

PETER D. BELL RULE OF LAW PROGRAM



Overview

Launched in 2015, the [Peter D. Bell Rule of Law Program](#) is the Inter-American Dialogue's flagship program on democracy, human rights, anticorruption, and rights-respecting security policies in the Americas.

Latin America and the Caribbean face a range of challenges, including the dismantling of democratic institutions, rising levels of violence and insecurity, longstanding failures by democracies to address poverty and inequality, as well as limited accountability and transparency amidst rampant corruption, all in a context of post-pandemic economic hardship. Strengthening the rule of law—a system in which norms that govern society are clear, fair, and effectively applied by capable and independent democratic institutions to everyone, including those in power—is key to ensure that democracy can deliver, and address people's needs.

The rule of law is an essential element of effective governance, inclusive economic growth, and strong democracies in the Americas. Through enhancing the quality of analysis on the challenges to the rule of law in the hemisphere, the Program facilitates the development of actionable solutions that influence policymaking.

Featured Projects

Countering Democratic Backsliding

Signs of democratic backsliding include: assaults on judicial independence, efforts to undermine independent institutions that act as a check on executive power, attacks on the free press, and restrictions on independent civil society organizations. The Program supports key actors who uphold democratic processes and guarantees within the boundaries of the rule of law. Current projects include contributing to a democratic transition in Venezuela, strengthening judicial independence in Mexico, protecting the work of independent journalists and human rights defenders, and supporting democratic efforts in Central America.

Promoting Rights-Respecting Security Policies

In light of the escalating challenges posed by organized crime and violence, and the rising popularity of abusive, punitive security policies in the region, the work of the Program proposes effective policies to combat security democratically. The Program hosts national-level private workshops, in collaboration with local partners, to help shift the conversation in each country and generate regional-level discussion to improve security within the boundaries of the rule of law.

Elections Series

The Program provides a unique platform for experts, thought leaders, new voices, and other stakeholders to engage in key aspects of presidential elections across the region. These dynamic conversations generate new insight that can help shape the future throughout the region.

Engaging the Private Sector

The High-Level Task Force on Rule of Law and Governance in Latin America and the Caribbean strengthens the role of the private sector in promoting good governance in the region. The Task Force is comprised of committed and diverse business leaders to broaden involvement beyond traditional actors. With input from current and former public officials and civil society experts, the Task Force will identify high-priority issues that private sector leadership could make a significant difference in strengthening rule of law.

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The Dialogue is a hemispheric organization that builds networks of cooperation and action to advance democratic resilience, shared prosperity, social inclusion, and sustainable development across the Americas. We impact policy debates, devise solutions, and enhance collaboration to unlock meaningful change in the Western Hemisphere.