

IAB press release on the harassment against journalist and television channel in Bolivia

The International Association of Broadcasting – IAB – deplores and condemns the harassment and threats that have taken place in Bolivia against the journalist Marianela Montenegro, director and owner of Canal 33 of Cochabamba, which was raided twice.

In November of 2012, officers of the telecommunications supervisory organism in Bolivia (ATT) and police forcibly entered the facilities of the channel 33, citing alleged irregularities in the operation of the station, proceeding to the kidnapping of transmission equipment along with the warning to revoke the license to operate.

This action meant an attack against freedom of expression and the operation of a free and independent media, which has been characterized by a critical editorial of the government and by informing and reporting acts of corruption.

Marianela Montenegro continues to be harassed because of her work and has recently filed a formal complaint at the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights - IACHR.

Principle 9 of the Declaration on Freedom of Expression of the IACHR of the Organization of American States, provides:

“The murder, kidnapping, intimidation 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 the victims receive due compensation”.

IAB urges the authorities of Bolivia to cease all acts of persecution or reprisal against journalists and media and to comply with all the guarantees for the full exercise of freedom of expression.

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