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Note on Human Rights Principles for Archivists

The Human Rights Working Group of the International Council on Archives has prepared a set of draft Basic Principles on the Role of Archivists in Support of Human Rights. The draft Principles highlight the role Archivists can play in supporting human rights, as well as the conditions needed to allow them to do this. The Centre for Law and Democracy (CLD) has prepared a Note on the draft Principles with a view to making the final product as robust as possible.

“The preparation of these Principles is a great initiative by the International Council of Archives which will draw attention to the important role of archives and archivists in promoting respect for human rights,” said CLD Executive Director Toby Mendel. *“We hope that our comments help hone the document so that it can be as effective as possible in achieving its goals.”*

Many of the recommendations in the CLD Note are technical in nature, and aim to introduce formal improvements into the draft Principles. The Note suggests that the main operative paragraph in the preamble be redrafted so as to address a wider range of stakeholders and calls for all of the substantive provisions to be presented as normative statements (which include the term ‘should’).

The draft Principles are available at: www.ica.org/15999/news-and-events/basic-principles-on-the-role-of-archivists-in-support-of-human-rights-give-your-opinion.html and the CLD Note is available at: www.law-democracy.org/live/note-on-human-rights-principles-for-archivists.

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