

PUBLIC

AI Index: AMR 13/017/2003

05 November 2003

Further Information on UA 263/03 (AMR 13/015/2003, 09 September 2003) Fear for Safety/Death threats

ARGENTINA

Marcelino ALTAMIRANO (m) human rights defender

Marcelino Altamirano has been subject to further threats and intimidation, reportedly in relation to his work as coordinator of the street children's home *La Casita del Puente Afectivo* (The Little House of the Bridge of Affection) in the city of Mendoza. Amnesty International remains seriously concerned for his safety.

At 7.30am on 28 October, Marcelino Altamirano was threatened and physically assaulted near a police station close to his home in the locality of Guaymallén, near Mendoza. He was on his way to collect his van, which he parks outside the police station for security purposes. An unidentified man accosted him, saying "*te llegó la hora*" ("your time is up") and reportedly fired a gun into the air. In the struggle that followed, the man snatched Marcelino's rucksack, which contained legal documents relating to the 12 street children sheltered at *La Casita del Puente Afectivo*. As Marcelino Altamirano ran towards the police station, the assailant fired his gun again. Two unidentified individuals then arrived in a Fiat Uno car, stopped to let the man get into the car, and then drove off.

Marcelino Altamirano believes that this incident was perpetrated by the same people who set fire to his car, possibly with a Molotov cocktail, on 29 August (see original UA). He has subsequently filed a complaint regarding this latest incident at the local police station *Comisaría 25*. A complaint has also been filed before the *Comisión de Derechos y Garantías del Senado*, Senate Commission of Rights and Protection.

Although Amnesty International has received assurances from the provincial authorities regarding their support for Marcelino Altamirano's work and their deep interest in his safety and that of the children, the organization is concerned that no effective measures have apparently been taken to protect them.

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

- expressing concern for the safety of Marcelino Altamirano, following this latest act of harassment and intimidation;
- asking for an immediate, thorough and independent investigation into the assault on 28 October, as well as into all previous acts of intimidation against him; for the results to be made public and those responsible brought to justice;
- urging the authorities to take the necessary steps to protect and guarantee the safety of Marcelino Altamirano and the children sheltered in *La Casita del Puente Afectivo*.

APPEALS TO:

Governor of Mendoza Province

Gobernador de la Provincia

Ing. Roberto Raúl Iglesias

Casa de Gobierno

Barrio Cívico, 4º Piso Cuerpo Central

5500 Mendoza, Provincia de Mendoza, Argentina

Telegram: Gobernador de la Provincia, Provincia de Mendoza, Argentina

Fax: + 54 261 449 2142

Salutation: Sr. Gobernador / Dear Governor

Minister of Justice and Security

Ministro de Justicia y Seguridad

Dr. Leopoldo Manuel Orquin

Salta 672 –

5501 Godoy Cruz – Provincia de Mendoza, Argentina

Telegram: Ministro de Justicia y Seguridad, Godoy Cruz, Provincia de Mendoza, Argentina

Fax: + 54 261 449 9042

Salutation: Sr. Ministro/ Dear Minister

President of the Rights and Guarantees Commission (Chamber of Deputies)

Sr. Presidente de la Comisión de Derechos y Garantías Constitucionales

Sr. Jorge Poblete

Cámara de Diputados de Mendoza

Paseo Sarmiento y P. Mendocinas,

5500 Mendoza, Provincia de Mendoza, Argentina

Telegram: Sr. Presidente de la Comisión de Derechos y Garantías Constitucionales, Provincia de Mendoza, Argentina

Fax: + 54 261 449 3707

Salutation: Sr. Presidente / Dear President

COPIES TO:

Mayor of Mendoza

Sr. Intendente Municipal

Dr. Raúl Vicchi

9 de Julio 500 - 2do. piso –

5500 – Mendoza, Provincia de Mendoza, Argentina

Fax: + 54 261 438 1387

Provincial Newspaper

Diario Los Andes

Avenida San Martín 1049,

5500 Mendoza, Argentina

Fax: + 54 261 420 2011

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 17 December 2003.