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## **CLD Report Highlights Need for Major Overhaul of Copyright**

Copyright law is among the most contentious issues regarding freedom of expression today. Artists claim that rampant piracy is destroying their ability to earn a living, while audiences accustomed to the free-flowing digital age feel stifled by copyright's limitations. Against this backdrop, major conflicts have taken place to prevent attempts by rights holding lobbies to pass draconian rules which would impose harsh sanctions – including jail terms and even cutting off Internet access – for copyright breaches.

In a major Report released today, *Reconceptualising Copyright: Adapting the Rules to Respect Freedom of Expression in the Digital Age*, CLD examines the current copyright rules from the perspective of freedom of expression. The Report finds that the rules signally fail to respect basic freedom of expression standards and proposes dramatic changes to bring copyright into line with its core purpose of promoting expression.

*“Despite all of the rhetoric, there have been few attempts to conduct a rigorous analysis of copyright from the perspective of freedom of expression,”* said Toby Mendel, Executive Director of CLD. *“We are proposing some major changes to the current regime to provide for an appropriate balance between the need for authors to earn a living and to bring the rules into line with the needs of the digital age in which we live.”*

Key recommendations made in the Report include:

- A clear distinction needs to be made between author's moral rights and the economic protection afforded by copyright law.
- Economic copyright protection should apply only where authors specifically assert it and where it is necessary to incentivise creation.
- The duration of economic copyright protection should be significantly reduced and should be based on market conditions rather than the life of the author.
- Creative derivative uses of existing works should benefit from broad protection.
- Sanctions for copyright infringement should not include loss of access to the Internet and criminal sanctions should be limited to commercial-scale breaches.

The Analysis is available at: <http://www.law-democracy.org/live/report-highlights-need-for-major-overhaul-of-copyright>.

***For further information, please contact:***

Michael Karanicolas  
Legal Officer  
Centre for Law and Democracy  
Email: [michael@law-democracy.org](mailto:michael@law-democracy.org)  
Tel: +1 902 448-5290  
[www.law-democracy.org](http://www.law-democracy.org)