



Important: Facing the deplorable murder of Pablo Medina, a journalist for ABC Color of Paraguay, following a press release of the Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression of the IACHR of the OAS

Inter-American Commission on Human Rights

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Press Release

Press Release R122/14

Office of the Special Rapporteur Condemns Murder of Journalist in Paraguay

October 17, 2014

The Office of the Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) condemns the murder of Pablo Medina, journalist with *ABC Color*, which took place on October 16, near Villa Ygatimí, department of Canindeyú, Paraguay. The Office of the Special Rapporteur expresses its concern and urges the Paraguayan authorities to take urgent action to establish the motive of the crime and to active all the legal instruments available to identify and punish the perpetrators and masterminds behind this crime.

According to the information received, on the afternoon of October 16, Pablo Medina was in his car coming back from covering a story in the colony of Ko'ë Porã when he was ambushed by two strangers who shot at him several times. Two persons were accompanying the journalist. One of them was also shot and injured, and died a short time after. Medina was a correspondent with *ABC Color* in the Curuguaty area and reported on drug trafficking and irregularities allegedly committed by local authorities. According to Minister of Interior Francisco de Vargas, the journalist had suffered constant threats, on account of which he received sporadic police protection for certain assignments.

Paraguay's President Horacio Cartes expressed his repudiation of the crime and said he would use "all the weight of the law and of the legitimate strength of the State" to investigate and punish those responsible. The President also reiterated his respect for the work of journalists in the country. Secretary of State Eladio Loizaga also manifested his "highest" condemnation of the event. According to the information received, four persons were reportedly arrested for the murder of Pablo Medina until now.

With this crime, the number of journalists murdered in Paraguay in 2014 has risen to three. In none of these cases the relation to their work has been discarded. To the Office of the Special Rapporteur, it is fundamental that the State clarifies the motive behind this crime and urges the authorities to thoroughly investigate the hypothesis that the crime could have been associated with the journalist's work and punish the perpetrators and masterminds behind this crime.

Principle 9 of the IACHR [Declaration of Principles on Freedom of Expression](#) states: "[t]he murder, kidnapping, intimidation of and/or threats to social communicators, as well as the material destruction of communications media violate the fundamental rights of individuals and strongly restrict freedom of expression. It is the duty of the state to prevent and investigate such occurrences, to punish their perpetrators and to ensure that victims receive due compensation."

The Office of the Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression was created by the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) to encourage the defense of the right to freedom of thought and expression in the hemisphere, given the fundamental role this right plays in consolidating and developing the democratic system.