

PUBLIC

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12 April 2007

Further Information on UA 322/05 (AMR 13/011/2005, 19 December 2005) Fear for safety

ARGENTINA

Pablo Gabriel Salinas (m), human rights lawyer
His wife and four young children
María Angélica Escayola (f)] human rights lawyers
Alfredo Guevara Escayola (m)]

Human rights lawyer Pablo Gabriel Salinas has received an anonymous threat apparently related to his work. His life and the lives of his family may be in danger.

On 9 April, Pablo Salinas arrived at his office in the city of Mendoza, Mendoza Province, and found an anonymous letter personally addressed to him. The letter stated, "You are a son of a thousand bitches for defending criminals in jail, piece of shit, watch yourself bitch and your bitch family [sic], defender of murderers, rapists, thieves; start defending the victims of these degenerates, failure piece of shit" ("*sos un hijo de mil puta en defender a criminales de la cárcel, sorete, cuídate puto vos y tu puta familia, defensor de homicidas, violadores, ladrones y rateros, empezá a defender a la gente víctima de esos degenerados, fracasado de mierda*").

The following day, Pablo Salinas reported the anonymous threat to Mendoza's public prosecutor's office (*Unidad Fiscal de Delitos Complejos de la Primera Circunscripción Judicial de Mendoza*) and on the same day a petition was made on his behalf to the Inter-American Commission for Human Rights, asking the authorities to put in place measures to protect Pablo Salinas and his family.

Pablo Salinas has repeatedly publicly condemned the use of torture and ill-treatment in prisons in Mendoza province. He has also worked on behalf of victims of police brutality, extrajudicial executions and other human rights violations committed by members of the security forces. Pablo Salinas has provided legal representation to victims of human rights violations committed during the period of military rule in Argentina (1976 – 1983). Due to his work in these areas he has repeatedly been the victim of threats and harassment. In December 2005, he received threatening telephone calls, and the office he shared with human rights lawyers María Angélica Escayola and Alfredo Guevara Escayola, was daubed with graffiti. Amnesty International is not aware of any further threats against the other two lawyers.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Human rights defenders working in Mendoza are often the target of harassment and threats. Amnesty International has expressed concern for their safety and has consistently asked for thorough and independent investigations into the judicial and public complaints submitted in relation to these threats.

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

- expressing concern for the safety of Pablo Salinas and his family;
- calling for an immediate, thorough and independent investigation into the threats of Pablo Salinas and his family; for the results to be made public, and for those responsible to be brought to justice;
- urging the authorities to take the necessary steps to protect and guarantee the safety of Pablo Salinas and his family in accordance with their wishes;
- reminding the authorities of their obligations to recognize the legitimacy of the activities of human rights defenders and their right to carry out their activities without any restrictions or fear of reprisals, as set out in

the UN Declaration on the Rights and Responsibilities of Individuals, Groups and Organs of Society to Promote and Protect Universally Recognised Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms.

APPEALS TO:

Governor of Mendoza Province

Gobernador de la Provincia
Ing. Dn. Julio César Cleto Cobos
Casa de Gobierno
Av. L. Peltier 351- 4to piso
5500 Mendoza, ARGENTINA
Fax: +54 261 449 2142
Salutation: Sr. Gobernador / Dear Governor

Minister of Foreign Affairs

Sr. Ministro de Relaciones Exteriores, Comercio Internacional y Culto
Sr Jorge Enrique Taiana
Ministerio de Relaciones
Exteriores, Comercio Internacional y Culto
Esmeralda 1212
1007 Buenos Aires, ARGENTINA
Fax: +54 11 4819 7324
Salutation: Sr. Ministro / Dear Minister

Minister of Security of Mendoza Province

Sr. Ministro de Seguridad de la Provincia de Mendoza
Dr. Miguel Bondino
Salta 672
5501 Godoy Cruz, Mendoza
ARGENTINA
Fax: +54 261 449 9083 / 9020 (if voice answers, ask "tono de fax por el Ministro, por favor")
Salutation: Sr. Ministro / Dear Minister

Undersecretary for Justice Mendoza Province

Sr. Subsecretario de Justicia de la Provincia de Mendoza
Sr. Gustavo Castiñeira de Dios
Ministerio de Gobierno
Salta 672
5504 Godoy Cruz
Mendoza, ARGENTINA
Salutation: Sr. Subsecretario / Dear Undersecretary

COPIES TO:

Legal Office in Mendoza

Rivadavia 680
5500, Mendoza, Provincia de Mendoza, ARGENTINA

Provincial Newspaper

Diario Los Andes
Avda. San Martin 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 24 May 2007.