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<http://www.rsf.org/brazil-police-think-they-have-solved-04-02-2013,44018.html>

Americas - Brazil

Murder arrests

Police think they have solved sports reporter's murder

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Reporters Without Borders notes that Mauricio Sampaio, the former deputy chairman of the Atlético-Goiás football club, was arrested during the weekend on suspicion of hiring a hit man to murder sports journalist [Valério Luiz de Oliveira](#) in Goiânia, the capital of the central state Goiás, last July.

A reporter for *Radio Jornal 820 AM*, Luiz was one of a total of five journalists who were killed in connection with their work last year in Brazil. Aged 49, he was gunned down outside the station on 5 July.

"Sampaio's arrest seems to support that theory that Luiz was killed as a reprisal for criticizing the Atlético-Goiás management on the air," Reporters Without Borders said. "While respecting the presumption of innocence, we welcome the progress in the police investigation.

"The grave security problems to which Brazilian journalists are exposed, especially at the local level, had an impact on Brazil's ranking in the latest Reporters Without Borders [press freedom index](#). But the efforts it often makes to combat impunity distinguish it from other countries in the region."

Sampaio was arrested at his home on 2 February, a day after the arrest of three other men on suspicion of involvement in the murder. One was Marcos "Marquinhos" Vinicius, a butcher by trade, who immediately confessed to being the perpetrator, police said. The other two – a military policeman and a friend and business partner of Luiz – allegedly paid Vinicius 200,000 réais (74,000 euros) to do it.

Sampaio, who is due to give a statement to the judicial authorities today, has so far denied any role in Luiz' murder. Luis was very critical of Sampaio and both he and other members of the radio station's staff had been banned from visiting the football club.

Read the Reporters Without Borders report on Brazil, entitled ["The country of 30 Berlusconis"](#).
