for more transparency in government to enable the media to obtain official information without problems. <https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1126113-aruba>

Panama

On January 22, Law 6 on regulations for free access to public information was enacted. It was celebrated as a great triumph for Panamanian journalism. <https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1126063-panama>

58 General Assembly, Washington D.C., United States, October 12 – 16, 2001

Canada

In June 2001, the federal information commissioner accused the prime minister and his most senior officials of subverting the federal Access to Information Act. <https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1126530-canada>

Panama

Transparency International in Panama has drafted a bill on free access to public information, which apparently has garnered consensus among majority and opposition lawmakers and may become law in the near future, thereby eliminating many of the obstacles to information access in nearly all matters of public interest.

<https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1126572-panama>

Paraguay

... the legislator who drafted the law, Rafael Filizzola, presented a substitute bill. This bill, called the law of “free access to public information,” now being studied in the Congress, has equally restrictive provisions. <https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1126575-paraguay>

Midyear Meeting, Fortaleza, Ceará, Brazil, March 16 – 20, 2001

Haití

... serious limitations continue on access to government sources.

<https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1126635-haiti>

Mexico

... the government’s demonstration of openness to demands by the media for laws guaranteeing access to public information, protection of confidential sources, encouragement of openness in the use of public funds intended for the media and control of the state-owned media by civil society. <https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1126641-mexico>

Paraguay

On October 19, the Chamber of Deputies approved a bill on “administrative openness and free access to news” presented by Deputy Rafael Filizzola. <https://en.sipiapa.org/notas/1126650-paraguay>