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**PRESS RELEASE**

**Brazil: Access to Information Bill Moving Forward**

**Yesterday, the Special Commission that will process Brazil's new Access to Information Bill was officially appointed. The new Commission is expected to review and revise the various versions of the Bill, and Members of Parliament are committed to approve a final version of the law by the end of this year.**

**ARTICLE 19, which participated in yesterday's first session of the Commission, calls on it to operate in a democratic, participatory manner and to ensure that the law that is finally adopted conforms to international standards.**

The Commission, whose membership includes a President and Rapporteur, was finalised yesterday and comprises of 18 MPs from different political parties. The Commission's task is to review both the draft bills recently presented to Congress by President Lula, and also the proposal dating from 2003, which was originally presented by MP Reginaldo Lopes, and is already pending before the Lower House.

The Commission's President, MP Jose Genoino, affirmed that both President Lula and the President of the Lower House of Congress, Michel Temer, have expressed an interest in seeing the final law adopted by the end of this year. Genoino told ARTICLE 19: "*The Commission plans to work in a deeply democratic and radically transparent fashion*". Lopes avowed that the Commission, "*needs to listen to the organised civil society and to learn about experiences in other countries.*"

In order to mobilise civil society and to facilitate monitoring of progress on the draft Bill, ARTICLE 19 will soon launch a blog and a public campaign.

Now that the Commission is operational, ARTICLE 19 calls on its members to ensure that the review process is truly participatory and transparent, and to do all in its power to ensure that the law implements the constitutional right to information in accordance with best comparative practice and international human right standards.

**NOTES TO EDITORS:**

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- 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.