

URGENT ACTION

NICARAGUAN JOURNALIST'S LIFE AT RISK

Luis Galeano, a Nicaraguan journalist with the newspaper El Nuevo Diario, has received death threats by letter and phone from unknown individuals. Luis Galeano's life is at risk.

On 19 February an unknown individual called Luis Galeano on his mobile phone and said "You have 72 hours to change your mind about what you'll publish, otherwise your family won't see you anymore" ([...] "Tenés 72 horas para arrepentirte de lo que vas a publicar, de lo contrario no te va a ver más tu familia"). The caller alluded to an investigation that Galeano and a colleague had carried in recent days into a corruption case. The case deals with allegations of misuse of funds, estimated at around US\$20m, by officials in the Supreme Electoral Council ("Consejo Supremo Electoral") between 2004-2008.

Their article was published by El Nuevo Diario on 21 February.

A few hours prior to the call, Luis Galeano had received a message left for him by an unknown man at the reception desk of the El Nuevo Diario office where he works. The message contained a reference to his research on the corruption case and warned Luis Galeano not to publish the article. The message ended by saying "What you're trying to do is to compromise the Supreme Electoral Council, given that on 1 March [political] alliances will be registered [...] We're not joking" ("Lo que Uds. Pretenden es perjudicar al CSE, ya que el 1o de marzo es la inscripción de alianzas [...] No estamos jugando") followed by the slogan "Free country or death" ("Patria Libre o Morir").

Reports of intimidation of media workers in Nicaragua have increased in recent months in the context of a heated political debate in the run up to the presidential elections scheduled for November 2011.

PLEASE WRITE IMMEDIATELY in Spanish or your own language:

- Calling for an independent, thorough and impartial investigation by authorities into the threats against Luis Galeano, with the results made public and those responsible brought to justice;
- Urging that the authorities take immediate steps to provide appropriate protection to the Luis Galeano, according to his wishes;

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 6 APRIL 2011 TO:

Attorney General

Dr. Julio Centeno Gómez
Fiscal General de la República de
Nicaragua
Ministerio Público
Km 4, Carretera Masaya
Contiguo al Bancentro
Managua, Nicaragua
Fax: +505 2255 6832

**Salutation: Dear Attorney General/
Estimado Sr. Fisca**

Head of National Police
Primera Comisionada Aminta
Granera Sacasa
Directora de la Policía Nacional
Edificio Faustino Ruiz
Managua, NICARAGUA
Fax: +505 2277 1871
**Salutation: Dear Commissioner/
Estimada Comisionada**

And copies to:

CENIDH
De la Texaco de Montoya 1 ½ c.
al sur,
Managua,
Nicaragua

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country. Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date.

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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Amnesty International has previously raised concerns about the issue of freedom of expression and association in Nicaragua. In the Amnesty International Report 2010, Amnesty International documented a series of incidents involving attacks on journalists, government critics and civil society activists. In November 2009, pro-government supporters in Managua, the capital, attacked a group of protesters demonstrating against corruption and curbs on freedom of expressions. The pro-government supporters threw stones against the demonstrators and they broke the door of a police station where the protesters had taken refuge. See Nicaragua entry in "Amnesty International Report 2010 – The State of the World Human Rights" (AI Index POL 10/001/2010).

According to news reports, on 11 February a correspondent for El Nuevo Diario in Masaya was intimidated after having published an article involving a relative of the head of the local police.

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