

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

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Further information on UA 123/94 (AMR 13/03/94, 29 March 1994) and follow-up (AMR 13/04/94, 18 May) - Death in custody / Death threats

ARGENTINA Diego RODRIGUEZ LAGUENS, aged 26, forestry expert

new name: Dr Federico Alfredo HUBERT, lawyer

There is serious concern for the safety of Dr Federico Alfredo Hubert who continues to face intimidation in the course of his work as lawyer for the family of Diego Rodriguez Laguens. The latter was allegedly beaten to death in police custody in San Pedro, Jujuy in February 1994.

On the night of 14 October three unmarked cars passed Dr Hubert's house in the city of Salta on several occasions. An unidentified person got out of one of the cars and passed up and down outside the house. That same day Dr Hubert had received a telephone call from a person who refused to identify himself, who told him "not to make so much noise" ("no hacer tanto ruido") about the Diego Rodriguez Laguens case. He then suggested that the lawyer met him on the road between Salta and Jujuy to receive further information about the case. Dr Hubert fears that this was the pretext to ambush him on the Salta-Jujuy road. Later that evening when Dr Hubert detected another suspicious car parked outside his house, the car drove off at speed.

A judicial investigation into the death of Rodriguez Laguens is being conducted in the city of Jujuy. Dr Hubert frequently has to travel from Salta to Jujuy to attend court hearings. Since these are scheduled late in the afternoon, he is obliged to return along this road late at night. Dr Hubert has expressed fears of being attacked on this road. When Dr Hubert sought for hearings to be scheduled earlier in the day he was threatened with sanctions by the judge in charge of the case.

Dr Hubert has reported the above incidents to the police and asked the Ministry of Interior for a federal police escort on his journeys to and from Jujuy.

The incidents follow the death threats issued in March against Dr Hubert and against Diego Rodriguez Laguens's mother, Mabel Cristina Laguens de Rodriguez, and the independent forensic expert investigating the death in custody. Members of the Jujuy police have allegedly tried to obstruct the police and judicial investigation of the Rodriguez Laguens case.

In recent years there have been frequent reports of human rights violations by provincial police forces in Argentina. Abuses include torture and ill-treatment of detainees, in some cases resulting in death, "disappearance" and possible extrajudicial execution. While investigations may have been opened into some of these cases few have resulted in prosecution of those found responsible. Human rights activists denouncing police involvement in human rights violations have often been the subject of death threats.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send telegrams/telexes/faxes/express and airmail letters either in Spanish or in your own language:

- expressing concern for the safety of lawyer Dr Federico Alfredo Hubert, following intimidation and the appearance of suspicious vehicles outside his house in Salta in October 1994.

- expressing concern that these threats may be connected to his work on behalf of the family of Diego Rodriguez Laguens, allegedly beaten to death in police custody in Jujuy in February 1994;
- urging that Dr Hubert be provided with a federal police escort when travelling to and from Jujuy to attend court hearings into the death of Rodriguez Laguens;
- seeking information about the progress of investigations into the death of Diego Rodriguez Laguens and urging that all those responsible be brought to justice.

APPEALS TO

Minister of the Interior

Sr Ministro del Interior

Sr Carlos Ruckauf

Ministerio del Interior

Casa de Gobierno

Balcare 50, Buenos Aires, Argentina

Faxes : + 541 343 2326

Telegrams : Ministro Ruckauf, Buenos Aires, Argentina

Salutation: Sr Ministro / Dear Minister

Governor of the Province of Jujuy

Dr José Carlos Ficooseco

Palacio de Gobierno

San Martín 450

4600 San Salvador de Jujuy,

Provincia de Jujuy, Argentina

Faxes: + 54 882 33 949

Telegrams: Gobernador Ficooseco, San Salvador de Jujuy, Argentina

Salutation : Sr Gobernador de la Provicina de Jujuy / Dear Governor

Governor of the Province of Salta

Sr. Gobernador de la Provincia de Salta

Cpn. Roberto Ulloa

Casa de Gobierno

Salta, SALTA, Argentina

Telegrams: Gobernador Ulloa, Salta, Argentina

Salutation: Sr Gobernador de la Provincia de Salta / Dear Governor

COPIES OF YOUR APPEALS TO:

Dr Federico Alberto Hubert

Los Pomelos 144

Tres Cerritos

4.400 Salta, Argentina

El Tribuno de Salta (newspaper Province of Salta)

Ruta 68 kmt 1592

Barrio Parque El Tribuno (Limache)

4500 Salta, Argentina

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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 29 November 1994.