

# *Paraguay Asks Brazil to Extradite Mayor Linked to Murder*

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Asunción, March 31 (teleSUR-RHC) Paraguay's government formally requested the extradition of former politician Vilmar Acosta Marques on Monday, who is accused of being the mastermind behind the murder of journalist Pablo Medina and his aide.

Acosta, former mayor of the small border town of Ypehu, was arrested earlier this month in the neighboring Brazil after fleeing Paraguay. Medina and his aide Antonia Almada were gunned down in October 2014 in what authorities believe was a result of his work investigating ties between politicians and drug trafficking cartels.

Links between politicians and drug traffickers, referred to as "narcs-politics," is prevalent in the region, particularly in border regions. Acosta, a member of the ruling Colorado Party, is suspected of having ties to organized crime and drug traffickers.

A Senate commission submitted a report to the country's attorney general that alleged ties between several members of the Colorado Party and drug traffickers. "Paraguayan politics is openly contaminated by the financial power of drug-traffickers," political analyst Alfredo Boccia told AFP in November.

"After the assassination of Pablo Medina... people have more courage to speak out of narcs-politics," The general secretary of the journalists union of Paraguay, Santiago Ortiz, declared in October that Paraguay

was run by “narcs-politics.”

The journalist union laid the blame for Medina’s murder at the feet of President Horacio Cartes, also of the Colorado Party. Brazilians authorities promised to promptly act on the extradition request.

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