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Americas - Argentina

Narco threats

City in Salta rallies to defence of journalists threatened by drug traffickers

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Civil society, political and professional organizations and ordinary citizens plan to demonstrate in San Miguel de Nueva Orán (in the northern province of Salta) on 6 October in protest against the threats that two local journalists, **Gloria Seco** and **Claudio Ruiz** of *Radio Ciudad 99.5*, have received from local drug traffickers.

Reporters Without Borders welcomes the protection that the police are giving the journalists and their radio station and hopes that the investigation into the threats makes rapid progress.

"We praise the authorities for the way they have reacted to the danger to these two journalists," Reporters Without Borders said. "Organized crime in general and drug cartels in particular nowadays represent the leading source of physical danger to journalists. The need for police protection was imperative and urgent. It must remain in place as long as the case has not been solved.

"It is not just the threat to the two journalists that is at stake in this investigation. There is a need for political and judicial will to show that the danger from drug traffickers is not inevitable. It is with this in mind that we add our voice to those of the citizens of San Miguel de Nueva Orán."

"Everyone here knows that there are narcos who go to prison, stay there for a week and then leave as if nothing had happened," Seco told Reporters Without Borders. She and Ruiz together host the programme "Arriba todo el mundo" (Stand up everyone), which is broadcast every weekday morning on *Radio Ciudad*.

As the Argentine Journalist Forum (FOPEA) reported, Seco and Ruiz invited local federal judge Raúl Reinoso to their studio on 27 September to be interviewed about drug trafficking in San Miguel de Nueva Orán. When the judge invited them to name someone involved, they gave him the name of a drug trafficker who is well known locally.

"We gave him this narco's name but it is nothing new," Seco told Reporters Without Borders. "There are around 180 places in Orán where drugs are sold." Just a few minutes after the end of the interview with the judge, someone phoned the station threatening to kill the two journalists.

Three days earlier, an unidentified person went to the home of a friend of Seco to warn that shots would be fired at Seco's home that night. "The guy said he would send a pickup to my house to machine-gun it and that is what happened, except that they did not shoot because the door was guarded," Seco said, explaining that she had immediately reported the threat to the police. The homes of both Seco and Ruiz and the radio station are now under protective police surveillance.

Generally speaking, Argentina is one of Latin America's safest countries for journalists but no country is spared by organized crime and no kind of media, local or national, should think it is safe from this threat, as Reporters Without Borders confirmed during a recent [visit to Paraguay and northern Argentina](#).

Also read the Reporters Without Borders report on organized crime: ["Muscling in on the](#)

[media](#)".
