



IAB PRESS RELEASE ON THE DISAPPEARANCE OF JOURNALISTS IN COLOMBIA

The International Association of Broadcasting - IAB – expresses its deepest concern and rejection at the disappearance of the journalist Diego D’Pazos, the cameraman Carlos Melo and the journalist Salud Hernandez Mora, the first two since last May 23 and the latter, since May 21, occurred in Filogringo, Colombia.

D’Pazos and Melo, from RCN channel, went to the area of Catatumbo, in northeastern Colombia, to cover and inform about the disappearance of Hernandez Mora, a reporter for the Spanish newspaper El Mundo.

Since Monday 23, the authorities have had no new accurate information on the fate of journalists. The news suggest they have been kidnapped by guerrilla groups.

Furthermore, in the same area, a team of journalists of Caracol Television was stripped of their working materials such as cameras and cell phones and interrogated, but eventually they were released.

As stated in the Declaration of Principles on Freedom of Expression of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights; "The murder, kidnapping, intimidation of and/or threats to social communicators, as well as the material destruction of communications media violate the fundamental rights of individuals and strongly restrict freedom of expression. It is the duty of the state to prevent and investigate such occurrences, to punish their perpetrators and to ensure that victims receive due compensation. "

IAB calls on the Colombian authorities to devote every available resource and take all the necessary measures to quickly find the missing journalists, while condemning this very serious attack on Freedom of Expression in Colombia.

The International Association of Broadcasting - IAB is an organization founded in 1946 that represents over 17.000 private radio and television stations and its goal is the defense of private and free broadcasting as well as the effectiveness of Freedom of Expression and Opinion.