



CENTRE FOR LAW
AND DEMOCRACY

28 July 2020 – for immediate release

Regional Report Series on Law and Policy Environment for Civic Space: Latin America

CLD today released the third regional report in our global series on the law and policy environment for civic space. The report focuses on nine countries in Latin America, highlighting laws and policies which restrict the ability of organisations to establish themselves and obtain funding, to conduct activities safely and to engage freely in advocacy. In identifying more problematic laws, the report and series seek to provide guidance to those working to create a more open civic space in the region and globally.

This series represents the public launch of law and policy reviews commissioned by Transparency International last year covering five regions: Asia Pacific, Europe and Central Asia, Latin America, Middle East and North Africa, and Sub-Saharan Africa. The Asia Pacific, and Europe and Central Asia reports have already been launched and are available [here](#) and [here](#) respectively.

Some of the general trends which can be observed in Latin America include the following:

- Many countries in the region still retain “desacato” laws prohibiting the insult of public officials, along with general criminal defamation laws.
- Strong securitisation policies have led to ambiguous emergency, national security and anti-terrorism laws which do not adequately protect peaceful civil society activity.
- There is a trend towards the increasing criminalisation of protests.
- Stronger legal regimes are needed to protect media regulators against political or commercial interference and to promote media diversity.
- Typically overbroad secrecy laws often override rules providing for access to information in right to information laws.
- Eight of the nine countries lack comprehensive whistleblower protection laws and, while the creation of safety mechanisms for journalists and others in some countries is a welcome development, some of these mechanisms lack adequate resources.

The Latin America regional report is available at: https://www.law-democracy.org/live/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/LatinAmerica.FINAL_.pdf.

For further information, please contact:

Laura Notess
Legal Officer
Centre for Law and Democracy
Email: laura@law-democracy.org
+1 782 234 4471
www.law-democracy.org
twitter: @law_democracy