

# Reporters Without Borders

<http://www.rsf.org/nicaragua-nuevo-diario-reporter-and-her-12-08-2011,40778.html>

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Americas - Nicaragua

Polarized climate

## Nuevo Diario reporter and her family threatened in polarized pre-election climate

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Reporters Without Borders voices its support for **Silvia González**, the national daily *El Nuevo Diario's* correspondent in the northern city of Jinotega, who gave a news conference on 5 August to denounce the repeated death threats to herself and her young children that she has received on her mobile phone.

Backed by various groups including the Permanent Commission for Human Rights (CPDH) and the Nicaraguan Centre for Human Rights (CENIDH), González said she is no longer able to work normally because of the climate of terror now hanging over her.

The Jinotega police recently arrested a 21-year-old man (said to be a government supporter) on suspicion of being the source of the threats against González. But she said she continues to fear for her safety and suspects that the police will not carry out a full investigation.

"The solidarity we express for González is due above all to the fact that she is a female reporter, working in isolation as a provincial correspondent and exposed to immediate physical danger," Reporters Without Borders said.

"She needs proper protection. We also think she is right to suspect that aspects of this case are not being explored because of the very sensitive nature of the story she was covering recently. The atmosphere prevailing in the run-up to the 6 November general elections is weighing heavily on *El Nuevo Diario*, whose staff received similar threats after covering cases of alleged corruption."

González thinks the “warnings” are linked to a series of articles she began writing in January about Gabriel José “Yajob” Garmendia, a former commander of the “Contra” guerrillas which the United States armed in the 1980s in order to combat the government established after the 1979 Sandinista revolution.

Garmendia, who had said was willing to take up arms again against Daniel Ortega’s current government, was murdered in February in still unclear circumstances. Other former “contras,” now linked to the opposition, have accused members of the army’s special forces of carrying out the murder. Both the armed forces and the authorities in charge of the investigation have strongly denied this.

*El Nuevo Diario* took care to report both versions. But the former contra’s family has accused the press of reporting only the official version and journalists from various media were physically attacked at Garmendia’s funeral.

“This situation does not bode well, especially as the election campaign has barely begun,” Reporters Without Borders added. “We urge media executives and editors of all tendencies to act responsibly and to take care not to expose their reporters and correspondents in the field.”

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