

Reporters Without Borders

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Americas - Argentina

Abuse of authority

Government urged to hold gendarmes to account for detaining and beating photographer

6 January 2014

Reporters Without Borders calls on the ministry of justice and human rights to investigate freelance photographer **Brian Palacio**'s detention by members of the gendarmerie on 30 December in Buenos Aires, during which he was beaten and threatened.

"The [many abuses](#) by the security forces during 2013 cannot continue," Reporters Without Borders said. "The National Gendarmerie has repeatedly been criticized for its methods and must be held to account for this latest case of mistreatment. The justice ministry must signal its determination to end impunity."

Palacio, 25, was covering protests against the ongoing power cuts in the capital and its suburbs, which often give rise to acts of violence and vandalism. He had just photographed an arrest when gendarmes grabbed him, bundled him into one of their trucks and drove him to a vacant lot, where they beat him for two hours.

He told Reporters Without Borders that the gendarmes threatened him with reprisals, including rape and torture, if he filed a complaint. The equipment they took from him was not returned.

Journalists and media that dare to cover [abuses](#) by the security forces are unfortunately often the targets of violence and persecution. The same goes for those who challenge local government officials.

Omar Reinoso, the manager of *Radio Belgrano* in San Luis province, has been getting threats for the past month from former senator Alberto Leyes and his son, Fernando Leyes. *Radio Belgrano* was the target of break-ins on 22 and 25 December during which broadcasting equipment and many files were taken. The station was previously the target of an arson attack in August 2012.

Photo: Clarín
