



PUBLIC STATEMENT

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Uruguay: The Supreme Court must guarantee the protection of a child subjected to violence.

Amnesty International calls on the Uruguayan government to guarantee the rights to physical integrity and to freedom from violence for a five-year-old girl and her mother in light of strong evidence that they were subjected to gender-based violence by the child's father, who lives in Spain.

“Uruguay is duty-bound to guarantee the protection of all women and girls against violence, and, furthermore, when ruling on this case, the Court must avoid putting the girl at further risk of violence and must act in the girl's best interests”, said Erika Guevara Rosas, Americas Director at Amnesty International.

The child and her mother are currently in Uruguay, where they have been living for more than a year. An order issued by the Uruguayan courts would force them to return to Spain on Thursday, 5 October, under international return proceedings initiated by the child's father. The child's lawyers in Uruguay have lodged appeals for the review of this judgment, which are still pending.

Amnesty International is aware of the existence of a court order in Spain that prohibits the child's father from approaching her. In addition, the child has voiced her fear and anxiety about returning to Spain. The mother has also filed a criminal complaint after experiencing violence at the hands of the child's father and states that she does not want to go back to a situation of violence in Spain. They are currently under police protection in Uruguay because of the fear that the child's father might make an attempt on their lives.

“To force the girl and her mother to return to Spain could result in irreparable damage to the health and physical and psychological wellbeing of them both,” explained Guevara Rosas. “In cases of violence against women and girls, support networks are crucial for recovery and coping with the trauma. For this child and her mother, their support networks are in Uruguay.”