

URGENT ACTION

INDIGENOUS LEADER KILLED IN ARGENTINA

Indigenous leader Cristian Ferreyra has been killed by two security guards working for a landowner. He was a member of Lule Vilela indigenous community. The community has been receiving threats and intimidation because of their fight to defend their ancestral lands, which is under threat from deforestation.

On 16 November, **Cristian Ferreyra** and his brother in law, **Darío Godoy**, confronted a man who was fencing off part of the land claimed by their community as part of their traditional territory. Later on they went to Cristian Ferreyra's house in the community of San Antonio, in the province of Santiago del Estero. Two armed men approached the house and called for them to go out into the courtyard. As they did so, one of the armed men shot Cristian Ferreyra, who died on his way to hospital. Darío Godoy was also shot in the legs and remains in hospital. Members of the Lule Vilela community state that the two armed men worked for a landowner in neighbouring Santa Fe province who wants to expand soybean plantations onto their land. The community claims the land as their ancestral land, vital to their survival. They also state it has important water reserves for their animals.

Four people have been arrested, including the person identified by an eyewitness as the one who shot Cristian Ferreyra and Darío Godoy. The judge has also ordered the immediate arrest of the landowner.

Cristian Ferreyra and Darío Godoy are members of the Mocase Vila Campesina, a peasant movement in Santiago del Estero. The organisation has been at the forefront of the fight against the impact of deforestation on lands owned by indigenous and peasant communities by agro-business farmers. Cristian Ferreyra and Darío Godoy were due to meet other members of the organisation to discuss legal actions against deforestation on the day that they were shot.

Please write immediately in Spanish or your own language:

- Demand that Cristian Ferreyra's relatives and members of the Lule Vilela indigenous community of San Antonio are provided with the protection they need, according to their wishes
- Call on them to order a full and impartial investigation into the shooting of Cristian Ferreyra and Darío Godoy as well as the threats against other community members, and bring those responsible to justice.
- Call on them to comply fully with the UN Declaration on the Indigenous Peoples and the International Labour Organisation's Convention 169, to enshrine Indigenous People's rights to their ancestral lands and establish mechanisms whereby these rights can be recognised and exercised with their full participation.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 3 JANUARY 2012 TO:

Governor of Santiago del Estero
Sr. Gerardo Zamora
Governador de Santiago del Estero
Rivadavia (N) 551
CP 4200
Santiago del Estero, Argentina
Fax: +54 385 422 1066
Email: secprivsde@hotmail.com
Salutation: Estimado Sr. Gobernador

Ministry of the Interior
Cdr. Aníbal Florencio Randazzo
Ministerio del Interior
25 de Mayo 101/145
C1002ABC - Buenos Aires,
Argentina
Fax: +54 11 4346 1584
Email: info@mininterior.gov.ar
Salutation: Estimado Sr. Ministro

And copies to:
Mocase Villa Campesina
Calle sin numero
Rotonda azul
Quimil, CP 4238
Santiago del Estero
Argentina

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country.

Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date.

**AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL**



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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The Lule Vilela community of San Antonio are formed by 14 families; they live close to three other Lule Vilela communities, Campos de Mayo, Santa Lucia, and San Bernardo. For over three years they, as well as local farmers, have faced numerous threats, intimidation and harassment due to their struggle to defend their ancestral land from the interests of landowners who were allowed to acquire the lands by the provincial authorities for the expansion of soy crops in the territory.

The Mocase Villa Campesina organisation has reported that eight months ago the same landowner ordered the installation of a wire fence within the territory which obstructed access to the community school. Some members of the community tried to unblock access by cutting the wire fence but they received threats. Two months ago the local community radio was subjected to an arson attack destroying some of the equipment. According to the Mocase Villa Campesina, complaints filled before the local judicial authorities have been ignored.

More widely, there have been recent episodes of intimidation and harassment against Indigenous Peoples' rights in Argentina, that in some cases have ended with terrible consequences.

Indigenous community leader Félix Díaz and his family have been facing several threats by members of a non indigenous family (criollo) who claim ownership of land that Toba Qom indigenous community members consider their traditional land. Recently on 8 November 2011, he son and grandson of Félix Díaz, were attacked by men. In November 2010, police violently dispersed a roadblock by members of the community leaving one community member and one police officer dead. Police also burned temporary housing built by the community. In July, video footage was made public about the violent police operation of November 2010. So far no one has been brought to justice for these events.

On 12 October 2009, Javier Chocobar, a 68-year-old from Diaguita Indigenous community of Los Chuschagasta, was killed when local landowner arrived in the community with two other men identified as former police officers.

Name: Lule Vilela Indigenous community

Gender m/f: Both M

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