



PRESS RELEASE

Murder of Nestlé worker Romero in Colombia:

Complaint against Switzerland submitted to European Court of Human Rights

Berlin, 18 December 2014 – The Swiss judiciary has refused to investigate the role played by Nestlé in the murder of Colombian trade unionist and Nestlé worker [Luciano Romero](#). The European Center for Constitutional and Human Rights ([ECCHR](#)) has responded by submitting a complaint against Switzerland on behalf of Romero’s widow to the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) in Strasbourg. The ECCHR is basing its case on the right to life (Article 2) and the right to an effective remedy (Article 13) guaranteed by the European Convention on Human Rights. The ECtHR must now determine whether the Swiss judiciary has adequately examined Nestlé’s liability for Romero’s murder.

According to figures from Colombian sources, almost 3,000 trade unionists have been murdered in Colombia over the past 30 years. 13 of these worked for Nestlé. “Neither Nestlé management nor the Swiss authorities could claim to have been unaware of or powerless against the violence in Colombia,” says ECCHR General Secretary Wolfgang Kaleck. “Trade unionists are being systematically murdered in Colombia. The killing of Luciano Romero is not an isolated incident,” says Javier Correa, president of the Colombian trade union SINALTRAINAL, which is assisting with the complaint along with lawyers from Colombia and Switzerland.

The Swiss judiciary dismissed all claims against Nestlé in the Romero case. In July 2014 the Swiss Federal Supreme Court held that the crimes in question were now statute-barred. “The lapse of the statute of limitations, a lack of jurisdiction, investigatory difficulties – it’s always the same arguments. European corporations are almost never held accountable in their home states for human rights violations committed abroad,” says Kaleck. “Europe badly needs a catalog of human rights due diligence obligations for corporations!”

More on the Luciano Romero case: <http://www.ecchr.de/nestle-518.html>

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