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[2020 Joint Declaration on Freedom of Expression and Elections](#)

Today, the specialised mandates tasked with promoting and protecting freedom of expression at the UN, OAS and OSCE launched their annual statement, the Joint Declaration on Freedom of Expression and Elections in the Digital Age. The Joint Declaration, which was drafted with the assistance of the Centre for Law and Democracy (CLD), sets out standards for both State and non-State actors regarding communications during elections.

“The Joint Declaration breaks new ground in several respects”, said Toby Mendel, Executive Director of CLD. “Some key areas it addresses include extending certain types of rules which apply to legacy media, such as on spending and transparency, to digital media, respecting the right to privacy when using personal data to micro-target messages and, for digital actors, avoiding measures which limit the diversity of information available to users or the ability of certain parties and candidates to disseminate messages.”

Some of the specific standards in the Joint Declaration include:

- Rules on election spending should apply equally to both legacy and digital media, taking into account their differences.
- Using personal data to target advertising should be done only where those concerned have consented to this sort of use of their data.
- Parties and candidates should be required to be transparent about election spending, including on both legacy and digital media.
- Digital media and platforms should ensure that automated tools do not, intentionally or unintentionally, prevent users from accessing a diversity of information.
- Parties, politicians and candidates should not limit the ability of certain media to access their public communications.

The Joint Declaration is available in English and other languages at: <https://www.law-democracy.org/live/2020-joint-declaration-on-freedom-of-expression-and-elections/>.

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