



# Best Investigative Journalism Report On Corruption In Latin America And Caribbean Award Goes To Nicaraguan Journalist

Transparency International

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## BEST INVESTIGATIVE JOURNALISM REPORT ON CORRUPTION IN LATIN AMERICA AND CARIBBEAN AWARD GOES TO NICARAGUAN JOURNALIST

JORGE LOÁSIGA, JOURNALIST FROM LA PRENSA OF MANAGUA (NICARAGUA), WINS PRIZE AWARDED BY TRANSPARENCY INTERNATIONAL AND THE PRESS AND SOCIETY INSTITUTE (INSTITUTO PRENSA Y SOCIEDAD)

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Translations: [ES](#)

Investigations into mishandling of funds by Latin American presidents were identified as some of the exceptional reports presented in the first year of the Prize for Best Investigative Journalism Report on a Corruption Case in Latin America and the Caribbean, awarded annually by Transparency International in Latin America and the Caribbean (TILAC) and the Instituto Prensa y Sociedad (IPYS). The prize, an award of \$25,000, will be presented during the 11th International Anti-Corruption Conference in Seoul, Korea, on 25-28 May 2003 (see <http://www.11iacc.org/iacc/index.html>).

An international jury, composed of Tina Rosenberg, editorial page editor for *The New York Times*; Michael Reid, Latin American editor of *The Economist*; Marcelo Beraba, director of the Rio de Janeiro office of *Folha de S. Paulo*; Gustavo Gorriti, associate researcher at IPYS; and Juan Lozano, until recently director of Colombia's *CityTV*, declared Jorge Loásiga, journalist at *La Prensa* of Managua, winner of the prize.

Loásiga presented a series of investigative articles on the embezzlement of state funds on the part of Arnoldo Aleman, President of Nicaragua, and in office at the time the articles were published (1997-2002). The investigation, known as "Los checazos de Alemán" (Aleman's Cheques), was chosen from amongst 100 works by a unanimous decision of the Jury. In its final declaration, the jury highlighted that "by bringing to light significant evidence, Loásiga's research achieved conclusive findings" as well as "the considerable research efforts Loásiga made prior to proof gathering". Loásiga, 35, investigated alleged malpractice by the Aleman government over the course of more than a year.

Among the ten finalists were investigations by Daniel Santoro of *Clarín* in Buenos Aires, by Rodolfo Flores of *Siglo XXI* in Guatemala, together with investigations from Rolando Rodríguez of *La Prensa* in Panama, of Colombian journalists Norbey Quevedo and Fabio Castillo of *El Espectador*, and of members of the staff of *El Meridiano* in Cordoba, Colombia. Finalists from Brazil were Amaury Ribeyro of *Istoé* and Fábio Gusmão of *Extra*. Two television investigations were noted as the most prominent in their category: that of Eduardo Faustini of *TV Globo*, and that of Miguel Agosta de *Telenoche Investiga*, airing on *Canal 13* in Argentina. (For more information on the ten finalists, please refer to the "**Declaration of the Jury**").

"This prize initiates a marvellous alliance between investigative journalism and the anti-corruption movement," commented Silke Pfeiffer, Regional Director for Latin America at Transparency International, one of the organisers of the prize, speaking at the conclusion of the meeting of the jury in Cartagena, Colombia. Pfeiffer added: "The quality and the impact of the works presented demonstrated the important

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role that investigative journalism plays in the search for truth and transparency in a region where there are such high levels of corruption."

Of the 96 works submitted, 41 referred to corruption cases in state activities, whereas other reports dealt with irregularities within the private sector (15), the armed forces (13) and the fight against drug trafficking (7). Two investigations reported on corruption within football championships. Finally, contestants were for the most part Colombia reporters, representing 29 of the submitted works. The journalists included 17 from Brazil and 10 from Argentina.

"The competition was a great success," said Ricardo Uceda, Executive Director of the Press and Society Institute, the second organiser of the prize. He added: "The quality of the works presented reveals the energy and high level of journalist investigations into corruption in Latin America."

The Award will be presented during the 11th International Anti-Corruption Conference in Seoul, Korea, on 25-28 May. (See <http://www.11iacc.org/iacc/index.html>). Later this year, the different investigative reports will be presented during an event for Latin American journalists.

**Note:**

**The Prize for Best Investigative Journalism Report on a Corruption Case in Latin America and the Caribbean is awarded every year. Its organisers are the Transparency International Latin America and the Caribbean network (TILAC), the network comprising the various Transparency International (TI) chapters in the region, and the Press and Society Institute (IPYS). IPYS is a regional organisation of independent journalists promoting free press and investigative journalism.**

**The Prize is sponsored by the Open Society Institute (OSI), a private foundation created in 1993 and based in New York. OSI promotes the development and support of open societies around the world.**

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