

RADIO VICTORIA: CHRONOLOGY OF THREATS AND ACTIONS

Background:

Marcelo Rivera was a resident of San Isidro, Cabañas, El Salvador and was an active community leader, artist and teacher who participated in a national environmentalist movement that has thus far prevented the Canadian Pacific Rim Mining Corporation from advancing their El Dorado gold mining venture located in the San Isidro municipality. Had the company opened the gold mine at El Dorado, it was expected that Pacific Rim's taxes and royalty payments would have boosted the annual municipal budget by a factor of ten, to approximately \$1 million. In 2002, the annual tax income for the Department of Cabañas, which includes nine municipalities including San Isidro, was under \$1.3 million.

Pacific Rim pulled out of El Salvador in July 2008 and issued a press release in December 2008 announcing that they had filed a Notice of Intent to commence international arbitration proceedings against El Salvador's government under the Central American Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA): "arising out of the Government's failure, within its own mandated time frames...to issue exploration and exploitation permits to which the Company is entitled."

For years Marcelo Rivera had opposed projects that would damage the environment and denounced corruption carried out by San Isidro's Mayor José Ignacio Bautista, who has held the office since 1997. During the election campaign for the January 2009 municipal elections, Marcelo received threats and insults from the right-wing political party, the Nationalist Republican Alliance (ARENA), to which Mayor Bautista belongs. On the day of the elections, Marcelo led a campaign to denounce fraud when it was alleged that ARENA had tried to bring illegal voters from neighboring countries to vote. All of the political parties except ARENA suspended the voting process that day because of obvious fraud. The election was rescheduled for the next week and Mayor Bautista once again was elected mayor.

Marcelo Rivera was disappeared on June 18th, 2009, last seen getting off a bus at the El Molino turn-off near Ilobasco, Cabañas. On July 1st, police found Mr. Rivera at the bottom of a thirty-meter-deep, dry well, which had been covered in chicken excrement and lime. In an anonymous phone call on June 27th, Mr. Rivera's sister-in-law was told that for several days a dead man had been in the well known as El Lagarto in Ilobasco, the municipality neighboring San Isidro where Mr. Rivera was last seen.

Mr. Rivera's body showed signs of brutal torture typical of a death squad killing. He had no fingernails, scalp, nose, or mouth. His trachea was broken with a nylon cord, forcing his arm toward his face.

On July 7th, the Elite Division Against Organized Crime (DECO) of the National Civilian Police (PNC) captured four gang members and notified a fifth already in prison that they were suspects in Marcelo's murder. According to the DECO's investigations, the victim and the now-detained men "were imbibing alcoholic beverages in an abandoned house in the community of Las Flores, canton Agua Zarca when they began a fight that ended in the murder of the FMLN activist."

On July 8th, the Attorney General of the Republic (FGR) confirmed the assassination of Mr. Rivera. The chief of the Unit Against Organized Crime of the FGR, Rodolfo Delgado, stated: “To date there exists no evidence of an intellectual author of the assassination. We are not closed to any possibility, so if any subsequent investigation indicates that there exists an intellectual author, corresponding accusations will be formulated.” He also sustained that between the presumed assassins and the victim, it has been possible to establish a relationship of friendship, which with the heat of alcohol this act of blood was generated. They were in a rural home in Ilobasco, and it was in that place that the death was caused by strangulation.”

RADIO VICTORIA:

Radio Victoria is a community, and mostly youth-run, radio station located in the Cabañas province of northern El Salvador and has publicly taken positions against gold mining projects, electoral fraud and human rights violations. The Radio is not affiliated with any political party, religion or creed. Radio Victoria has been transmitting for 16 years and is a founding member of ARPAS, the Salvadoran Association of Participative Radios and Programs, which is a member of ALER, the Latin American Radio Education Association, and AMARC, the World Association of Community Radios.

Radio Victoria first received threats in 2006 during the electoral campaigns, but almost all of the more recent threats have mentioned Marcelo Rivera and what happened to him:

March 2006: Elvis Zavala, coordinator of Radio Victoria’s Educational Production, received a threat stating: “We know where you live, we know who you are, we know your family, we know what time you leave the radio and if you don’t shut up we are going to kill you.”

March 2006: Vilma Recinos, head of Radio Victoria’s news team at that time, received a threat stating: “Keep quiet, you only have 10 more minutes to live”.

March 2006: Catholic priest Father Luis Quintanilla received various anonymous threatening messages, one of which stated: “Since you like to talk so much about Monseñor Romero and Father Rutilio Grande (the archbishop assassinated in March, 1980 and a Jesuit priest assassinated in March, 1977 both of whom spoke out and defended the poor and oppressed) we will make sure you go and keep them company!”

October 2007: Pacific Rim gold mining company offered to finish constructing Radio Victoria’s new building and to place \$8,000.00 in publicity on the radio. Radio Victoria refused this offer.

December 2007 and January 2008: Neftaly Ruiz, a reporter for Radio Victoria, received threats on his cell phone and directly through warnings by way of community leaders saying that he should keep out of Pacific Rim’s way.

April 2008: Oscar Menjivar chased after Nelson Ventura with a machete. Nelson works with the Environmental Committee of ADES. He was not hurt because he was able to escape in a car. Menjivar lives in the rural village Trinidad of Sensuntepeque.

Mayo 2008: Oscar Menjivar attacked Don Santos Rodríguez with a machete cutting off 2 fingers and damaging another finger that doctors were able to save. Don Santos is a member of the Environmental Committee of Cabañas that works to stop gold-mining projects and lives in Trinidad, Sensuntepeque. This attack was denounced to the PNC but Menjivar was not taken into custody.

December 2008 and January 2009: During the municipal electoral campaign in Victoria, Cabañas (where the Radio is located) the present mayor and ARENA candidate made statements such as Radio Victoria is a guerrilla radio, it belongs to the FMLN and they have arms hidden inside their building.

January 13, 2009: Isabel Gámez, head of the news team, received a threat from a municipal official who had been arrested for contraband: “You don’t know who you are dealing with. It could be that the words you are saying today you won’t be saying them tomorrow.”

January 18, 2009: On the day of the municipal elections in San Isidro in which the process was suspended because of fraud accusations, one of our correspondents, Ramiro Láinez, was aggressed upon by people identified as ARENA supporters because he was reporting on the fact that people from outside the municipality had been brought in to vote.

January 20 2009: Someone tries to run over Marcelo Rivera with a pick-up. His brother Miguel saves him. The incident is denounced by Marcelo with the police and regional attorney general's office.

April 28, 2009: 15 residents of San Isidro, Cabañas signed and delivered a letter to the PNC (National Civilian Police) in Sensuntepeque asking for regular patrols in an area where a group of youth had been carrying out public disorders in vulgar ways. The letter, which was signed by Radio Victoria’s community correspondent José Beltrán, asked for regular patrols, not to arrest the youth.

May 2009: The radio link antenna, which receives the signal from the Radio Victoria building in Victoria to the transmission tower in Sensuntepeque, was stolen.

May 2009: Father Luís Quintanilla, on his way to Radio Victoria, is followed by a car that starts blinking its headlights on and off. The car pulled up beside his car and the person in the passenger seat rolled down the window and pulled something out. It turned out to be a camera and he proceeded to take 3 or 4 photos of Father Luís.

May 21, 2009: A family member of José Beltrán received by regular mail 6 pages of a printed out email chat supposedly between José and someone else but which Jose had never seen before much less participated in and which defames his character by making it appear that he carried out inappropriate behavior when he was supposed to be reporting for Radio Victoria.

June 18, 2009: Marcelo Rivera is last seen getting off a bus around 5:00-6:00 p.m. at the El Molino turn-off near Ilobasco, Cabañas en route from San Isidro, Cabañas to San Salvador.

June 30, 2009: Margarita, Marcelo's sister in law, received an anonymous phone call saying there was a body in an abandoned well.

July 1, 2009: A cadaver is found in 30-meter-deep, dry well near an abandoned house with Marcelo's clothes and keys nearby.

July 7, 2009: Prosecutor from the Office of the Attorney General of the Republic, Rodolfo Delgado, stated that 4 suspects had been arrested and a 5th already in jail notified that he is a suspect. They are gang members. The Prosecutor stated that they and Marcelo had been drinking and got into a fight.

July 10, 2009: A governmental forensic investigator stated that the cadaver belongs to Marcelo based on results of DNA tests. Marcelo's family asks to claim the body, and police say that it has already been buried.

July 11, 2009: Funeral mass for Marcelo Rivera in San Isidro.

July 13, 2009: Father Luis Quintanilla left Radio Victoria after his Monday night program at 10 p.m. and on his way to Sensuntepeque encountered a car blocking his way. When he saw men with hoods on and guns he accelerated his car and dodged the car barely getting by and scraping his car on a fence.

July 15, 2009: Radio Victoria dedicated its 16th anniversary all day special programming to Marcelo Rivera.

July 15, 2009: Another letter arrived at José Beltrán's house saying that he shouldn't continue working with Radio Victoria, that it would be better for him to dedicate himself only to his studies and not go around with the Radio or there would be something to lament.

July 18, 2009: Bladimir Abarca Ayala, community correspondent for Radio Victoria received a death threat on his cell phone saying: "Today it was Marcelo Rivera, tomorrow it could be you, Bladimir, for being in that guerrilla radio, you know, Radio Victoria".

July 20, 2009: Father Luis Quintanilla did not come to transmit his Monday night program because he was afraid.

July 21, 2009: The PNC in San Isidro arrested the 7 youth who had been accused of public disorder 3 months earlier. Nothing had been done up until that time. The complaint had asked for more police presence, not for arrests.

July 22, 2009: The mother of one of the arrested youth in San Isidro approached one of José Beltrán's family members with a copy of the complaint that had been delivered to the PNC in Sensuntepeque 3 months earlier saying: "The same thing that happened to Marcelo is going to happen to you". The police had custody of this complaint and it is not clear how this woman got

a copy.

July 22, 2009: A policeman from San Isidro who is friends with one of José Beltrán's family members, told them to: "Get him out of the Radio, he's too young for that stuff. There is a list and probably he is on it, for that there is no age, so be careful."

July 23, 2009: Ludwin Franklin Iraheta, a Radio Victoria community correspondent received a threat that was pushed under the door of his house saying: "You like to talk too much, be careful, you are also on the list. You spoke too much in San Isidro (at Marcelo's wake) and it will be for nothing because you see how the "Cipiton" (a legendary Salvadoran character that Marcelo often portrayed) appeared, ha ha ha, soon it will happen to you and no one will be able to save you, son of a bitch. You are a piece of shit and not good for anything except to talk all this stuff in that damned Radio and soon we will see each other and we won't write you again because now you must be scared as shit". (Ludwin had previously received threats on his cell phone).

July 23, 2009: José Beltrán and Ludwin Iraheta are taken out of Cabañas to a safe house.

July 24, 2009: Bladimir Abarca is taken out of Cabañas to a safe house.

July 24, 2009: José Beltrán and Ludwin Iraheta placed a formal complaint with the Human Rights Ombudperson, Oscar Luna, in San Salvador.

July 25, 2009: Oscar Luna, Human Rights Ombudperson wrote a resolution asking for precautionary measures to protect José, Ludwin and Bladimir.

JULY 27, 2009: Oscar Luna, Human Rights Ombudperson called a press conference and issued a resolution demanding that the National Civilian Police and the Attorney General of the Republic report back within 72 hours regarding what steps they have taken in investigating the threats against the 3 Radio Victoria correspondents. He called on the Director of the Police and the Acting Attorney General to "guarantee the life and physical integrity of the youth" who were threatened and their families; and to "urgently investigate in an impartial, exhaustive, and effective manner the threats against [the youth] to the effect of finding those responsible and making them face justice."

July 27, 2009: The 3 Radio Victoria journalists and other members of the Radio met with President Funes' Communications Secretary for an hour and a half. He relayed the information about the case directly to President Funes.

July 27, 2009: Four armed and hooded men intercepted Father Luís Quintanilla in a kidnapping and assassination attempt as he drove towards Sensuntepeque after his 9:00 p.m. program at Radio Victoria. He was forced from his car and the men said: "Should we kill him now? No, we are supposed to take him alive". He was able to escape by throwing himself down a ravine when the 4 men were distracted by his car alarm. Earlier he received threats similar to those of the journalists and one that said: "We will finish off the damned reds dressed up as priests."

When the police finally arrived on the scene, they asked Father Luís if he had been harmed, or if something had been stolen, or if his car was damaged. When he responded negatively to all the police said, well, nothing has happened to you, if you want, you can decide whether or not to make a charge!

July 28, 2009: Father Luís attends an appointment at the prosecuting attorney's office in Sensuntepeque. This appointment was related to the death threats he received in 2007. He was told that since nothing more had transpired (basically since he had not been killed) that they were closing the case. He said on the contrary, now there was more reason than ever to continue the case. The answer he received was that what happened the night before was a new case so he would have to make a new complaint.

July 28, 2009: The Salvadoran Association of Participative Radios and Programs hold a press conference denouncing threats against Radio Victoria and other community organizations in Cabañas.

July 29, 2009: Walter Laínez, a community activist from Santa Marta who is a member of the Historic Memory Committee and member of the FMLN received a threat, which was tacked to the gate of his property. The note also mentioned Antonio Pacheco, the Director of the Association for Economic and Social Development (ADES) in Sensuntepeque, also known to be associated with the FMLN and to have participated in the movement against gold mining. The threat said: "The hour has come, Chico Montes (Antonio Pacheco) for the bomb in your own house and of your pals, now is the hour you pay for what you did in the decade of '88 in coordination with that asshole Walter, for this reason (you are) the next like Marcelo Rivera.

July 29, 2009: Edward Lara receives 2 threats on his cell phone, one threatening him and his mother directly, and the second threatening everyone at the radio in general: "Extermination > all at Radio Victoria will die for assholes and for confronting ARENA, they will appear rotten like that asshole Marcelo"

July 29, 2009: The electrical system at Radio Victoria's transmission station in Sensuntepeque was sabotaged, causing the transmitter to fail. The Radio was off the air until it was partially repaired the next day.

July 29, 2009: Isabel Gamez, head of the news team at Radio Victoria hears someone moving around in the upstairs of her house around 1 a.m.

July 30, 2009: Formal denouncements and complaints are made at the headquarters of the PNC's Criminal Investigation Division in San Salvador.

July 30, 2009: A long vicious and vulgar email threat is sent to most of Radio Victoria personnel naming 8 people specifically.

July 30, 2009: Isabel Gamez, head of the Radio Victoria news team, was the last person left at the Radio. As soon as everyone else had gone, she got a phone call in the pressroom. The person said: "Oh, you're all alone, mamaita. Well, we came to visit you last night but we didn't have

luck, tonight we will have more luck. We saw you in Sensuntepeque today and know everywhere you went.”

July 30, 2009: Ludwin Iraheta receives an email threat stating: “Why are you hiding, why don’t you come back to Cabañas, we are waiting for you.”

July 30, 2009: Elvis Antonio Natarén received 3 threatening messages on his cell phone. Elvis, known as Peter, presents a youth based opinion show on Radio Victoria. He had received various threats before.

July 30, 2009: Edward Lara received a text message that says: “You are dead, now you are in the mouth of the wolf, you goddamn dog.”

July 30, 2009: The transmitter failed again and the radio goes off the air.

July 31, 2009 National Journalists Day: The Attorney General of the Republic asks for a meeting with Radio Victoria and Isabel Gamez travels to San Salvador to meet with him (Astor Escalante). He did not provide any new developments in the case. Basically this was just a big show (probably because of all the pressure put on him!!!!)

July 31, 2009: Radio Victoria’s transmitter is partially repaired once again.

July 31, 2009: One of the 3 threatened reporters from Radio Victoria attended a reception put on by the President of the Republic for National Journalists Day. The journalist spoke directly with President Funes regarding the Radio Victoria case and the President promises to take measures to find who are behind all the threats.

July 31, 2009: One policeman is assigned as a guard in front of the Radio from 4 a.m until 11 p.m. Members of Radio Victoria and people from Santa Marta begin all night watches at Radio Victoria.

July 31, 2009: Haydee Rivas, Radio Victoria reporter received a call on her cell phone: “You have a good body for making love, we going to do all kinds of things because you have a big mouth working at that radio.”

August 2, 2009: Walter Láinez received a threat on his cell phone that states: “This is serious, pal, your days are counted, we have people in the community to do these things.”

August 2, 2009: Haydee Rivas received various calls on her cell phone but when she answers no one responds.

August 3, 2009: Radio Victoria’s transmitter and electric system is completely repaired.

August 5, 2009: Pablo Ayala, community correspondent for Radio Victoria, receives a threat that mentions him and others from the Radio.

August 7, 2009: Various Radio Victoria members received emails threats saying: “Today, you dogs, yes we are going to carry out the objective, we are being pressured from above to carry out actions.... (it continues)”.

August 7, 2009: A community leader in the village of Trinidad, Don Ramiro Rivera, who actively participates in the anti-mining movement, was shot 8 times in the back and legs while going out to milk his cow. Don Ramiro recognized Oscar Menjivar as the person that attacked him. He was able to escape, notify the police and look for help to get to a hospital.

August 13, 2009: Oscar Menjivar was condemned to 6 months in jail for attacking Don Ramiro Rivera.

September 2, 2009: The rural police, accompanied by soldiers, come to Radio Victoria community correspondent Pablo Ayala's house at 10 p.m. saying they wanted to search everyone in his family. When he asked why they said someone in the community had said he was cultivating marijuana. They searched his mother and father and other family members and then asked to see his identity card. Then they asked if he worked at Radio Victoria and asked to see his press card. Then they asked how the situation of threats was going and finally they said "you are obstructing our work here in the community", which Pablo understood that they were saying his work as a community correspondent got in the way of their work.

October 5, 2009: Radio Victoria's community correspondent Pablo Ayala received a death threat by cell phone, a woman's voice from a private undisclosed number.

October 6, 2009: Pablo Ayala found a hand written death threat outside his front door stating that "we are still around and he could be next if he doesn't stop expressing opinions against mayors and national deputies" and also naming other Radio Victoria members.

October 24, 2009: Pablo Ayala left a workshop in Guacotecti and across the road there are 2 rural policemen watching him. He took a bus to Sensuntepeque, got off at the park and noticed that 2 well dressed watch him and then nod at each other. He starts to walk to his next bus and the men follow, the faster Pablo walks the faster the men walk following him. Finally he runs to catch his bus and jumps in the back door. The men look like they feel like they blew it, that they lost him.

October 24, 2009: Ludwin Iraheta and Edward Lara are accosted by Police outside a dance when they ask in protest why the police are beating 2 young men. One of the policemen hit Ludwin and another grabs Edward by the throat as if to strangle him and then hits him in the face and says we don't want gay people here.

October 25, 2009: Pablo Ayala's brother is stopped and beaten by the rural police in the community where they live. The brother of Rubia Escobar (new Radio Victoria correspondent) and a friend are stopped by the rural police and taken into custody for supposed "illicit grouping". They are put in jail for 3 days and then released.

October 30, 2009: Radio Victoria's community correspondent Ludwin Iraheta was followed from near his grandmother's house in Guacotecti a Metro Centro in San Salvador where he got in a taxi and was able to lose the 2 men. He also received a threatening call while on the bus from Sensuntepeque to San Salvador.

November 6, 2009: Isabel Gamez's sister encountered a man outside their house at 11 p.m. coming toward her when she went outside to the bathroom. She did not recognize him and stated that he was not from Victoria. Isabel is Radio Victoria's news team coordinator.

November 7, 2009: Community correspondent Pablo Ayala encounters 2 strange men outside his house who did not arrive by the main path.

November 9, 2009: Hooded armed men arrive at the house of a key witness in the Ramiro Rivera case. The witness was not at home.

November 17, 2009: Pablo Ayala's friends and neighbors tell him there is a group in his community that is organizing to threaten his life because they blame him and Radio Victoria for removing 2 rural policemen from the community who they say were on their side.

November 18, 2009: Edward Lara's mother receives a call at 9:30 p.m. demanding \$600.00 in exchange for Edward's life.

December 1, 2009: Isabel Gamez hears someone knocking on her door at night. When she asks who it is, no one answers. The second time there is knocking, her son answers and when he opens the door someone throws stones and others things at him.

December 20, 2009: Don Ramiro Rivera is ambushed and killed along with another woman as he returns to his community in his pick-up. He had 2 police protectors accompanying him.

December 23, 2009: Different members of Radio Victoria receive 2 emails, the first saying: "well, we sent 2 into a hole, the question is, who will be the third, maybe Father Luis Quintanilla, or someone from the Radio, that's not a bad idea to continue with one of the big mouths at Radio Victoria, we are not playing around, we have demonstrated that we have the logistical capacity and financing to take care of whoever, it doesn't matter if you have a police battalion taking care of your back like dogs, we will do it when we want to, the deaths will continue and no one can stop the vengeance that has started, we prefer that the third death be a radio announcer or a correspondent or whoever from this damn radio, the most secure target is an on the air announcer, be careful, we are not playing, this is the new wave of warning that we are starting after taking care of Ramiro"

and the second: "As we said before, we are ready for everything and will not stop, if you don't stop this new campaign in that damn radio we cannot respond for what might happen, we are tired and we have an arsenal to send whoever to another world, we are saying right now and we have chosen the next who will die, a radio announcer of the most renown, it will be something that will really affect everyone at that radio, today we will not commit errors saying names, we only will say that this announcer is one of the best known and it will hurt you all, sooner or later

we will get him.!

and 2 radio announcers received direct threats on their cell phones:

Juan Carlos's cell: 11:08 a.m. "exterminio > We know where you live and your family will be taken into account leave the radio you will get yours on Saturdays and Sundays (when Juan Carlos has his shifts on the radio) we are listening to you here dog" and "exterminio > You son of a bitch you are chosen to die, we know where you live and you are now dead one of these days you will die we will wait for you when you leave your shift (at the Radio)"

Eliseo Rodriguez's cell: 7:07 p.m. "exterminio > stop this campaign on the radio or we will not respond for what happens, we are after the third victim, it is a radio announcer and we have already chosen the one who will die, it is a radio announcer" and "exterminio > dogs sons of bitches, sooner or later we will break that radio announcer, guess who it is".

December 26, 2009: Dora Alicia Recinos Sorto was assassinated as she returned home from washing with her 2 year old son, he was wounded in the leg. Dora Alicia was 8 months pregnant and the wife of Don Santos Rodriguez who in May of 2008 was attacked and had 2 fingers cut off by Oscar Menjivar who is now in jail for shooting Don Ramiro Rivera 8 times in the back and legs. Dora Alicia and her husband are both members of the Cabañas Environmental Committee, which has been very active in protesting metallic mining in Cabañas.

December 27, 2009: Six men riding on three motorcycles arrived at Isabel Gamez's house (Radio Victoria's news team coordinator), they got off the motorcycles and surrounded her house shining flashlights. Fortunately Isabel was not home, but a neighbor came out thinking it was the police and he was the witness who saw that they were not the police and that they were armed and had their faces covered. They left after about a half hour.

January 7, 2010: A stranger is seen outside Elvis Zavala and Marixela Ramos house around 10 p.m. . He is heard outside twice more. He flees into the woods and not on the paths or the road.

January 9, 2010: Isabel Gaméz received a call from a friend in Sensuntepeque saying that she had received a call on November 21, 2009 in which a man asked her for information about the cases of "Ludwin, Edward and Isabel". Then he began to relate everything that the 3 of them had done during Victoria's patron saint day's festival (November 20), where they had gone, who they were hanging out with and that if Edward had not stayed home that night, and if Ludwin and Isabel had not been hanging out with various friends, the night would have turned out differently. They asked who was taking care of Isabel, why she stayed home alone at night, if she had people from Santa Marta protecting her, if Ludwin had renounced his protection, and they asked if Juan Carlos was the one to give directions to the on the air presenters and if he worked only weekends or also during the week. He also said that they were going to hit Elvis where it most hurt and that they had all the time in the world to do it. Isabel's friend refused to answer any of their questions and left Sensuntepeque for a time.

January 21, 2010: Bladimir Abarca received a threatening message on his cell phone saying: "get ready you damn Radio Victoria people because we already got the first 3" and later received another message making fun: "ha ha ha ".

December 12, 2010: Darwin Serrano (alias "El Pato") was attacked and killed by men wielding machetes in Agua Zarca, Ilobasco in the department of Cabañas, the same community where Marcelo Rivera was murdered in June of 2009. Serrano was a minor who had been condemned in the Marcelo Rivera murder case, was placed in a Juvenile Detention Center and subsequently released due to "over-crowding". When he was released various people warned the police that his life was in danger due to the information he had about who had ordered and paid for Marcelo's murder. The police responded that they had an eye on him. After Serrano was released from the detention center 3 additional gang members were condemned in the Marcelo Rivera murder case and 3 others were condemned for conspiring to kill him.

December 12, 2010: William Iraheta, who lives in San Isidro, Cabañas was attacked by men with guns and was able to escape. Before the shooting began Iraheta saw his attackers and recognized 2 gang members in the back of a pick-up owned by Omar Chopa. This was the second time there had been a contract to kill him. In 2009 a gang member known as Paco Jayo said that he and another gang member had been hired by the mayor of San Isidro, José Bautista, to kill Iraheta. A few years before Iraheta worked for the same mayor and it is assumed that the attempts to kill him are because he has information on Mayor Bautista's illicit activities.

January 2, 2011: Gerardo Abrego León (alias "El Gato") was murdered in the Quesera community of the Ilobasco municipality in the department of Cabañas. El Gato was a key witness in the Marcelo Rivera murder case.

January 11, 2011: A death threat was pushed under Radio Victoria's front door sometime during the night in spite of the fact that police were supposed to be guarding the Radio all night. The threat mentioned 3 Radio members and offered money if the Radio would change its "tone" and fire the 3 workers.

January 21, 2011: At 11 p.m. an unknown person appeared outside Radio Victoria's press reporter Pablo Ayala's house in the San Antonio community of the Victoria municipality in Cabañas. The person said "Pablo, are you there? Come on out I want to talk to you because they have sent something to say to you". He kept knocking and repeating the same thing for over 5 minutes. Pablo was not home that night but his brother told him "that was not a good person, you could tell by his voice that he didn't have good intentions".

January 21, 2011: Between 10:30 and 11 p.m. footsteps and the presence of an unknown person were heard outside the house of Radio Victoria workers Elvis Zavala and Marixela Ramos in the El Rodeo community in the Victoria municipality of Cabañas. Later dogs were heard barking at Marixela's parents house a few hundred meters away. Pablo and Elvis and Marixela's houses are in different areas of the municipality about 15 kilometers away.

January 22 and 23, 2011: Hector Berrios, lawyer and environmental activist, received various phone calls on his home landline and cell phone. When he answered the call was cut off. Finally on January 23 around midday, someone answered saying they had been hired to kill him. Berrios had been denouncing the murders of Darwin Serrano and Gerardo Abrego León as well as the attempt on William Iraheta's life.

January 24, 2011: Zenayda Serrano, Héctor Berríos's wife, was shopping in a supermarket in the Zacamil neighborhood close to their house in San Salvador, and realized a man was following her. For that reason she decided to leave the supermarket but as she was leaving the man also started to leave and then was stopped by the supermarket's private security.

January 25, 2011: Zenayda Serrano was taking her daughters, Joaquina García, to school in San Salvador, and saw that the same man that had been in the supermarket had gotten on her bus and kept staring at them.

January 29, 2011: Two men, one older and one young, enter the corridor of Pablo Ayala's house in the San Antonio village of the municipality of Victoria (Pablo is a Radio Victoria reporter). They knock on his door saying "Pablo, now we know you are in there. Come out immediately because we want to talk with you, or do you want us to break down the door?" Then they said "you only have one more time, the third one is your defeat " and "come out because you won't always be enclosed you son of a great bitch!!"

January 31, 2011: While waiting for a bus near their home, a young person that looked like a gang member came up close to Zenayda y Héctor Berríos, and kept staring at them insistently. Then he took out his cell phone and began to send messages. Héctor asked some taxi drivers they are usually in that spot if they knew the young person and they said they hadn't seen him before.

February 8, 2011: A few hours after transmitting his weekly show on Radio Victoria Padre Luís Quintanilla received the following messages on his cell phone:

EXTERMINIO: Priests sons of the great bitch, we have you targeted. This priest at the Radio has got our balls hot

EXTERMINIO: Don't start making alarms we have control we have people in the police and they do us favors, to do in a dog like you...

EXTERMINIO: ... is the easiest thing, the so-called priest Neftali (Ruíz) we know all about him in Altavista (where he lives) and in Cabañas, the same with who they say is a bishop (Padre Luís was named a catholic bishop, but not a roman catholic) we know...

EXTERMINIO: ... his house in Apopa and in Victoria we have you very much under control, we already warned you, we left you a sign of how we are going to do you in (bullet shells were left on the altar of Padre Luis's church about 6 months earlier).

February 8, 2011: The policeman that was on watch outside Radio Victoria heard 2 people suspiciously moving around the back wall very late at night. He called 2 other police men to come and check it out and when they started searching the 2 suspicious people escaped running.

April 30, 2011: Between midnight and 4:00 a.m. a note was slipped under Radio Victoria's front door threatening 3 Radio workers saying they had 4 days to leave the Cabañas province or they would suffer the consequences:

"This is a new warning to the Radio Victoria personnel, sons of whores, gossipers that only speak shit, the truth is you have worn out our patience, as we asked Oscar the last time if you don't change the Radio's focus things will go badly but it seems he didn't do that so we are here again, Pablo, Oscar and Manuel have until Wednesday to abandon the whole Cabañas

department, if not you will have to suffer the consequences because what is coming is not easy and no one believes in you all, no one listens to you, you only talk lies and praise the Santa Marta assassins, we have powerful means, you cannot compete, Oscar you blew it by not taking money, you will eat shit and Pablo, we know all your steps here in Victoria, you are the son of a dog that fills your mouth talking, we know it well, we do not miss that piece of shit news show, you only make destructive hypocritical criticisms you assholes, you don't know what awaits you, we have you in photos and videos, you are fools, we repeat, you have until Wednesday to get the hell out, it is an order from the extermination group, no one plays with the narcos, the first will be Pablo because sometimes we even give him a ride, he is vulnerable trash nothing more, think about it Radio Victoria's Coordinating Team, a radio that gets in the way of the institutions in Cabañas, no one can forget that it is a dog radio that only barks, we will be in charge of shutting it up, trash without education with horrible programming, there are many in the list that this year will go to the other world, the 3 we mentioned before."

The note referred to a January 11th threat that said Radio Victoria must change its tone or people would pay with their lives.

May 2, 2011: Around 8:00 in the evening 2 radio journalists received several text messages on their cell phones threatening them in different ways including saying that one of the workers' 3 year old daughter would be the one to pay if they did not change the tone of the radio.

on Marixela Ramos's phone:

- 1) "extermination > YOUR DAUGHTER WILL PAY ALL AND DON'T FORGET THAT PABLO CONTINUES ON THE LIST, DO SOMETHING, YOU CAN AND IF YOU DON'T GET OUT OF THE RADIO AS SOON AS YOU CAN"
- 2) "extermination > LOOK YOU FOOL, WE KNOW WHERE YOU LIVE, THAT YOU ARE ALONE IN YOUR HOUSE, PUT A STOP TO THE NEWS SHOW, YOU ARE THE COORDINATOR, YOU ALSO HAVE A DAUGHTER"

on Pablo Ayala phone:

- 1) "EXTERMINATION> FROM WEDNESDAY ON IF YOU ARE STILL IN THE RADIO YOU WILL REGRET IT, YOU HAVE WORN OUT OUR PATIENCE WE WILL SEE WHAT YOU GET SINCE YOU WON'T STOP TALKING"
- 2) "EXTERMINATION> YOU GOT YOUR NEW HOUSE READY, WE HAVE GIVEN YOU SOME TIME, AFTER THAT YOU ARE WORTH NOTHING, FOR NOW YOUR HEAD IS WORTH A LOT YOU DOG"
- 3) "extermination> NOW YOU HAVE A MOTORCYCLE, RIGHT, THAT'S EVEN BETTER, WE CAN FLIP YOU OVER YOU FOOL SON OF A BITCH, YOU WILL FIND OUT WE ARE NOT JOKING AND THAT YOU ARE IN THE MIDDLE OF A BIG PROBLEM FOR YOUR FAMOUS STRUGGLE".

May 3, 2011: WORLD PRESS FREEDOM DAY: Radio Victoria begins to denounce the new death threats against their workers and calls a press conference for the next day.

May 4, 2011: Radio Victoria, ADES (the Social Economic Development Association of Santa Marta) and Santa Marta community members held a press conference in front of the General Attorney of the Republic's office in San Salvador denouncing the total lack of results from

investigations into who are the intellectual and material authors of these continuous threats. The group also delivered a petition to his office.

That night 2 Radio Victoria journalists once again received death threats on their cell phones.

on Pablo Ayala's phone:

- 1) "today you should have left like we ordered and you haven't, no problem, we will finish our work as we have been told to, be careful".
- 2) "you started making noise, finish it dogs, we saw you on TV today like little dogs, what a shame, now finish talking, fools".

on Marixela Ramos's phone:

- 1) "extermination > tomorrow you will have to work, we will be waiting, we act when there is a space, for now you know who all has to leave, them".
- 2) "do whatever you will do, the moment to act will arrive and it will be when you least expect it, you big mouths".