

Reporters Without Borders

<http://www.rsf.org/colombie-paramilitaries-threaten-11-06-04-2011,39966.html>

Americas - Colombia

Hate targets

Paramilitaries threaten 11 journalists and 11 indigenous radio stations – vice-president asked to intercede

6 April 2011

Peasant, trade union and indigenous groups and affiliated news media are designated as “permanent military targets” in three leaflets apparently issued by paramilitary groups – the Black Eagles, “Rastrojos” and United Self-Defence Forces of Colombia (AUC) – that have been circulating in the southwestern city of Popayán and the surrounding Cauca region since late February.

The latest leaflet, dated late March and signed by the AUC’s central column, names 11 journalists. The targets also include the 11 community radio stations that are affiliated to the Cauca Regional Indigenous Council (CRIC), which representatives of the World Association of Community Radio Broadcasters (AMARC) and Reporters Without Borders visited in May 2010.

“We are not all dead or in prison or extradited,” the authors of one of the leaflets say, going on to promise “offensive and repressive military actions” against the people and organizations named in the leaflet. CRIC spokesman **Yamir Adolfo Conejo**, one of those threatened, told Reporters Without Borders that CRIC’s member organizations have requested a meeting with Vice-President Angelino Garzón to discuss the threats, but have not yet received a reply.

“The highest level of government should respond to the request from the victims in this extremely urgent situation,” Reporters Without Borders said. “These [intimidation and terror campaigns](#), especially against journalists and community and national media, have been coming at a furious pace. We publicly urge Vice-President Angelino Garzón to agree to the meeting requested by the CRIC and to order appropriate protective measures. The safety of the population of Cauca, a region at the heart of the armed conflict that continues to rack Colombia, is at stake.”

The press freedom organization added: “These latest threats unfortunately confirm what we told the representatives of the various indigenous communities about a new expansion of paramilitary activity in the region and the terrible consequences. The authorities have been slow to react to the danger. It is no longer possible to escape the fact that the so-called [demobilization](#) of the paramilitaries from 2003 to 2006 was a failure.”

According to the CRIC, 18 members of the indigenous communities have been assassinated in the Cauca region since the start of the year. Three of them have been victims of [“false positive”](#) killings– killings in which the victim is falsely portrayed as having belonged to a guerrilla organization.

The last leaflet – a copy of which has been obtained by Reporters Without Borders – names both local journalists and journalists from outside the region who had relayed the CRIC’s appeal for help. They are **Silvio Sierra**, **Fredy Calvache**, **Antonio Palechor**, **Ricardo Mottato**, **Eli Alegría**, **Gustavo Molina**, **Carlos Pito**, **Gustavo Alzate**, **José Fernando Conejo**, **Carlos Andrés Gómez** and **Dario Patiño**.

These are the 11 radio stations that are affiliated to the CRIC (media, people and locality):

1. *Guambía Estéreo*, Misak people, locality of Silvia

2. *Uswal Nasa Yuwe*, Nasa, Caldono
 3. *Nuestra Voz Estéreo*, Nasa, Morales
 4. *Renacer Kokonuco*, Kokonuco, Puracé
 5. *Radio Nasa de Tierradentro*, Nasa, Belalcazar
 6. *Aires del Pueblo Yanacona*, Yanacona, Almaguer
 7. *Radio Payumat*, Nasa, Santander
 8. *Radio Libertad*, Totoró, Totoró
 9. *Voces de Nuestra Tierra*, Nasa, Jambalo
 10. *Nasa Estéreo*, Nasa, Toribio
 11. *Radio Inzá*, Nasa, Inzá
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