

Reporters Without Borders

<http://www.rsf.org/colombia-head-of-community-radio-shot-dead-16-03-2012,42136.html>

Americas - Colombia

Killed in cold blood

Head of community radio shot dead in region gripped by drug gangs

16 March 2012

Community broadcaster **Argemiro Cárdenas Agudelo** was shot dead in cold blood by a hired killer on a motorcycle yesterday in Dosquebradas, in Risaralda department. A politician and former mayor of the town, he was also director and manager of the community radio station *Metro Radio Estéreo* and for the past 14 years had also contributed to other stations. Since 2010, he had been running *Red Radial Cafetera* radio and was affiliated to the World Association of Community Radio Broadcasters (AMARC).

"We join AMARC and professional bodies in Colombia in paying tribute to Argemiro Cárdenas Agudelo and calling for a thorough investigation into his murder," Reporters Without Borders said.

"One again we call on those conducting the investigation not to be too quick to rule out the possibility that he was killed because of his work, as is often the case in this type of crime. Managing a community radio station is, by definition, a huge risk in a region like Risaralda, where drug traffickers and the feared 'Cordillera' armed gang hold sway.

"The shadow of these predators of free expression hangs over the most recent cases of journalists [murdered or forced into exile](#)."

Local journalists say Cardenas, who was about to retire, had not recently been the target of threats. He campaigned on behalf of local communities, sometimes on the air, against the political establishment, but he did not tackle subjects regarded as risky.

As far as a motive is concerned, the police favour the theory that it was a long-standing financial dispute or an attempt to extort cash allegedly earned from the sale of a radio station. While acknowledging these are possibilities, Reporters Without Borders should like to know on what the evidence they are based.

Colombia remains one of the western hemisphere's most dangerous countries for journalists, ranked 143rd of 179 countries in the latest world press freedom index published by Reporters Without Borders, and for several years has had the [largest number living in exile](#), both abroad and internally.
