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Report on Progress Towards Sustainable Development Goal 16

Today, the Centre for Law and Democracy (CLD), in collaboration with a number of other civil society organisations that make up the Sustainable Development Goal 16 Data Initiative, is launching a report on progress towards achieving SDG 16, [*SDG 16 Data Initiative Report 2022: Are we on track to meeting the 2030 agenda?*](#) This is timely given that we are now approaching the half-way point of the SDGs. Based on the extensive collection of high-quality non-official SDG data by participating groups, the report concludes: “[T]he non-official data relied upon show stagnation, backsliding or only very limited progress which cannot possibly be said to represent a halfway point towards substantial progress, which is where the world should be at this point.”

“All of the SDGs are important, but SDG 16 – focusing on peaceful and inclusive societies, access to justice and effective, accountable institutions – is a cross-cutting goal in the sense that sustainable progress towards all other goals depend on it,” said Toby Mendel, Executive Director of CLD. *“The evidence shows that progress on Goal 16 is nowhere near what it should be at the half-way point, a matter of very serious concern.”*

The report contains six chapters looking at seven of the ten SDG 16 targets. CLD’s Toby Mendel co-authored Chapter 2, on SDG Target 16.10 (access to information and protection of fundamental freedoms) and authored the final Chapter 6: Nearly halfway: but where are we? As regards the first, in terms of access to information, the focus of the CLD part of the chapter, while some progress has been made in terms of adopting access to information laws, too many countries have still not done so and the average strength of those laws remains well below its 2010 peak. The evidence also suggests that progress on implementation is very weak and indeed backsliding in many countries.

The final chapter provides an overview of progress across all seven targets. With the exception of intentional homicides and conflict-related deaths (the indicators for Target 16.1), progress on all of the targets surveyed was limited or non-existent. As such, the chance of achieving significant progress on SDG 16 by 2030, the objective set by the UN for all SDGs, seems nigh on impossible.

The Report is available [here](#).

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