

Reporters Without Borders

<http://www.rsf.org/peru-disturbing-signal-seen-in-third-16-09-2011,41013.html>

Americas - Peru

Gunned down

Disturbing signal seen in third murder of a journalist this year

16 September 2011

José Oquendo Reyes, an investigative TV reporter who covered local corruption, was gunned down as he was about to enter his home in Chincha, in the southern region of Ica, on 14 September, becoming the second Peruvian TV journalist to be murdered in the space of a week.

The producer and host of the programme "Without Borders" on *BTV Canal 45*, Oquendo was shot five times at close range by a man on a motorcycle with two other men. His son rushed him to a hospital but he was dead on arrival.

Local TV station programme director **Pedro Alfonso Flores Silva** was gunned down in a similar fashion near his home in the northwestern city of Casma on 7 September.

"Oquendo's murder brings the number of journalists murdered this year in Peru to three," Reporters Without Borders said. "Although the motive has yet to be established, it is clearly a very disturbing signal for investigative journalists who dare to report cases of corruption or stand up to local officials. Oquendo had the courage to do this, like Pedro Flores and **Julio Castillo Narváez**.

"The investigations into the murders of Flores and Castillo have yet to produce any significant results. We hope the Oquendo murder investigation will have more success."

In his programme, Oquendo reportedly criticised Chincha municipal contracts and financial irregularities involving mayor Lucio Juárez Ochoa. His widow, Marina Juárez, said he had not received any threats. According to the Lima-based Press and Society Institute (IPYS), Chincha police chief José Taysaco de la Cruz has announced the arrest of a suspect.

Combating impunity for the murders of journalists is essential for the future of journalism and the news media in Peru, as is the decriminalization of media offences.

In this respect, Reporters Without Borders joins Peru's media freedom organizations in calling for the immediate release of **Paul Garay Ramírez**, a programme producer for Visión 47 TV and a correspondent for Radio La Exitosa, who is serving an 18-month jail sentence on a charge of defaming a judge.
