

WHAT WOULD IT BE LIKE IF YOU WERE A JOURNALIST... HERE

With the exception of Cuba, the hemisphere is a relatively free place to be a journalist compared to much of the rest of the world. But that doesn't mean it's safe or easy, or that it's getting any easier. Below is a catalogue of the abuses, risks and challenges that journalists and media faced in the Americas and in selected countries outside the region last year.

CATEGORIES OF ABUSES AND THREATS

	MURDER
	IMPRISONMENT
	VIOLENCE
	EXILE
	IMPUNITY FOR ANTI-PRESS ATTACKS
	RESTRICTIVE LAWS
	CENSORSHIP
	LACK OF MEDIA PLURALISM
	LEGAL HARASSMENT (INCLUDING CHARGES OF DEFAMATION)
	POLITICAL POLARIZATION

ARGENTINA



Polarization between the government and media owners has led to restrictive laws that may threaten your ability to do your job. And if your newspaper or TV station criticizes the government, don't expect much state advertising.



José Luis Cabezas, photojournalist, murdered in 1997 (undated file photo).

BRAZIL



Be careful. Rates of violence are increasing and not only is there a growing risk of being killed (four journalists were killed in 2012, three the year before), your case is unlikely to be solved. Judicial censorship—often at the request of businesses and public officials—may undermine your ability to do your job, especially when it comes to investigating corruption.



TV journalist Tim Lopes, missing since 2002 following an investigative report on drug trafficking in Rio slums. Police believe he was tortured and killed.

CHILE



There's not a lot of media plurality in Chile, so who you work for is limited. And if you're a community broadcaster in the country's Mapuche area, you run the risk of legal harassment by the government.

CHINA



You have ended up in one of the toughest places to do your job. Here, violence and even murder aren't your risks; it's imprisonment. Last year, 32 of your colleagues were jailed. And censorship of the media and the Internet remain.



Web journalist Zhu Ruifeng, fired in 2012 after exposing sex tapes of top officials.

COLOMBIA



As a journalist here, you confront both the country's violent past and impunity. Physical attacks continue (though they have decreased) and one journalist was murdered in 2012. In total, eight cases of murder remain unsolved.



Radio journalist Julio Palacios Sánchez, host of the popular Radio Lema program in the northeastern city of Cúcuta, gunned down by two unidentified men on January 11, 2005. Palacios had escaped a similar attack nine years earlier, when a grenade hurled into his office failed to explode.

CUBA



Welcome to the most repressive country in the hemisphere for journalists, where non-state media are forbidden. Last year, one of your colleagues was jailed, and a number of independent journalists and bloggers were harassed, detained and beaten. In the past five years, 19 of your colleagues fled the island.



Yoani Sánchez, Cuba's best known blogger, is regularly detained by government agents.

ECUADOR



You'll need to watch what you write or say. Political polarization and a flurry of legal changes have created new restrictions and threaten you with a lawsuit or court action if you're judged to be defaming public officials.

EL SALVADOR



Government efforts to combat crime have made your job a little safer. But if you're going to investigate the government, you will have a difficult time getting information.



French-Spanish photojournalist Christian Poveda, who covered the country's civil war, killed on September 2, 2009, in El Salvador.

HONDURAS



The controls on the media and polarization from the 2009 coup remain. Opposition media and community radio stations are harassed by the government. Last year, two of your colleagues were killed. This year, in a particularly grisly act, one journalist was kidnapped, burned and dismembered.

INDIA



Violence against journalists has increased in India. One journalist was killed last year and three imprisoned. Meanwhile, the government is tightening censorship of the Internet.



Investigative journalist Jiyotendra Dey, who reported on Mumbai's crime underworld, shot to death by four assailants on June 11, 2011.



Pictures of assassinated journalists held aloft at a protest in front of the the National Congress in Tegucigalpa in 2010.

IRAQ



Your security here will be what matters most. Last year, three journalists were killed in connection with their work, seven the year before. And don't hope for much justice for you or your colleagues if there is an attack or you're murdered. There are 93 unsolved journalist murders in Iraq.

Reuters freelancer Sabah al-Bazee, killed during an attack on a local government building in Tikrit, March 29, 2011.



MEXICO



Narcotics trafficking and the government's war on organized crime have made Mexico the most violent place in the hemisphere for journalists. Here, you need to watch out for the state as well as criminal syndicates, who threaten and kill investigative journalists with impunity. Last year, six of your colleagues were killed, and 15 journalist murders are still unsolved.



Ana Marcela Yarce Viveros, a writer for *Contralínea* magazine, kidnapped and murdered along with colleague Rocío González near Mexico City in September 2011.

PERU



Physical violence against journalists—which continued in 2012, particularly at the local level—will likely remain one of your greatest challenges here.



El Comercio photographer Luis Choy, shot to death outside his home in Lima, February 23, 2013. Police say they have no motive.

PHILIPPINES



Impunity for those who've murdered journalists reigns in this Asian country, with 55 unsolved cases.



The coffins of 34 Filipino reporters killed on November 23, 2009 when paramilitary forces attacked a political convoy—the single most deadly attack anywhere on journalists.

RUSSIA



Things have gotten worse for you and your colleagues since Vladimir Putin returned to power. Violence against journalists has increased and the government has pursued cases of defamation. You'll be particularly at risk if you try to cover an opposition protest. One journalist was killed last year, and 16 journalist murders remain unsolved.

Ana Politkovskaya, an investigative journalist who exposed political and military corruption, murdered in 2006.



UNITED STATES



It may be difficult for you if you're an investigative reporter covering the government. The Obama Administration's prosecution of government leakers and whistleblowers is threatening journalists' ability to do their jobs.



New York Times reporter James Risen, subpoenaed by the U.S. Justice Department in 2011, after refusing to disclose sources in the CIA.

SAUDI ARABIA



Being an enterprising, independent journalist will not be easy here. Expect heavy censorship from the state—with your bosses likely to be appointed by the government—and the threat of jail to hang over your job, with four of your colleagues imprisoned last year.



BBC journalist Frank Gardner, injured in a 2004 gun attack in the south of Riyadh. A colleague, cameraman Simon Cumbers, was killed.

SOMALIA



Before you even consider working in journalism, you may want to reflect on the 78 colleagues who fled last year. Somalia is one of the toughest places to pursue your craft in the world. Eighteen journalists were killed in 2012, either as a result of bombs or direct attacks.



TV Journalist Ahmed Addow Anshur, shot dead by gunmen on his way home from work, May 23, 2012.

SOUTH AFRICA



Congratulations, you're in one of the safest countries in Africa to do your job. But the 2012 Protection of State Information Bill, which places large segments of government information under wraps, has made the job of an investigative journalist a lot more difficult.

VENEZUELA



You won't have many options of places to work, thanks to the government's policies of reducing media pluralism. And if you find work in a non-government-sanctioned newspaper, TV or radio station, you'll need to watch your back. Last year, there were over 170 cases of violence against journalists, and one reporter was murdered.



El Mundo photographer Jorge Aguirre, killed April 5, 2006, while covering a protest.

Source: The information and data has been drawn from the Reporters Without Borders "2013 World Press Freedom Index," <http://en.rsf.org/press-freedom-index-2013,1054.html> (Last accessed 8-2-13) and the Committee to Protect Journalists.