
The AJH Secretary General believes he has reliable information that the police did indeed execute journalist Abdias Jean

Port-au-Prince, January 19, 2005 (AHP)- Guyler C. Delva, Secretary General of the AJH (Association of Haitian Journalists), spoke in condemnation Wednesday of the killing of journalist Abdias Jean in Village de Dieu during a police operation conducted in that populist district on Friday, January 14.

Guy Delva said he has solid information indicating that the crime was committed by police officers who pursued Mr. Jean to a house after he witnessed their crimes.

Two other youths were killed during this police sweep.

Mr. Delva said he was amazed to find that police officers are summarily executing journalists and seizing the tools of their trade because they have witnessed criminal conduct.

"I can not comprehend how such practices can take place at a time when one is talking about the rule of law and democracy", declared Mr. Delva.

He called for the opening of a rigorous investigation into this case.

For his part, Ronald St-Jean, director of the Committee for the Defense of the Rights of the Haitian People (CDPH), took issue with the recent statements of interim Prime Minister Gérard Latortue assuring that his government would not sink to engaging in arbitrary practices.

By way of examples, Ronald St-Jean cited the case of the summary execution of Lavalas activist Jimmy Charles, whose bullet-ridden body was discovered Saturday in La Saline though he was known to have been in police custody, and the case of journalist Abdias Jean who was killed Friday in Village de Dieu during a PNH intervention in this populist district.

Mr. St-Jean strongly urged that an autopsy be performed on the body of the journalist as a means of producing additional verification.

He also condemned the behavior of the police toward journalists from Télé Ginen during the same operation.

PNH officers had seized the video camera of the journalists and only returned it several hours later without the video cassette that had been in the camera.

According to the CDPH official, this attitude clearly shows that the police are trying to hide their misdeeds.