



CENTRE FOR LAW  
AND DEMOCRACY

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## **Colombia: Amicus Brief on Government Social Media Blocks**

The Centre for Law and Democracy (CLD) has submitted an *amicus curiae* (friend of the court) brief to the Constitutional Court of Colombia in a case in which a journalist was blocked on X (formerly Twitter) by the official account of a regional government.

Official government accounts are part of the wider public information system, in this case using social media to communicate important updates and information to the public. Blocking users, especially journalists, interferes with their right both to access information and to express themselves on the platform. Like other restrictions on freedom of expression, such actions are invalid unless they meet the test for such restrictions under international human rights law.

*“Journalists need to access government social media accounts to be able to fulfil their crucial role of disseminating important public information to their audiences,”* said Toby Mendel, Executive Director of CLD. *“Limiting journalists access to such accounts undermines their ability to report on government actions, a breach not only of their right to information but also of the rights of others to receive information.”*

The brief argues that blocking a journalist from an official social media account would only very exceptionally be legitimate, for example if the journalist was posting spam or acting in a way which interfered with participation by other users. Such an action can never be legitimate if its aim is to target those who are critical of government officials. In addition, blocks should be imposed only following repeated violations of a clearly worded social media policy and pursuant to a procedure which incorporates due process protections.

In this case, the journalist was blocked arbitrarily after he had made critical comments about government officials. CLD hopes that the Colombian Constitutional Court will consider the serious concerns such circumstances raise under international human rights law.

CLD’s *amicus curiae* brief is available in [English](#) and [Spanish](#).

El informe de *amicus curiae* está disponible en español [aquí](#).

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