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Canada: UN Universal Periodic Review Submission

The Centre for Law and Democracy, in collaboration with four other civil society groups – the BC Freedom of Information and Privacy Association (FIPA), Canadian Journalists for Free Expression (CJFE), Lawyer's Rights Watch Canada (LRWC) and Pen Canada – provided a Submission to the UN Human Rights Council's Universal Periodic Review (UPR) process on Canada. The Submission focuses on freedom of expression and the right to information issues in Canada.

"Canada generally has a strong record on human rights," said CLD Executive Director Toby Mendel. *"But it also has some significant weaknesses, including in relation to freedom of expression and access to information, which need to be addressed if democracy is to continue to flourish."*

Some key problem areas identified in the Submission include:

- Weak protection for the confidentiality of sources of information.
- A failure to respect the rights of journalists covering demonstrations.
- The retention of criminal defamation laws.
- Poor legal guarantees for the right to information.
- Limited protection for whistleblowers.
- Insufficient attention to promoting universal access to the Internet, particularly among First Nations communities.
- An emerging practice of passing repressive laws during protest events, only to repeal them after the demonstrations have ended.

The Submission is available at: <http://www.law-democracy.org/live/canada-universal-periodic-review-submission/>.

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