

# Reporters Without Borders

<http://www.rsf.org/honduras-broadcaster-banned-again-from-01-10-2014,47043.html>

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Americas - Honduras

Judicial persecution

## Broadcaster banned again from working as journalist

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**Honduran opposition broadcaster Julio Ernesto Alvarado is again subject to a 16-month ban on working as a journalist. After originally taking effect in February as part of a sentence for a criminal defamation, the ban was suspended in April but an appeal court reimposed it on 24 September.**

It stems from a case by Belinda Flores, the former economics faculty dean at the Autonomous University of Honduras, who accused Alvarado, a programme host with *Radio and TV Globo*, of defaming her because he reported the charges that the supreme court had brought against her.

A lower court imposed the 16th-month ban on working as a journalist in December 2013 at the same time as it sentenced Alvarado to 16 months in prison. The court of cassation upheld both sentences in February.

[The jail term was commuted to a fine](#) in March and then the ban on working was lifted by a Tegucigalpa court (the Juzgado de Ejecución Sección Judicial) on 3 April.

*"We regard the decision to reimpose the ban on Alvarado as unacceptable and we call for this entire criminal defamation conviction to be overturned,"* said Reporters Without Borders deputy programme director Virginie Dangles.

*"Banning someone from working as a journalist is tantamount to censorship. The Honduran justice system should defend freedom of information and should ensure that the country's defamation laws are not turned into a tool for silencing opposition journalists."*

The case is one of many acts of intimidation against Alvarado, who reported being followed by suspicious vehicles when he left his home on 26 and 27 September. He suspended his Radio Globo programme "Medianoche" in 2013 after getting constant threats for more than a year. The [target of disturbing surveillance](#) measures since 2012, he is a frequent critic of the Honduran government and armed forces.

Reporters Without Borders [recently accused the government](#) of clearly trying to gag critical media

The *Radio and TV Globo* group has been one of the most popular opposition news organizations since the 2009 coup. Its CEO, **David Romero Ellner**, was himself charged with criminal defamation in August and is facing a possible 15-year jail sentence.

Ranked 129th out of 180 countries in the 2014 Reporters Without Borders [press freedom index](#), Honduras has seen a sharp increase in recent years in threats, attacks and murders targeting journalists, and is currently the western hemisphere's [fourth deadliest country for media personnel](#).

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