

CHAPULTEPEC INDEX

on Freedom of Expression and the Press

Period Surveyed
August 2, 2023 – August 1, 2024

ECUADOR SWOT ANALYSIS

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| WEAKNESSES | <p>The increase in violence linked to organized crime has created an environment of insecurity for journalists. This is noticeable from the self-exile of journalists and the murders of media-related public figures.</p> <p>Weak institutions are incapable of responding effectively to insecurity and violence that threaten freedom of expression and the press. In addition, there is a perception that organizations such as the Attorney General's Office have their own agenda and behave as political rather than technical agents. This discourages journalistic investigation relevant to national life and increases the feeling of impunity.</p> |
| OPPORTUNITIES | <p>In February, a new government will take office, which increases the possibilities of new relationships between the rulers and the media.</p> <p>The progress in the protection of journalists through the Communication Act offers the alternative for the Legislative Branch to keep consolidating itself as a favorable space to foster improvements in freedom of the press.</p> <p>Progress in the “Control Over the Media” realm could be interpreted as an opportunity to encourage a greater plurality of voices, boosting independent journalism and strengthening the connection with new media.</p> |
| STRENGTHS | <p>Ecuador has seen an upturn in the Chapultepec Index, which shows progress in certain aspects. While the situation is far from ideal, the report evinces that information flow and ability to self-express are aspects worth highlighting.</p> <p>The Legislative has taken important steps by implementing devices to protect journalists, which could contribute to improving the profession’s safety.</p> <p>Although the media confiscation history is still present, there have been no recent information on new attempts at the State’s direct control over the media.</p> <p>There are fewer reported judicial events. This implies that, in general, this segment from the State understands the social role of the media and newspersons.</p> |
| THREATS | <p>The growing influence of organized crime represents a critical threat to media employees’ safety in Ecuador. The murder of political figures and constant threats exacerbate the feeling of insecurity.</p> <p>The tensions between the government and the media, such as the Alondra Santiago’s case and the axing of the “Los Irreverentes” show, reflect a risk to freedom of expression, even more so when other State agencies have not</p> |

reacted in accordance with their competences, which opens the door for repeating similar actions in the future.

The State's unresponsiveness in the face of violence against journalists, reflected in the lack of judicial follow-up for such key cases as attacks on journalists and threats from organized crime, strengthens an impunity culture that aggravates insecurity when newsmen do their job.

