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PRESS RELEASE

Senegal: ARTICLE 19 Welcomes the Formation of National Committee for the Adoption of a Law on Access to Information

A two-day seminar in Dakar, Senegal, with government officials, parliamentarians and civil society organisations, agreed to establish a committee to review a draft Access to Information Law and work for its adoption by parliament.

An eleven-member committee, including ARTICLE 19, will work with Forum Civil (the local chapter of Transparency International) on their draft law on Access to information ensuring it is in line with international standards and best practice. The draft will then be presented to the Ministry of Communication for submission to the National Assembly.

The seminar, held on 16-17 December 2009, was organised by the Panos Institute for West Africa, Forum Civil, and ARTICLE 19. It brought together officials from the Ministry of Communication and Ministry of Justice; members of parliament from the National Assembly and Senate; the national media regulator, CNRA; the journalists' union SYNPICS; and the Journalists' Council for Ethics and Deontology CORED.

Members of parliament who participated in the discussion expressed their eagerness to support the process.

ARTICLE 19 believes that Access to Information without which people cannot play a meaningful part in the affairs of society is essential for good governance, to combat corruption and to enable development. ARTICLE 19 is pleased to be able to contribute to a process that may serve as a model for the region.

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.