In 1997, the members of the IACHR unanimously decided to create the Office of the Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression (Special Rapporteur) to contribute to the protection and promotion of freedom of thought and expression. The Office of the Special Rapporteur has played a fundamental role in national-level legislative reforms and the adaptation of legislation to meet the standards of the Inter-American Human Rights System. Also, it has contributed to the implementation of access to public information laws and the protection at-risk journalists and has contributed to the promotion and protection of freedom of thought and expression in the Americas.

The Office of the Special Rapporteur has also played a fundamental role in national-level legislative reforms and the adaptation of legislation to meet the standards of the Inter-American Human Rights System. Also, it has contributed to the implementation of access to public information laws and the protection at-risk journalists and has contributed to the promotion and protection of freedom of thought and expression in the Americas.

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How is the Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression selected?

In accordance with Article 15 of the IACHR’s Rules of Procedure, Resolution 04/06, and the criteria laid down in the Inter-American Court of Human Rights’ jurisprudence regarding freedom of expression, the IACHR’s members select the Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression for the purpose of protecting, promoting, and defending freedom of thought and expression.

The Office of the Special Rapporteur has been essential in developing Inter-American policies, standards, and jurisprudence regarding freedom of expression. It has played a vital role in detecting and protecting individuals, particularly journalists, whose freedom of thought and expression, and whose lives or ways of life, have been threatened or impacted.

The Special Rapporteur has played a vital role in defending and protecting individuals, particularly journalists, whose freedom of thought and expression, and whose lives or ways of life, have been threatened or impacted.

This decision-making process is known as the “special rapporteurship.” It involves the IACHR’s members selecting a Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression to protect, promote, and defend freedom of thought and expression.

The IACHR selects finalists for the position and their curricula vitae are published on the IACHR’s website for a time period sufficient to allow for submission of observations regarding the candidates. The candidates selected as finalists should submit a short video, no more than five minutes in length, for publication on the IACHR’s website, outlining their strategies should they be designated to the position.

The new Special Rapporteur will take office on 6 October 2020.