

Women defend solo travels after murder of backpackers in Ecuador

By **Pietro Lombardi**, for CNN

🕒 Updated 1625 GMT (0025 HKT) March 17, 2016



A Facebook post 'giving voice' to murdered female backpackers sparked a social media campaign to defend women's right to solo travels

Story highlights

A Facebook post written from the perspective of two female backpackers killed in Ecuador took on victim-blaming

The post sparked a social media campaign under the hashtag "#viajosola" to defend women's right to solo travels

Paraguayan student Guadalupe Acosta, goes on.

"They stabbed me and I was left to bleed to death. Like trash, they put me in a black polythene bag, wrapped with duct tape and threw me on to a beach, where hours later they found me."

[Media reports](#) say Maria Coni, 22, and Marina Menegazzo, 21, were sexually assaulted and killed in February while traveling in Ecuador. The pair were reportedly killed by two men who had offered them a place to stay.

The post written in their name has now had more than 730,000 shares over the past two weeks.

It's also sparked a social media debate over victim-blaming and women's right to safely travel alone.

traveling alone is my joy in life, not an invitation for man to rob, rape & murder me [#ViajoSola](#)
pic.twitter.com/2Zk4uQjHSX

(CNN) — "Yesterday I was killed."

So begins a Facebook post, now spreading virally, that's written from the perspective of two Argentinian female backpackers killed in Ecuador.

"I refused to be touched, and they smashed my skull with a stick," the post, written by

— Coreen (@Coreen085) [March 14, 2016](#)

The post was written to protest against those who implied that the two young women had invited trouble and their own brutal deaths through their own actions.

Time to stop blaming women for men killing them. [#viajosola](#) Solo travel is good for the soul.

— Dr Lori Goodsell (@docgoodsell) [March 9, 2016](#)

"But worse than death was the humiliation which came after," the post continues.

Why I won't let fear stop me from travelling alone as a woman [#viajosola](#) <https://t.co/eZOrgjM3Mg>
pic.twitter.com/DSAXAqKn44

— Stylist Magazine (@StylistMagazine) [March 15, 2016](#)

It criticizes the "useless questions" of people who blamed the women for "traveling alone."

The hashtag [#viajosola](#), meaning "I travel alone," has since been picked up by thousands of people, mostly women, who are using it to share pictures of themselves on their solo travels, defending their right to explore the world without discrimination or harassment.

[#viajosola Tweets](#)

I'm a woman and travel solo because...

Soy mujer y viajo sola porque... [#viajosola](#) [#NiUnaMenos](#) pic.twitter.com/7oFqwvvPMA

— Ana RM (@AnnaRMedina) [March 5, 2016](#)

Many make the point that the victims weren't traveling alone, since they were together

and were only seen as "alone" because they were unaccompanied by men.

Aquí estoy mochileando con mi mejor amiga, pero para la sociedad en realidad viajé sola. #viajosol
#NiUnaMenos pic.twitter.com/jRx67sOc1F

— Sofia Diaz Gonzalez (@PopiDiaz) [March 5, 2016](#)

"Here I am backpacking with my best friend, but for society I actually traveled alone."

#Viajosola because traveling solo as a women makes u a stronger confident and responsible hum:
being ! pic.twitter.com/8zkDvoBrco

— BouchraDraouiPhoto (@BDPhotographies) [March 11, 2016](#)

Yo también #viajosola #NiUnaMenos pic.twitter.com/qExV5s95rf

— Monica Galvan (@moniqgalvan) [March 5, 2016](#)

Ecuadorian authorities have arrested two men allegedly linked to the murders.

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