

# Reporters Without Borders

<http://www.rsf.org/colombia-two-colombian-journalists-murdered-05-03-2015,47650.html>

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Americas - Colombia

Murders

## Two Colombian journalists murdered in past three weeks

5 March 2015

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Reporters Without Borders condemns the murders of two journalists in Colombia in the past three weeks and reiterates its concern about the climate of impunity for crimes of violence against media personnel.

The two victims were radio reporter Edgar Quintero, who was killed on 2 March in Palmira, in the southwestern department of Valle del Cauca, and Luis Peralta, the owner of a radio station in El Doncello, in the southern department of Caquetá, who became the first journalist to be murdered this year in Colombia on 14 February.

Quintero was gunned down near Radio Luna, the local radio station where he worked. The Colombian Federation of Journalists (FECOLPER) said that, [ten years ago](#), he had reported being threatened by Palmira's then mayor after covering alleged corruption. Radio Luna director María Consuelo Luna told local media he had never stopped being outspoken.

Peralta, who was murdered in his home in El Doncello, owned and ran Linda Stéreo, a local radio station in which he hosted his own broadcasts and often covered alleged cases of corruption. He had been the target of threats. A suspect was arrested yesterday but was released because of procedural irregularities.

Reporters Without Borders is concerned for the safety of his colleague, **Geovanny Canacué**, who has reported that, a week before his murder, Peralta told him he had been threatened.

Canacué has himself been the target of frequent intimidation attempts in the past six years and had to relocate several times as a security measure. The National Protection Unit (UNP) and the prosecutor's office (Fiscalía) should take charge of his protection without delay.

*"We urge the authorities to conduct exhaustive, independent and impartial investigations into these two murders and to not rule out the possibility that they were connected to the victims' journalistic activities,"* said Claire San Filippo, the head of the Reporters Without Borders America's desk.

*"These two murders have again highlighted the dangers to which journalists are exposed in Colombia. As result of the generalized impunity, journalists work in fear and the families of victims are unable to obtain justice. This must stop, and those responsible for these crimes must be held accountable."*

According to the figures available to Reporters Without Borders, a total of 27 journalists were murdered from 1980 to 2012 in the department of Valle del Cauca and nine were murdered in the department of Caquetá.

Reporters Without Borders has condemned other acts of violence in Valle del Cauca, including [the attempted murder](#) in November 2013 of **Diego Gómez Valverde**, the head of Canal Universitario, the University of Valle de Cali's TV station, and the threats that forced newspaper reporter Yesid Toro to flee the region the same year.

Last September, Los Urabeños, a paramilitary military group that is on the Reporters Without Borders list of "Predators of press freedom," threatened eight journalists with various media in Cali and Buenaventura, another city in the department of Valle del Cauca.

The journalists were named in a message that was sent to them on [28 September](#), four days after two other journalists were threatened in a similar manner by the criminal gang known as Los Rastrojos.

Los [Urabeños](#) have a presence in 337 municipalities on the Caribbean coast and the centre of the country, and especially in the cities of Cali and Medellín.

Journalism has long been a dangerous profession in Colombia, the western hemisphere's [second deadliest country](#) for media personnel. On 9 February, celebrated as [Day of the Journalist](#) in Colombia, Reporters Without Borders asked the country's journalists what their most precious gift would be. The unanimous reply was physical safety and an end to impunity.

Colombia is ranked 128th out of 180 countries in the latest [Reporters Without Borders press freedom index](#), which was published last month.

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