

UA 87/98

Fear for safety

18 March 1998

ARGENTINARagnar Hagelin - father of a "disappeared"

An anonymous threat made to Ragnar Hagelin, the father of 17-year-old Dagmar Hagelin, who "disappeared" in 1977, has raised serious concerns for his safety.

Ragnar Hagelin, a Swedish national, is presently attending hearings at the *Cámara Federal*, Buenos Aires Federal Court. The hearings concern the cases of people who "disappeared" in Argentina after being taken to the *Escuela de Mecánica de la Armada* (ESMA), Navy Mechanics School, during the years of the military regime (1976 - 1983). According to testimonies, Dagmar Hagelin was taken to ESMA in 1977.

On 10 March 1998, Ragnar Hagelin reportedly called his wife in Sweden from a private telephone number in Argentina. A few minutes later, a man telephoned him, repeating the exact conversation he had just had with his wife. The anonymous caller also told him: "Son of a bitch, finish it" (*hijo de puta, terminála*).

While Amnesty International is unable to confirm the source of the threat, the organization believes there is well-founded concern for the safety of Ragnar Hagelin while he remains in Argentina, and that the anonymous call relates directly to his efforts to find out what happened to his "disappeared" daughter. Ragnar Hagelin has publicly denounced the threat. Following the incident, he will now reportedly be accompanied to the hearings by the Swedish Ambassador to Argentina.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Since 1995, new evidence has emerged, through revelations by former members of the security forces, regarding the systematic involvement of the armed forces in human rights violations during the military regime. The most recent example is the widely publicized interview of former Navy Captain Alfredo Astiz, who admitted having participated in operations by ESMA units, aimed at abducting, "disappearing" or killing people.

Legal redress for victims of human rights abuses committed during the military regime in Argentina was exhausted with the amnesty laws *Ley de Punto Final*, Full Stop Law, of 1986, and *Ley de Obediencia Debida*, Law of Due Obedience, of 1987, and the presidential pardons of 1989 and 1990. However, the Federal Court has opened an inquiry into the ESMA cases, directed at establishing the fate of "disappeared" people taken to the ESMA.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send telegrams/faxes/express/airmail letters in Spanish if fluent otherwise your own language:

- expressing concern at reports indicating that Ragnar Hagelin has been threatened;
- asking for the anonymous telephone call to be investigated and that those found responsible to be brought before the courts;
- asking for information regarding any measures taken by the authorities to investigate the threat and to guarantee the personal safety of Ragnar Hagelin while in Argentina;
- reiterating your concern regarding the thousands of cases of "disappeared" people in Argentina, including Dagmar Hagelin's, which remain unresolved and for which no one has been brought to justice.

APPEALS TO:

President

Exmo. Sr. Presidente de la República Argentina

Dr. Carlos Saúl Menem

Casa Rosada, Balcarce 50

Buenos Aires C.F., ARGENTINA

Telegrams: President Menem, Buenos Aires, Argentina

Fax: + 541 331 6376 / 331 1849

Salutation: Excelencia / Your Excellency

Minister of Interior

Sr. Ministro del Interior

Sr Carlos Corach

Ministerio del Interior

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1002 Buenos Aires C.F., ARGENTINA

Telegrams: Ministro del Interior, Buenos Aires, Argentina

Fax: + 541 331 1156 (if voice, ask "me puede dar tono de fax, por favor")

Salutation: Sr. Ministro / Dear Minister

Minister of Justice

Sr. Ministro de Justicia

Dr. Raúl Granillo Ocampo

Ministerio de Justicia

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1041 Buenos Aires, Argentina

Telegrams: Ministro de Justicia, Buenos Aires, Argentina

Faxes: +541 328 6038 / 6039

Salutation: Sr. Ministro/ Dear Minister

COPIES TO:

The Swedish Embassy in Buenos Aires

Embajada de Suecia

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Human Rights Secretariat

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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 30 April 1998.