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Americas - Mexico

Disturbing legislation

Senate approves draconian telecommunications bill

4 July 2014

The senate has just approved the "[Secondary Law on Telecommunications](#)" that President Enrique Peña Nieto's government proposed on 24 March. Reporters Without Borders is alarmed by the speed with which the bill is being adopted because some of its articles threaten freedom of information.

The bill provides for content surveillance, the right to block telecommunication services, prior censorship of news and information that could endanger national security, and an unequal distribution of licences between commercial, state-owned and community broadcast media.

A majority of senators were in favour of the bill although some criticized the speed with which it was being adopted. The senate would have had just four hours to discuss it. The criticism resulted in a decision by parliament's standing committee for an extraordinary debate today to decide on the bill's final approval before submission to the chamber of deputies on 8 July.

"We regret that the parliament has so far not taken account of any of civil society's recommendations," said Camille Soulier, the head of the Reporters Without Borders Americas desk.

"Reform of the telecommunications law is indeed necessary but this bill has been advancing too quickly and is acquiring an alarming character. We urge legislators to discuss it more thoroughly and to consult civil society before taking a final decision so that its provisions can benefit from a democratic dialogue."

Reporters Without Borders supports a petition submitted to the senate on 2 July in which more than 100 human rights organizations and many members of the public expressed opposition to the bill. They said it would "permit prior censorship, violate property rights, and protect the rights of telecommunication companies rather than citizen rights."

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