

PUBLIC

AI Index: AMR 13/005/2003

16 April 2003

Further Information on UA 53/03 (AMR 13/002/2003, 21 February 2003) - Fear for safety/Death threats

ARGENTINA Clara Britos (f), journalist
Members of her family

Amnesty International continues to be seriously concerned for the safety of Clara Britos and her family. As the owner and editor of the monthly newspaper *La Tapa* in Guernica, Buenos Aires Province, she is continuously being threatened as a result of her work as a journalist.

On 26 March, Clara Britos reported on a demonstration outside the house of Argentine President Eduardo Duhalde. The protest was against the impunity of the police force following the alleged murder by police of two *piqueteros* (protesting unemployed workers) in a demonstration in Avellaneda, Buenos Aires Province on 26 June 2002 (see UA 53/03, AMR 13/002/2003, 21 February 2003). On the night of 27 March, stones were thrown against the roof of her house. The following morning she received four threatening telephone calls in which she was warned "*Te vamos a matar, hija de puta...ciudáte*", "we're going to kill you, bitch...watch out".

On the afternoon of 30 March, Clara Britos received two further telephone calls in which a recording of screams and gunshots was played. She recognized the recording as being from the Avellaneda demonstrations four days earlier. On 2 and 5 April, she received four messages on each day which contained the same threat: "*los vamos a matar, primero a tus hijos...*", "we're going to kill your children first...". On 10 April, stones were again thrown onto the roof of her house.

Following months of requests, Clara Britos finally received police protection on 25 February. While members of the police have interviewed Clara Britos regarding the threats she has received, Amnesty International is not aware of any police investigation that has been initiated. There is also increasing concern that no action has been taken on the judicial complaints she has filed.

Given her inability to freely carry out her profession of journalist and the increasingly serious nature of the threats against her and her family, Clara Britos is considering leaving Argentina to seek asylum.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send appeals to arrive as quickly as possible, in Spanish or your own language:

- expressing concern at the continuous threats and harassment to which Clara Britos and her family have been subjected;
- calling for an immediate, thorough and independent investigation into all the judicial and police complaints made by Clara Britos, for the results to be made public and those responsible brought to justice;
- asking for assurances that the Argentine authorities take all necessary and effective steps to protect Clara Britos and her family, and that she be allowed to perform her legitimate work as a journalist without threats and harassment in Argentina.

APPEALS TO:Governor of Buenos Aires Province

Sr. Gobernador de la Provincia de Buenos Aires

Ing. Felipe Carlos Solá

Casa de Gobierno

Calle 6 Entre 51/53

1900 La Plata

Prov. Buenos Aires, Argentina

Telegrams: **Governor, Buenos Aires Province, Argentina**

Fax: **+ 54 221 429 4189**

Salutation: **Sr. Gobernador/ Dear Governor**

Minister of Justice and Security of Buenos Aires Province

Sr. Ministro de Justicia y Seguridad de la Provincia de Buenos Aires

Dr Juan Pablo Cafiero

Calle 2 e/51 y 53

1900 La Plata

Prov. Buenos Aires, Argentina

Telegrams: **Minister of Justice and Security, Buenos Aires Province, Argentina**

Fax: **+ 54 221 429 3187/3188 (If someone answers say 'Fax, por favor')**

Salutation: **Sr. Ministro/ Dear Minister**

Minister for Foreign Affairs

Sr. Ministro de Relaciones Exteriores, Comercio Internacional y Culto

Dr. Carlos Ruckauf

Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores

Esmeralda 1212

1003 Buenos Aires, Argentina

Telegrams: **Foreign Minister, Buenos Aires, Argentina**

Fax: **+ 54 11 4819 7619/7359 (If someone answers say 'Fax, por favor')**

Salutation: **Sr. Ministro/ Dear Minister**

COPIES TO:Under-Secretary for Human Rights

Sr. Subsecretario de Derechos Humanos

Dr. Oscar Fappiano

Ministerio de Justicia y Derechos Humanos

Humanos

Sarmiento 329

1041 Buenos Aires, Argentina

Fax: **+ 54 11 4381 4571 (There could be some problems getting through to this number. If someone answers say 'Fax, por favor')**

Asociación para la Defensa del Periodismo Independiente – PERIODISTAS

Piedras 1675 Oficina B

Secretaría de Derechos

1140 Buenos Aires, Argentina

Fax: **+ 54 11 4300 6149**

Newspapers

Clarín

Tacuarcí 1840

1139 Buenos Aires, Argentina

Fax: **+ 54 11 4309 7200**

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Avenida Belgrano 673

1092 Buenos Aires, Argentina

Fax: + 54 11 4334 2330

and to diplomatic representatives of ARGENTINA accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 28 May 2003.