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<http://www.rsf.org/guatemala-two-reporters-gunned-down-in-11-03-2015,47678.html>

Americas - Guatemala

Double murder

Two reporters gunned down in Mazatenango

11 March 2015

Reporters Without Borders condemns yesterday's murder of two local reporters in the centre of Mazatenango, capital of the southwestern department Suchitepéquez, and voices deep concern about the dangers for journalists in Guatemala.

Prensa Libre correspondent **Danilo López** and *Radio Nuevo Mundo* correspondent **Federico Salazar** were gunned down by two men on a motorcycle, who also shot and wounded a third local journalist, **Marvin Túnchez**. The Suchitepéquez press association said they were shot just "20 metres from a police station."

López had been threatened by several local officials in connection with his critical coverage of a range of issues including mismanagement of public resources.

Prensa Libre editor Miguel Angel Méndez Zetina said López had filed a complaint against the mayor of San Lorenzo, one of the department's municipalities, accusing him of making death threats. *Radio Nuevo Mundo* director Marvin Robledo said he was not aware of any threats against Salazar.

"We urge the authorities to conduct an independent, exhaustive and impartial investigation into this double murder with the aim of bringing the culprits to justice," said Claire San Filippo, the head of the Reporters Without Borders Americas desk.

"We are deeply concerned about the fate of media personnel in Guatemala. Since announcing a protection programme for journalists last November, the government has not provided any information about its policies and the situation is far from improving."

San Filippo added: "The authorities must urgently adopt effective protective measures to guarantee the physical safety of journalists and prevent any further tragedies in 2015, which is likely to be particularly hazardous for media personnel because it is an election year."

Guatemala continues to be very dangerous for journalists and Suchitepéquez is one of the regions where the most incidents have been reported in recent years. TV presenter [Nery Morales](#) narrowly escaped a shooting attack in February 2014, while radio reporter Fredy Rodas was badly injured and TV presenter [Carlos Alberto Orellana](#) was killed in shootings a week apart in August 2013.

[Abuses against media personnel](#) – including harassment, threats, intimidation, physical attacks and murder – increased in 2014 in a climate of almost complete impunity that fosters self-censorship.

Many journalists restrict their coverage of sensitive subjects such as organized crime and the bribing of government officials for fear of violent reprisals. The fact that they are often targeted by police and judicial officials – the very people who are supposed to be protecting them – makes them feel all the more vulnerable.

Guatemala [is ranked 129th out of 180 countries in the 2015 Reporters Without Borders press freedom index](#).
