



The Citizen Lab

Latin America and the Caribbean CyberWatch: May 2013

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

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BRAZIL

Marco Civil bill receives high-profile support

Recent [support](#) for Brazil's Marco Civil da Internet bill has prompted speculation that the [previously-shelved](#) bill could be sent back to a parliamentary vote in coming months. On a recent visit to Brazil, executives from Yahoo! announced their support for the Marco Civil bill. In an online [statement](#), Kuek Yu-Chuang, Regional Public Policy Director of Yahoo!, describes how the bill would increase Internet access and supports "a local culture of innovation." Additionally, Tim Berners-Lee, the creator of the World Wide Web, [announced](#) his support for the bill at the [2013 International World Wide Web Conference](#). Berners-Lee expressed his [belief](#) that Internet governance is a civil rights issue and that the Marco Civil will set a key precedent worldwide.

CUBA

Internet access to expand in Cuba

Two recent developments in Cuba indicate a future increase in access to Internet services across the country. US company Renesys has [reported](#) that an underwater fibre-optic cable connecting Cuba and Jamaica has been activated and is undergoing testing. This cable would increase bandwidth and Internet speed in the country. It was [previously reported](#) that another branch of the ALBA-1 cable, connecting Cuba to Venezuela, had been activated by government officials but was [not yet available](#) for public use. Additionally, the Cuban government has [announced](#) that it will offer public Internet access at 118 sites across the country starting in June. Unfortunately, access will still be monitored and will likely be prohibitively expensive for most Cubans.

PERU

World leaders negotiate intellectual property law in Lima

The 17th [meeting](#) of world leaders for negotiations on the Trans Pacific Partnership (TPP) agreement took place in Lima, Peru this month, which could have serious consequences for Internet freedom and intellectual property laws worldwide. The TPP is an international trade [agreement](#) between 11 countries, and negotiations have been largely secretive, with the actual text yet to be publicly released. However, a copy of the proposed chapter on Intellectual Property law which was drafted by US delegates is [available](#), and it includes [limits](#) on copyright and freedom of expression that are far stricter than current laws in the participating countries. The Electronic Frontier Foundation has been [reporting](#) extensively on the TPP meeting and is a [participating member](#) in the "[A Fair Deal](#)" campaign, which is fighting against the provisions of the TPP that would restrict Internet freedom. Peruvian civil society has also [organized](#) a campaign urging President Tasso to defend their rights during the TPP negotiations.

MEXICO

Famous blogger forced to flee country

The blogger behind the well-known [Blog del Narco](#), which chronicles the drug war in Mexico, has been forced to [flee](#) the country after being warned by a colleague that she was in danger. "Lucy" does not plan to [continue](#) with the blog, which was known for its uncensored coverage of the drug war, out of fear for herself and her missing colleague. The anonymous blogger had been silent about her identity up until last month, when she [spoke](#) with two Western news outlets and announced that she was female, contrary to popular belief. She is now [communicating](#) with the media from a location in Spain, after receiving a phone call at her home in Mexico, warning her to flee. Many reporters have been killed while attempting to cover the war, and those that are still in operation have been the subject of [cyberattacks](#). The newspaper *El Mañana* suffered two separate cyberattacks this month alone.

JAMAICA

Jamaica's first Blog Action Day examines abuse of force

On May 23, Jamaican bloggers [collaborated](#) for the first [Jamaica Blog Action Day](#), by blogging on the topic of “Police and Security Force Abuse.” Bloggers from across the nation told their own stories of abuse on the [third anniversary](#) of the Tivoli Incursion in Jamaica, where many were killed in a police hunt for one citizen. Abuse of force is still a serious issue in the country, and the powerful stories shared by these bloggers attest to this. A total of 22 individual bloggers participated in the event, and the full list of posts is now [available](#), with updates posted to [@JaBlogDay](#). [Blog Action Days](#) are held around the world and encourage bloggers to speak out on one relevant topic each year.

CHILE

President announces plans to double Internet access

On May 20th, the Chilean President Sebastián Piñera [announced](#) plans to double access to Internet across the country in the next ten years. A report entitled “Agenda Digital ImaginaChile” details how the government plans to [invest](#) approximately US \$80M into 30 new projects which would expand country-wide access to Internet connections, with the [primary goal](#) to have 80% of the population with at-home Internet by 2020. Currently, less than half of the population has Internet access, despite the government's recent [investment](#) in online start-ups. The president has [expressed](#) his desire for the country to have a larger stake in the digital economy.

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