

22 February 2005

Declaration of Cancún

Transparency and Accountability: A Commitment to Democracy

The right of access to information has no meaning if people cannot use information to improve the quality of their lives. Access to information must not simply belong to elites, but must be a daily component of participatory democracy, equitable development, and the struggle against poverty and discrimination.

As civil society organizations we recognize and welcome the open and interactive nature of the Third International Conference of Information Commissioners

In recognition that access to information is a fundamental right and an essential condition for democratic governance, accountability and the development of participatory democracy:

We call on governments to promote the full implementation of access to information in line with the highest standards, including the establishment of access to information commissions. We urge those governments which have not yet adopted access to information laws to initiate adoption as rapidly as possible; we urge those governments whose laws do not conform with the minimum standards to improve their legislation. Principles of transparency should be applied to all government decision-making, budgeting, and administrative functions.

We demand that transparency principles apply to all institutions that operate with public funds and carry out public functions, including the executive, legislative and judicial branches, also political parties, autonomous and parastatal organizations, and to private businesses to the extent that the information is related to their public functions or use of public resources, or affects the enjoyment of human rights.

We urge that principles of transparency and access to information be adopted in the regulations and practices of all intergovernmental organizations, including financial institutions. The management, structure and policies of these organizations should be grounded in respect for transparency and access to information in accordance with the highest international standards.

We propose that non-governmental organizations and private businesses adopt the same standards of transparency as voluntary good practices.

In particular, we recognize the crucial role played by information commissioners and we offer our continued support and cooperation in promoting full enjoyment of the right of access to information at the national and international levels.

Signatories:

Academia Mexicana de Derechos Humanos (México)
Access to Information Programme (Bulgaria)
Acción Ciudadana (Guatemala)
Acción para la Democracia A.C. (Aguascalientes, México)
Alianza Cívica (México)
Article 19 (International)
Asociación DOSES (Guatemala)
Asociación por los Derechos Civiles (Argentina)
Campaign for Freedom of Information in Scotland (Escocia)

Centro Mexicano de Derecho Ambiental A.C. (CEMDA, México)
Center for Independent Journalism (Rumania)
Centro Nacional de Comunicación Social (CENCOS, México)
Centro de Servicios Municipales Heriberto Jara A.C. (México)
Consejo Ciudadano por la Transparencia y la Ética del Municipio de Guadalajara (México)
Convergencia de Organismos Civiles por la Democracia (México)
Colegio Oaxaqueño de Ciencias Políticas y Administración Pública (México)
Coalición Acceso (Ecuador)
Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative (International)
Consejo de la Prensa Peruana (Perú)
Consortio para el Diálogo Parlamentario y la Equidad (México)
Corporación Latinoamericana para el Desarrollo (CLD, Ecuador)
Corporación Participa Chile
Cultura Ecológica, A.C. (México)
DECA Equipo Pueblo (México)
Democracia, Derechos Humanos y Seguridad, A.C. (México)
Equidad de Género, Ciudadanía, Trabajo y Familia A.C. (México)
FEMU A.C. (Sinaloa, México)
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Institute for Democracy in South Africa (IDASA, Sudáfrica)
Iniciativa de Acceso México
Instituto Prensa y Sociedad (Perú)
Instituto Mexicano de la Administración del Conocimiento A.C. (México)
International Budget Project (Internacional)
International Center for Journalists (Estados Unidos)
Libertad e Información México A.C. (LIMAC, México)
Mazdoor Kisan Shakti Sangathan (MKSS, India)
National Campaign for People's Right to Information (NCPRI, India)
National Security Archive (Estados Unidos)
Observatorio Ciudadano para el Libre Acceso a la Información (Guatemala)
Open Democracy Advice Center (Sudáfrica)
Open Society Archives (Hungría)
Open Society Justice Initiative (International)
Open Society Foundation (Eslovaquia)
Open Society (República Checa)
Prensa y Democracia (PRENDE, México)
Presencia Ciudadana (México)
Privacy International (internacional)
Proética Perú
Providus (Latvia)
Proyecto Fronterizo de Educación Ambiental A.C. (Mexico)
Red Ciudadana de Chihuahua (México)
Sindicato Mexicano de Electricistas (México)
South East Europe Network for Professionalization of the Media (Europa)
Transparency International (Berlin)
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