

# Indigenous Peoples' Right to Communication with Identity in Argentina, 2009–2017

by

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*Argentine Law 26.522 on Audiovisual Communication Services recognized, among other things, the right to communication for indigenous peoples. The cases of three indigenous radio stations in northern Argentina reveal the limits and possibilities of this normative transformation and the challenges to indigenous media posed by the changes in communications policy since the 2015 change of government.*

*La ley argentina 26.522 de Servicios de Comunicación Audiovisual reconoció, entre otras cuestiones, el derecho a la comunicación de los pueblos originarios. Los casos de tres emisoras de radio indígenas en el norte de Argentina revelan los límites y posibilidades de esta transformación normativa y los desafíos a los medios indígenas generados a partir de los cambios en política de comunicaciones desde el cambio de gobierno de 2015.*

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Public discussion regarding the drafting of Argentina's Audiovisual Communication Services Law began in March 2009. The law was intended to replace the broadcasting law in effect since the last civilian/military dictatorship (1976–1982), and the discussion led to a debate regarding the media's social role, the state's regulatory role in the field, and the meaning and authority of rights to communication. As subjects claiming the right to communicate, indigenous people positioned themselves differently from other actors (e.g., organizations that manage community stations) because of the specificities with regard to their indigenous character and their involuntary inclusion in the nation-state. This paper addresses the way in which indigenous proposals influenced the Audiovisual Communication Services Law to recognize indigenous peoples as radio and television providers and the transformations that led to the possibility of indigenous participation in the media system. We suggest that an understanding of these complex processes requires inscribing them within the Latin American context of indigenous struggles for communication

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rights and the experiences of indigenous communication in Argentina—addressing the way national and Latin American transformations and struggles have involved and influenced local situations.

We analyzed the cases of three indigenous radio stations in the Argentine North—in Salta and Jujuy, two of the provinces with the most authorizations granted to indigenous media under the new legal framework.<sup>1</sup> We employed a qualitative approach with techniques ranging from in-depth and semistructured interviews with broadcasters to participant observation in the events they organized.<sup>2</sup> We employed these techniques to analyze the genesis and the specific characteristics of their communications projects and the impact of the Audiovisual Communication Services Law on their development. Finally, we looked at the changes to the law since late 2015 and the way they have affected indigenous broadcasting.

## INDIGENOUS COMMUNICATION IN LATIN AMERICA

The first instances of indigenous participation in Latin American media can be traced to the late 1940s and, later and more vigorously, the 1960s and 1970s (Doyle, 2013). These first cases took place during the emergence of community media, when indigenous peoples and other popular sectors were seeking to engage in emancipatory and counterhegemonic projects. Initial indigenous media endeavors were linked to the Catholic Church, and their main goal was teaching literacy and evangelization of the oppressed. Among them were Radio San Gabriel, founded in Bolivia in 1955; Radio Onda Azul, founded in Peru in 1958; Radio Pío XII, founded in Bolivia in 1959; Escuelas Radiofónicas Populares del Ecuador, created in 1962 by Monsignor Leonidas Proaño; the Federación Guatemalteca de Escuelas, created in 1965 to coordinate the activities of several Catholic stations in Guatemala (Radio Mam, Radio Chortis, La Voz de Nahuala, La Voz de Colomba, and La Voz de Atitlán); and Radio Huayacocotla La Voz de los Campesinos, created in 1965 in Veracruz, Mexico. Many of these experiments developed in communities where only pre-Hispanic languages were spoken, meaning that programming had to be broadcast in those languages.

The second key moment in the indigenous struggle for communication rights in Latin America spans the 1980s and 1990s, during an ethno-political process called the “indigenous emergency” (Bengoa, 2009) that was initially linked to the counter celebrations of the five hundredth anniversary of Spanish arrival on the continent. This context led to the “gradual conversion of indigenous peoples into subjects of international law” (Doyle, 2013: 4). Native peoples began to create their own media with the purpose of aiding their various struggles (for the right to collective native landownership, the right to autonomy, the right to an intercultural education, and the right to health, among others). Indigenousness became the central element and axis of vindication in these media endeavors, an “identification category the configuration of which is relational and a product of historical processes linking economic, political, and cultural conditions” (Doyle, 2013: 39). This gave rise to the first networks of indigenous broadcasters, a political strategy for the strengthening of indigenous media on the basis of common problems.

These experiences, however, took place in a media system hegemonically characterized by its private, commercial, and geographically and economically concentrated nature.<sup>3</sup> In Argentina, the media system was primarily developed around the private, for-profit sector (Mastrini, 2005), with its exclusivity and concentration becoming consolidated in the 1980s and 1990s. Nonprofit media were made illegal during the period, and the concept of communications as a business became institutionalized.

The third key moment in indigenous communication rights struggles came in the late 1990s. Indigenous movements multiplied across the continent, leading to new kinds of efforts not just for land but also for self-representation in the mediatized public sphere. Salazar (2014) explains this as a “backwards conquest”—a dispute over new rights (including access to information and communication) that bonded indigenous peoples on the basis of their precariousness and invisibility, inspiring organized indigenous struggle. Across Latin America, indigenous peoples began demanding political and legal recognition of their right to communication. These demands were based on international agreements that acknowledged communication as a human right, on the one hand, and declared cultural identity an inalienable right of indigenous peoples, on the other—the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the 1978 UNESCO Declaration, and the 2007 Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. Article 16 of the latter states:

1. Indigenous peoples have the right to establish their own media in their own languages and to have access to all forms of nonindigenous media without discrimination.
2. States shall take effective measures to ensure that State-owned media duly reflect indigenous cultural diversity. States, without prejudice to ensuring full freedom of expression, should encourage privately owned media to adequately reflect indigenous cultural diversity.

Indigenous demands for media recognition and participation led to significant reforms in the communications field across the continent (in Argentina, Colombia, Chile, Bolivia, Ecuador, and Mexico).<sup>4</sup> Argentina's Audiovisual Communication Services Law is considered the first of its kind in that it recognizes indigenous media as public nonstate media. Indigenous media incorporation varies by country and with the particular tensions surrounding its recognition. Ultimately, indigenous struggle in Latin America is not limited to communications laws but entails a dispute regarding decolonization, self-determination, and the vindication of cultural identity in all aspects of life.

### **INDIGENOUS PEOPLES IN ARGENTINA: STRUGGLES AND NORMATIVE TRANSFORMATIONS**

According to the latest population census (2015), there are 32 indigenous groups in Argentina. While the identification of indigenous social, political, economic, and cultural rights has progressed during the past decade, indigenous poverty rates, labor market inclusion, and access to health services and education show that the areas in which these peoples live still lack basic

services (Mombello, 2002; Tamagno, 2013). While there have historically been indigenous organizations fighting against marginalization and dispossession in Argentina (Lenton, 2015), indigenous mobilization increased in 1983, after the last military dictatorship. Since the mid-1980s indigenous people have struggled for the creation of a legal framework enabling the acquisition of rights. Under this pressure and given the international advances in the recognition of indigenous rights (Doyle, 2015), the state began to warm up to indigenous issues, especially from a legal viewpoint (Mombello, 2002). One example is the passage of the 1985 law on indigenous policy and support for aboriginal communities, which, among other things, established indigenous peoples' right to native lands and communal legal status, and another is the recognition of the preexistence of indigenous peoples in the 1994 constitutional reform. These transformations, however, were accompanied by the state's withdrawal of basic social services and coverage during the 1990s, which thwarted the recognition of indigenous rights by contributing to the exclusion and impoverishment of vulnerable populations, including indigenous ones (Trincherro, 2009).

A new Argentine political era began in 2003 as some of the neoliberal policies that had prevailed since 1976 and especially during the 1990s were called into question. The state went back to playing a major role in national economic and social development, deploying inclusive measures aimed at social justice. The Néstor Kirchner and, later, Cristina Fernández de Kirchner administrations moved to address some historical indigenous demands. Meanwhile, many indigenous organizations continued to denounce activities such as intensive soy production, large-scale forest clearing, and mining in their native territories. These contradictions are inscribed, to some extent, in the debt the state owes these peoples: as Roulet and Garrido (2011) argue, despite some progress on the issue of indigenous rights Argentina has yet to initiate comprehensive reparations regarding the genocide carried out against indigenous peoples since European colonization. This would entail restitution, compensation, and satisfaction, as well as guarantees of nonrepetition and the pursuit of and dissemination of the truth experienced by indigenous groups, their current situation, and the state's and society's responsibility in this regard. In the eyes of some indigenous organizations, guarantees regarding the right to media communication have begun the reparation process.

## **BACKGROUND OF THE AUDIOVISUAL COMMUNICATION SERVICES LAW**

Until October 2009, Argentine communications were ruled by a broadcasting law that banned nonprofit media. After extensive discussions, the government submitted a preliminary bill in March 2009 that included indigenous media in the private nonprofit sector, awarding them the same status as community media. This issue was debated by more than 200 indigenous representatives at the National Conference of Organizations of Indigenous Peoples in Favor of an Intercultural State in Buenos Aires, and they developed a proposal for the inclusion in the draft bill of the right to communication with identity for indigenous organizations. They argued that, given the

constitutional recognition of indigenous preexistence (Article 75, Section 17 of the constitution), indigenous peoples should not be treated as minorities (e.g., migrants): after all, they had been incorporated into the modern nation-state against their will. They demanded that the project recognize them as subjects of nonstate public law, thus forcing the state to promote indigenous audiovisual communication services and enable the full exercise of indigenous communication rights. Their proposal demanded the direct right to the authorized provision of such services, bypassing the usual competition for licenses required of nonprofit media. It also demanded that the state allot funds to indigenous stations and guarantee the promotion of indigenous cultures across both state and private media and, finally, that indigenous representatives be able to participate in the bodies tasked with the implementation of the law.

### INDIGENOUS PEOPLES AND THE LAW: CHANGES AND UNRESOLVED ISSUES

The law that was finally passed included the indigenous organizations' proposals. This regulatory change and the communication policy that followed led to a change with regard to potential indigenous participation in the media system.<sup>5</sup> By December 2015 the *Autoridad Federal de Servicios de Comunicación Audiovisual* (Federal Authority for Audiovisual Communication Services—AFSCA) had granted authorization to operate to 55 indigenous stations,<sup>6</sup> some already operating and others purchasing broadcasting equipment to initiate services. The *Instituto Nacional de Asuntos Indígenas* (National Institute of Indigenous Affairs—INAI) and the Public Defender's Office of Audiovisual Communication Services (an office established by the law) were offering training in the production of audiovisual content for indigenous communicators.

Another key issue was the provision of resources via AFSCA's *Fondo de Fomento Concursable para Medios de Comunicación Audiovisual* (Competitive Promotion Fund for Audiovisual Communication Media—FOMECA). This financing, earmarked for the nonprofit sector and indigenous peoples, was first issued in 2013 and addressed the production of audiovisual content, the purchase or upgrading of radio or television equipment, and the improvement of economic, legal, and social broadcasting station management. From 2013 and until December 2015, some 70 FOMECA grants were awarded to indigenous media (AFSCA, 2015). Other government sponsorships for these media included the *Communication Strengthens Us* program of the Ministry of Family Agriculture. The dissemination of audiovisual productions on indigenous issues was carried out via events such as the Ministry of Culture's Indigenous Peoples' Film Week. The law also established the presence of an indigenous representative on the Federal Council for Audiovisual Communication Services<sup>7</sup> and another on the Honorary Council of Public Media.

While these developments are important, many indigenous peoples pointed to certain shortcomings with regard to the implementation of the law. One involved the possibility of indigenous participation in public state media, which have the greatest geographical reach. By December 2015 the only step taken in that direction had been the inclusion of a Mapuche communicator in

Telam, the official news agency. There were also claims of a violation of Article 151 of the law, which established the allocation of INAI funding to indigenous media. Finally, certain indigenous groups' access to radio frequencies was hampered by the AFSCA's granting requirements. During the legislative debate, indigenous groups had asked that access not be limited to communities with legal personhood (the organizational category established by the state for indigenous groups). Ultimately, the law established only that the rights it provided should "be exercised within the terms and scope of Law 24.071" (Article 152). In other words, it followed the International Labor Organization's Convention 169, which established self-identification as the criterion for determining what groups fell under the its provisions (Article 1, Section 2) and said that indigenous peoples had the right to maintain their own customs and institutions (Article 8, Section 2). However, when the law was implemented the AFSCA (2012) stated that it was "communities of Native Peoples possessing legal personhood and . . . included in the National Registry of Indigenous Communities of the INAI" that could apply for authorization. The specification of this communal legal entity not only contravened the convention but also gave the state the authority to determine who was indigenous and who was not, thus deciding who could be credited with indigenous rights.<sup>8</sup> It also overlooked the fact that indigenous communities were often quite small, making media management a very difficult task for a single village, while there were supracommunal organizations that could sustain such endeavors. Who can obtain authorization remains open for debate.

### THE IMPACT OF THE LAW ON INDIGENOUS RADIO STATIONS

The three stations whose experiences we will examine are the FM stations La Voz Indígena of Tartagal (Salta), Pachakuti, belonging to the Queta Kolla community of Abrapampa (Jujuy), and Runa Simi Kolla, belonging to the Las Capillas Kolla community of Iruya (Salta). Each case is unique, but all three share a process in which struggles for territory and identity are inextricably joined and may or may not reach the platforms of the mediatized public sphere.<sup>9</sup> This space is a locus for action and representation of individuals and groups and, consequently, the constitution of contemporary subjectivities and identities and political subjects. It is also a space for conflicts, alliances, and distinctions that give rise to actors and issues acknowledged as public—that is, shared and common (Mata et al., 2009). Their differences aside, these three stations underwent significant changes in both their status and their potential access to the public sphere under the Audiovisual Communication Services Law.

On a daily basis, La Voz Indígena involves some 20 people from five indigenous groups—Qom, Wichí, Guaraní, Chorote, and Chulupí. In 2002 a local non-governmental organization, ARETEDE, and teachers from the National University of Salta (Tartagal campus) organized a workshop on the information needs of the indigenous sector. Chiefs, *mburwoichas* (Guarani traditional leaders), and other men and women from 13 indigenous communities in the area participated. The purpose of the workshop "was to know, from [the subjects], to what extent they felt included in local media discourse. The answer, though known, is

no less powerful because of its predictability: they do not feel represented in any way" (Margen, 2006). Participants said that they wanted to learn how to "do radio." Workshop organizers created a radio training course for indigenous peoples from August to November 2002, after which some 20 people began producing a weekly two-hour radio program on a local radio station. In 2008 a government grant enabled them to buy equipment and start their own FM station. This gradually became a political space addressing the land struggles of indigenous communities around Tartagal.<sup>10</sup> Simultaneously, it turned into a space that made visible and vindicated—in the local, mediatized public sphere—the memories, languages, ways, and speech of indigenous communities.

While neither Pachakuti nor Runa Simi Kolla had existed as stations before the implementation of the law, their members had already begun participating in the public media space. In fact, communicators from both groups took part in the discussions regarding indigenous inclusion in the law. Members of Pachakuti had attended training workshops and programs on community media in the area. They had also issued programming on the commercial media, but this time it was subject to payment and content limitations. The need for an individual medium was evident. When the law went into effect, the community requested a broadcasting frequency from the AFSCA and was the first to receive one. Pachakuti began broadcasting in November 2011. In the case of Runa Simi Kolla, the first communications event organized by the Kolla of Las Capillas was a mobile cinema: "We were a group of young people who traveled between communities with a projector and a speaker carried by animals—horses, mules, donkeys, whatever; we've done this for five years" (Runa Simi Kolla representative, Iruya, August 2015). They also had an "open radio" at the Iruya's school. The purpose was to "strengthen our identity, because schools didn't speak about that; moreover, speech about Kollas was derogatory" (Runa Simi Kolla, Salta, August 2015).

All three stations felt the need to manage their own media to disseminate information on issues that were common to indigenous people and to challenge stigmatizing and stereotypical portrayals of them in the hegemonic media: "The goal, I think, has to do with the visibility of our people through our own means—to be able to say whatever you want, however you want to, to tell our version of things to the rest of society. . . . This was also part of a social denial, a condemnation of this sector" (Pachakuti representative, Jujuy, August, 2015). Additionally, this visibility sought to "strengthen this space, talk about our rights, strengthen our cultural identity" (Runa Simi Kolla representative, Salta, August 2015). This was evident in the choice of names: "Pachakuti means time to be ourselves again, so I think we are emerging once more, picking up on a lot of things and even issuing our proposals to society, the state" (Pachakuti representative, Jujuy, August 2015). Runa Simi Kolla had a similar story: "We were talking about how to regain our identity, our culture . . . so that's how Runa Simi Kolla, which means 'the voice of the Kolla,' was born" (Runa Simi Kolla representative, Salta, August 2015). The members of La Voz Indígena (the indigenous voice) said, "We called it so because it is our voice . . . because there we are free to speak our tongues, tell our stories, defend our rights. The radio is our voice" (Guaraní representative of La Voz Indígena, Salta, April 2011).

Thus, beyond theoretical assumptions that indigenous media are an instrument for the dissemination of demands,<sup>11</sup> these cases show media being constituted as part of ethnic political processes that at once transcend and are reconfigured by them. This happens in relation to three areas:

1. Strengthening organizations and communities politically and culturally—informing members about common problems and reevaluating and stimulating the daily use of indigenous languages: “The show I did . . . was all about the culture of the Guaraní community: what we used to eat . . . what it means to be losing our language. . . . All that so . . . young people would [try to] talk with grandparents, those who speak our language, teach it, so that our language does not get lost” (Guaraní representative at La Voz Indígena, Salta, June 2011).
2. Strengthening the bonds between different organizations and communities: “We follow the meetings of the Kollamarca, the Indigenous Council. . . . The idea is to pass on all the information via radio and continue to strengthen, in a way, the Indigenous Council . . . give each other a hand. . . . We should keep this information on the radio, it helps us a lot” (Runa Simi Kolla representative, Salta, August 2015).
3. Serving as a bridge between indigenous groups and nonindigenous society—making indigenous claims visible and consolidating their presence in the public debate regarding their identity, history, and links with the state and nonindigenous citizens (Wichi representative at La Voz Indígena during a workshop, Salta, October 2011):

I speak of the marginalization of my people . . . because I’ve seen it, lived it . . . from my childhood until now. . . . But I did not stagnate there. I didn’t care how others mocked me, I wanted to move forward. And then came the workshops and all of this . . . up to this place we have today. And it hasn’t been easy. We’ve knocked on doors . . . some have been opened and others haven’t. But today we already have this [the radio station] . . . . And I think of my children, hoping they won’t experience what I have, hoping they get respect!

Economic sustainability is a challenge for indigenous media, since they are generally located in rural or periurban areas where they make no significant income under commercial guidelines. Advertising from local governments is unavailable to these stations because they tend to denounce local government acts against indigenous peoples. This is why, during the discussion of the law, indigenous groups demanded that it include a federal obligation to fund indigenous media.

For La Voz Indígena, which existed before the enactment of the law, there were some changes after 2009. It received not only federal funding to expand the station but also resources from the Ministry of Family Agriculture to support the production of content. What it could not obtain, given the strict requirements, was FOMECA funding. It also ran into difficulties in obtaining authorization for the use of the radio spectrum. Since the station involved people from several communities and groups, members did not want the permit to go to a single community and thus foster internal conflict. For this reason, they were unable to apply as an indigenous group and did so as a nonprofit, which



took much longer and was successful only in early 2016. After Pachakuti and Runa Simi Kolla obtained their licenses, the National Communications Commission donated used equipment so that they could begin broadcasting. However, many of the machines broke down, making continued broadcasting impossible. Having won the 2013 competition, Pachakuti obtained FOMECA funds but did not receive the money because the community had no bank account. Finally, in 2014 and 2015, it received three FOMECA grants to purchase equipment, fund radio productions, and improve station management. Runa Simi Kolla ran into more issues with regard to FOMECA funding: it did not have a bank account or anyone who could write a grant proposal, and it had problems obtaining online forms because of a substandard Internet connection in the area. In 2015 it finally received grants to purchase radio equipment, but by late 2016 the government had yet to deliver the money. In the words of a Pachakuti member (Jujuy, August 2015),

I think the state has yet to adapt to the people's reality, the dynamics. . . . First, the procedure is so bureaucratic. . . . It's not like you put a project together, send it, and wait to see if it gets chosen or not. There is all this work you have to do, technical and logistic, regarding the community's documentation, which is not an easy task. . . . Here it's difficult to find communities that have a bank account, because having one also means maintaining it.

Another problem faced by these stations involved retaining employees, given their inability to pay broadcasters and operators. By late 2015 La Voz Indígena had found a palliative in this regard: the Ministry of Labor had awarded grants to operators, providing them with small salaries. The other two stations did not pay their members and were made up of "militant communicators," mostly young people who shared enthusiasm and concerns. In 2014 Pachakuti had 17 members, but 10 of them had to migrate to the Jujuy capital for either work or study. Runa Simi Kolla had a similar experience. Shortcomings in the implementation of the law also had a powerful effect: the community had to become a legal entity in order to receive authorization to use the radio spectrum, and the INAI was never required to grant funds directly to indigenous media. The 2015 change in government deepened these difficulties considerably.

## CONCLUSIONS: NEW POLITICAL CONDITIONS, NEW CHALLENGES

In December 2015, Argentina underwent a change of government as Mauricio Macri took over the presidency. A few weeks after he took power, the government made clear that it intended to halt the communication policies implemented by the previous one. The first step was to dissolve the AFSCA. On January 4, 2016, the government issued the Decree for Necessity and Urgency 267/15 and created the Ministry of Communications and its Ente Nacional de Comunicaciones (National Communications Agency—ENACOM). ENACOM placed the AFSCA under the Autoridad Federal de Tecnologías de la Información y las Comunicaciones (Federal Authority of Information Technologies and Communications—AFTIC)<sup>12</sup> and dissolved the Council of Audiovisual

Communication, with its indigenous representation. ENACOM's members are mostly appointed by the executive branch, and all are subject to removal by the president. Thus the bodies created by the Audiovisual Communication Services Law to ensure plural participation were eliminated.

The government then announced that a commission would start working on a draft of a communications law to replace the Audiovisual Communication Services and Digital Laws. In July 2016 ENACOM issued the principles that would govern this law, among them that "access to and participation in converged communications should be plural, diverse, and equal." These principles did not, however, include a regulatory body that was autonomous with regard to political and economic power. They established three types of providers: state-owned, private nonprofit, and private for-profit (Becerra, 2016). Nonstate subjects of the law, including indigenous peoples, were no longer mentioned, though they appeared in point 17 (ENACOM, 2016):

The Converged Communications environment will encourage the development of community media as a tool meant to facilitate information and communication for culturally or social unique populations, or that represent diverse collectives, and distant or inaccessible populations, giving them a voice of their own and promoting access to education, social development, and cultural and linguistic diversity; financing mechanisms for media in rural, border, and indigenous areas will also be encouraged.

This principle limited the meaning of "community media" and included indigenous people in that category, contravening indigenous demands while regressing toward a protectionist understanding of these peoples and community media. It asserted, almost oxymorically, that the goal was to provide them with "a voice of their own."

Other actions that affected indigenous peoples included that the body charged with determining communication policy no longer had an indigenous representative. Few new media licenses have been granted: only 12 indigenous groups had received one by the beginning of 2017.<sup>13</sup> FOMECA funds were restricted: the winners of the last 2015 call received no funds in 2016. In October 2016, after multiple demands from the indigenous and nonprofit media, it was announced that these debts would be paid, but by early 2017 the stations had not received funding. Support and funding for indigenous media by other state institutions were cut. Indigenous media are currently in an uncertain and vulnerable position.

La Voz Indígena, for example, lost its funding from the Ministry of Family Agriculture and the Ministry of Labor, and this threatened its survival. Every month members organized food fairs to pay the electrical bills. The situation worsened in December 2016 when some of their equipment was burned during a storm. Pachakuti and Runa Simi Kolla sustain themselves via team members' contributions, donations, and raffles. Advertising income is limited; these are small towns where merchants and clients are in close, direct contact. This income cannot cover costs such as equipment repairs. Runa Simi Kolla continues broadcasting without a radio transmitter because there is no money for repairs or to purchase a new one.

Securing funding is crucial to continuity: "We believe that the challenge is still having a physical space of our own, but as long as there are people in power who don't share our indigenous idea or project we will continue to be ignored. It won't be easy to obtain some things that are basically rights" (Pachakuti representative, Jujuy, August 2015). In spite of these difficulties, all three stations want to continue with their projects:

The idea is to rise up again with all our strength . . . and try to reach those people we see . . . irrigating their fields, herding with their radios; the idea is to continue to grow, in that sense, so the people can no longer live without the station. In a way, radio is the easiest and most economical medium for our communities, because there's no electricity and newspapers don't exist. (Runa Simi Kolla representative, Salta, August 2015)

I think communication is one of the most important branches of the indigenous movement given its power, its potential reach. I think we must continue strengthening our struggle through communication . . . seeking not only social transformation . . . [but] a transformation of people's minds and also of the state. (Pachakuti representative, Jujuy, August 2015)

The fight to ensure that the state fully assumes its obligation to support these broadcasters will continue. More than just representing historically silenced voices, they fulfill the vital information needs of the local populace. Therefore the state should maintain and expand the support it had begun to provide, ensuring that indigenous communities can exercise their right to communication.

## NOTES

1. By early 2017, 22 indigenous communities in these provinces had received authorizations.
2. This paper is part of a research project on indigenous media being carried out by the two authors at the National University of Córdoba and the University of Buenos Aires.
3. For an analysis of the media system's ownership structure in Argentina before the law, see Mastrini and Becerra (2009).
4. For a comparative analysis of normative transformations in indigenous communication rights in these countries, see Doyle (2015).
5. Rossi (2006) says that access and participation are notions coined during the mid-1970s in sociopolitical communications studies; researchers were seeking indicators that could be used to determine the degree of communication democratization within countries. UNESCO's 1977 meeting in Belgrade led to a report that established two categories of access: content choice and feedback. Participation, in turn, included three categories: involvement in message production, involvement in decision making, and contributions to the creation of mass media policies. After the passage of the law, communication policies aimed toward indigenous peoples were mainly focused on encouraging participation, and we will focus on this indicator here.
6. Information provided by the AFSCA.
7. The role of the council was to advise the AFSCA on communication policy. It was made up of one representative from each province; three representatives of entities involving private commercial lenders; three representatives of entities involving nonprofit lenders; one representative of national university stations; one representative of national universities offering communication degrees; one representative of public media in all areas and jurisdictions; three representatives of media workers' unions; one representative of rights management companies; and one representative of indigenous peoples.

8. This legal entity has been used by the state to guarantee other rights (e.g., access to land) and has always been controversial given that it contradicts constitutional recognition. The National Registry of Indigenous Communities has been criticized for delays or denials of licenses to communities seeking to acquire legal personhood (Gomiz, 2014).

9. We speak of “mediatized” public space because we understand that, even though public space has included all pertinent contemporary technologies since its inception, the mass media have become the leading architects of our media-driven societies (Caletti, 2000). They give voice and legitimacy to certain topics and speakers, changing traditional forms of intermediation and modifying processes of aggregation (Córdoba, 2013). In this regard, although the public space includes many areas and forms of organization, the mass media and information networks have achieved centrality as a point of reference and privileged scene of exchange.

10. We registered a variety of land-related conflicts between 2012 and 2014 in communities close to the station, and it played an important role in them. Reporters attended every communal meeting, every march, every police eviction.

11. For an analysis of diverse approaches to indigenous media experiences in Latin American communication studies, see Doyle (2013).

12. AFTIC was created in December 2014 as a consequence of the Law 27.078 on digital media.

13. Information obtained through the search for resolutions of authorizations to indigenous radio stations issued by ENACOM, available at <https://www.enacom.gov.ar/> (accessed March 20, 2017)

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