

Reporters Without Borders

<http://www.rsf.org/mexico-woman-newspaper-editor-beheaded-in-26-09-2011,41057.html>

Americas - Mexico

Atrocities without end

Woman newspaper editor beheaded in Nuevo Laredo, young reporter missing in Veracruz

26 September 2011

The decapitated body of **María Elizabeth Macías**, the editor of *Primera Hora*, a daily based in Nuevo Laredo (in the eastern state of Tamaulipas), was found on 24 September. Aged 39, she was the fourth woman journalist to be murdered in Mexico since the start of the year.

The previous three women victims were former *Televisa* reporter **Rocio González Trápaga** and **Ana María Marcela Yarce Viveros**, the editor of the weekly magazine *Contralínea*, who were killed together in the capital on 31 August, and columnist **Yolanda Ordaz de la Cruz** of the regional daily *Notiver*, who was slain in the eastern state of Veracruz on 26 July.

"The grim landmark of 80 journalists killed in the past decade has just been reached, with the murders getting steadily more horrific as the years pass," Reporters Without Borders said. "There seems to be no way out of this horror. The country is immersed in an all-out war and just writing the word 'narcos' or 'trafficking' can cost you your life. What will be left of freedom of information while the barbarity continues?"

"This collapse of a nation will not be resolved by the next elections. The international community must insist that the Mexican authorities give a regular accounting of the fight against impunity and the US federal government must impose drastic arms controls, without which the tragedy in Mexico will inevitably continue."

According to various sources, Macías used online social networks to report about organized crime activities in her region and blogged under the pseudonym of "La Nena de Nuevo Laredo." The Tamaulipas state attorney-general's office said two computer keys, a music player, several cables and the following message were found near her body:

"Ok Nuevo Laredo live on the social networks, I am La Nena de Laredo and I am here because of my reports and yours ... for those who don't want to believe it, this has happened to me because of my actions, because I trusted SEDENA and MARINA... Thank you for your attention. Att: La Nena de Laredo... zzz"

This type of warning was already used against social networks users who dare to talk about drug trafficking. Two bodies bearing the marks of torture were hung from a bridge in Nuevo Laredo on 13 September with messages to the contributors to the "Al rojo vivo" and "Blog del Narco" websites.

Disappearance and exile

Manuel Gabriel Fonseca Hernández, a journalist who covers crime for *El Mañanero de Acayucan*, a newspaper in the south of Veracruz state, and who also writes for *El Diario de Acayucan*, *Tribuna del Sur* and *La Verdad*, has meanwhile been missing since 19 September. His family says that, on day he disappeared, he went out to conduct interviews for a story he was doing for his main newspaper.

A new epicentre of terror since the start of 2011, Veracruz has just had another week of

violence and intimidation of journalists. The discovery of bodies often leads to threats against the journalists covering the story. Three journalists – **Jorge Flores** of *W Radio*, **Juan Carlos Alarcón** of *MVS Noticias* and **Arturo Moreno** of the news agency *Notimex* – were detained at gunpoint by members of the Veracruz Investigative Agency (AVI) outside the Boca del Río forensic department's headquarters and were forced to delete the photos they had taken. The state government was unable to explain this abuse of authority.

Rafael Pineda, a well-known cartoonist known as *Rapé*, meanwhile reported on Twitter on 22 September that he was leaving Veracruz state for safety reasons. Around 15 other journalists have fled to other states or fled the country in the past two months. Pineda draws cartoons for the magazines *El Chamucho* and *Zócalo*, the newspaper *Milenio* and the "[¡Basta de Sangre!](#)" - "[No + sangre](#)" campaign.

An estimated 50,000 people have been killed in the federal offensive against drug trafficking that was launched in December 2006. It has become virtually impossible to work as a journalist but the federal authorities continue to delay implementation of an [agreement for protecting journalists](#) that was signed a year ago.

Cartoon: Rapé
