

# Reporters Without Borders

<http://www.rsf.org/paraguay-journalist-edgar-fernandez-fleitas-25-06-2014,46533.html>

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Americas - Paraguay

Chain of killings

## Journalist Edgar Fernández Fleitas gunned down

25 June 2014

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**The murder of journalist Edgar Pantaleón Fernández Fleitas, the second such killing in one month, shows the mortal dangers facing reporters who investigate corruption and organized crime.**

On 9 June, an unidentified killer shot **Fernández Fleitas** in his office in Concepción, a city known as a drug trafficking hub. His murder followed that of **Fausto Gabriel Alcaraz**, who also worked in the area near the Brazilian border.

Local prosecutor Dora Irrazábal told radio *Cardinal AM* that the murder of Fernández Fleitas seemed linked to his journalism rather than to his work as a lawyer. Interior Minister Francisco de Vargas announced that a suspect was arrested on 21 June. But the motive has not been determined.

Fernández Fleitas presented a daily program, "Ciudad de la Furia" (City of Fury) on *Radio Belén Comunicaciones*, a community station, in which he openly criticized local judicial officials and pointed to their involvement in corruption linked to drug trafficking organizations. His radio work led to threats that had been reported by the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights.

"We demand that Interior Minister de Vargas fully acknowledge the alarming situation confronting journalists in the Concepción region, so as not to exclude a motive related to their work," said Camille Soulier, head of the Reporters Without Borders Americas desk.

"Reporters Without Borders also urges the Paraguayan government to establish protective measures for journalists who report on organized crime and corruption, in some cases at risk to their lives," Soulier added.

On 19 May, journalist **Fausto Gabriel Alcaraz** of radio station *Amambay* () was also gunned down by an anonymous killer. His murder occurred in Amambay department.

Over the past two years, four journalists have been slain in the Brazilian border region, where public officials and organized crime are often co-conspirators. In July 2011, Reporters Without Borders conducted a mission to Paraguay that led to a [report on the isolation and defencelessness of journalists facing this reality](#).

Paraguay is ranked 105th of 180 countries in the [2014 Reporters Without Borders world press freedom index](#).

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