



CENTRE FOR LAW
AND DEMOCRACY

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Myanmar: Broadcasting Law Delays Undermine Community Radio

A workshop in Yangon today highlighted the importance of community radio for Myanmar and the challenges facing this sector given the delays in implementing the 2015 Broadcasting Law. Hosted by the Centre for Law and Democracy (CLD), Protection Committee for Myanmar Journalists and Myanmar Press Freedom Center, with support from IMS and FOJO Media Institute, the workshop provided an opportunity for journalists from around the country to discuss and learn about legal standards for community broadcasting.

Myanmar's 2015 Broadcasting Law contains strong provisions supporting community radio, including by requiring at least 20% of the broadcast frequency spectrum to be allocated to this sector. As described in a [2016 Note](#) issued by CLD and IMS, the Broadcasting Law is largely in line with international standards and would provide a strong foundation for Myanmar's broadcasting sector if it were implemented. However, this has not yet happened because implementing By-laws are yet to be adopted, which in turn is a pre-requisite for the appointment of the National Broadcasting Council which will regulate broadcasters.

"A vibrant community broadcasting sector gives voice to communities, allowing them to share and receive information about local issues and contributing to greater media diversity," said Toby Mendel, Executive Director, CLD. *"However, until the Broadcasting Law is implemented, community broadcasters cannot obtain licences to operate."*

International standards call for a regulatory system for broadcasting which fosters a three-tiered system – with commercial, public service and community broadcasters – as part of the overall system of promoting media diversity. The Broadcasting Law largely aligns with these standards but it has not yet been implemented more than four years after it was first adopted by parliament due to various delays.

CLD urges the government to move ahead to adopt implementing By-laws and then to appoint the Broadcasting Council as a matter of priority.

For further information, please contact:

Toby Mendel
Executive Director
Centre for Law and Democracy
Email: toby@law-democracy.org
+1 902 431 3688
www.law-democracy.org
twitter: @law_democracy