



PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release – 27 July 2007

Sudanese Government Must Improve Media Laws

In a report released today, ARTICLE 19 condemned a set of four draft media laws as “unlikely to improve on the current dire situation for Sudan’s media”.

The ARTICLE 19’s report expresses serious concern at the current state of legislation as well as at the new proposals.

John Barker, ARTICLE 19’s Africa Programme Director, said:

“These new draft laws will not bring the much needed reform that ARTICLE 19 and others have long called for. If adopted, they would instead serve to maintain the status quo for the foreseeable future.”

The four new laws that ARTICLE 19 has received would govern the print as well as the broadcast media, and propose a new ‘access to information’ regime. However, the new media laws would still allow for significant government interference in media regulation, including by shutting down of newspapers, while the ‘access to information’ law contains exemptions that are so broad that it would be more likely to serve as a secrecy law.

The report also expresses concern at the lack of any true consultation with stakeholders in the drafting of the laws, and questions why a ‘press law’ is necessary at all. It also contrasts these laws with developments in Southern Sudan, where the Legislative Assembly has recently adopted a progressive media policy recognising, amongst other things, that self-regulation is the best form of regulation for the print media.

NOTES TO EDITORS

- ARTICLE 19’s Submission on the draft laws can be downloaded from our website, at <http://www.article19.org/pdfs/analysis/sudan-draft-media-laws-07.pdf>.
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- ARTICLE 19 thanks UNESCO and the European Commission for their funding for this project.