

## The Citizen Lab

### Latin America and the Caribbean CyberWatch: January 2013

A monthly report on trends in online censorship, information operations,  
and Internet use in Latin America and the Caribbean

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#### MEXICO

##### **Mexican Ministry of Defense Website Hacked**

Earlier this month, groups connected with Anonymous Mexico launched DDoS attacks and [hacked](#) into the Mexican Ministry of Defense website, posting messages on the home page in support of the rebel group, the Zapatista National Liberation Army (EZLN). The group MexicanH Team, which identifies itself as part of Anonymous Mexico, [tweeted](#) that they had “[defaced](#)” the Ministry’s site. Another group, Anonymous Hispano, also used Twitter to [announce](#) that they would start releasing the hacked content to the public. The Defense Ministry has [not confirmed](#) the hack attack, simply stating that there had been a service disruption to the site. In 2011, Anonymous [threatened to expose](#) members of the Zeta drug cartel in Mexico, but cancelled their plans out of fear that the cartel would be able to [trace](#)

and kidnap them. This new attack on the army and [support of the EZLN](#), a leftist anti-government group, is being interpreted as an alternative to the previously planned attack.

## CUBA

### **Cuban Internet Cable Being Tested**

The Cuban government has confirmed that they have finally [turned on](#) the [ALBA-1](#) underwater fibre optic cable connecting to Venezuela, two years after the cable was initially installed, which would provide faster Internet connection to the island. Renesys, an American Internet intelligence company, reported on their [blog](#) that they had detected much faster connectivity speeds in Cuba, indicating that the cable was likely in use. Cuban Telecommunications Enterprise S.A., Cuba's government run telecommunications company, has [confirmed](#) that they have been testing the cable. The underwater cable was constructed with the aim of replacing the much slower satellite-based connections in Cuba, and was completed in 2011. Since then, the Cuban government has been quiet on the reasons why the cable had not been put to use. With current connections slow and expensive, many Cubans do not have access to the Internet, and [bloggers](#) report that the government is still spreading the [message](#) that the Internet will have a negative social impact.

## BOLIVIA

### **Bolivia Seeks to Expand Internet Network**

The Bolivian government is also considering [connecting](#) its fibre optic cable network with Argentina's network. Argentina has plans through the [Argentina Conectada](#) program to make huge expansions to its own fibre optic network, and connecting to this network would greatly [reduce Internet costs](#) and increase connection speeds in Bolivia. Access to broadband connections have already increased dramatically in 2012 with the majority of the connections being through mobile devices.

## BAHAMAS

### **Cloud Storage Services Available in Caribbean**

Nassau based company Cloud Carib has recently [announced](#) the availability of hosted virtual data centres on vCloud -- the first Caribbean company to offer [cloud storage service](#). Hosted infrastructure as a service (IaaS) is cheaper, and more secure, and is used by major banks and government networks worldwide. The availability of this technology in the Caribbean will help to reach the [goals](#) set by many of the region's nations to [improve](#) ICT services to their population.

## ARGENTINA

### **Supreme Court Rules Against Government in Media Case**

Argentina's Supreme Court has recently made a [ruling](#) that would slow down the breakup of Grupo Clarín, as part of an ongoing battle between the telecommunications network and the Kirchner government. The Audiovisual Communication Services Law took effect on December 7, 2012, and [required](#) the media group to sell off many of its radio and television networks, which was interpreted as an attack on the media network for being critical of the government. However, the Supreme Court has rejected a request by the Kirchner government to apply a special law that would speed up the appeal process, thereby temporarily preventing the immediate breakup of the media group. Kirchner has [attempted](#) to pressure the courts to rule on her side, and regularly accuses them of trying to overthrow the government. The new law, which was initially proposed by the Kirchner government, was a key issue in December's [mass protests](#), in which citizens decry the restrictions on press freedom.

## BRAZIL

### **Twitter Set to Open Office in Brazil**

Twitter has [announced](#) that they will be opening an office in Sao Paulo, the largest city in South America and the city with the second highest number of Twitter accounts in the world. Twitter's manager for Brazil, Guilherme Ribenboim, said that the [aim](#) of this move is to further engage with Brazil's Internet-savvy population and to profit off of Twitter's widespread usage in the city. There has also been speculation that Twitter is opening the office to directly compete with Facebook, the most popular social platform in Brazil. Twitter usage is [slow](#) compared to Facebook's expanding network in the region.