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Americas - Guatemala

Murder attempt

Shooting attack on local TV news anchor

20 February 2014

Reporters Without Borders condemns the shooting attack on local TV news anchor **Nery Morales** in Mazatenango, in the southwestern department of Suchitepéquez, on 18 February.

The host of the *Noticias y más* news programme on local TV station *Óptimo 23*, Morales was driving home when two unidentified individuals on a motorcycle opened fire on his car. The police came to his aid after he drove to a nearby fire station. He is now in a safe location where he is receiving police protection.

"We call on the Guatemalan authorities to quickly investigate this murder attempt in order to find those responsible and bring them to justice," said Camille Soulier, the head of the Reporters Without Borders Americas desk.

"In view of the alarming level of violence against media personnel in Guatemala, we also urge the authorities not to immediately rule out the possibility that this shooting was linked to the victim's work as a journalist."

Guatemala was ranked 125th out of 180 countries in the [2014 Reporters Without Borders press freedom index](#) after a particular heavy media death toll in 2013, when a total of five journalists were gunned down on the street.

The victims were [Jaime Jarquín](#), [Luis Alberto Lemus Ruano](#), [Luis de Jesús Lima](#), [Carlos Alberto Orellana Chávez](#) and [Viltor García](#). All of these murders are still unpunished but, in most cases, the investigations were quickly shelved.

One of the victims, Orellana, was a presenter on the same programme as Morales. He was gunned down in Mazatenango on 19 August 2013.

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