



For immediate release – 8 December 2010

PRESS RELEASE

El Salvador: ARTICLE 19 Applauds Adoption of Access to Public Information Law

San Salvador 8.12.10: ARTICLE 19 welcomes the approval of the Access to Public Information Law by El Salvador’s Legislative Assembly on December 2nd, and urges President Mauricio Funes to immediately sign and implement the legislation. The law marks a new era for freedom of information in the country.

“The adoption of the Access to Public Information Law by the Legislative Assembly is an important step forward in the realisation of the right to information in El Salvador,” said Dr. Agnes Callamard, Executive Director of ARTICLE 19. *“President Funes must sign the law without delay. Following that, the government must immediately appoint Information Commissioners, set up information offices, and provide training for public officials on how to implement the law,”* continued Callamard.

The law was approved after 17 months of debate. Civil society played a fundamental role in pushing for its approval, with the Grupo Promotor de la Ley de Transparencia y Acceso a la Información Pública (LTAIP) providing technical assistance for the elaboration of a draft law. El Salvador is one of the last Central American countries without legislation on access to information.

The new law includes many progressive features including the creation of an independent Information Commission with the power to impose sanctions, and information offices in each government body. The law applies to both government bodies and private organisations that receive public funds or conduct public functions. Finally the law requires that the right to information is widely publicized and promoted.

NOTES TO EDITORS:

- For more information please contact: Gabriela Morales, gabriela@article.org; +52 55 1054 6500 Ext.105
- ARTICLE 19 is an independent human rights organisation that works around the world to protect and promote the right to freedom of expression. It takes its name from Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which guarantees free speech.