

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL NEWS RELEASE

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ARGENTINA: Human rights should not be sacrificed in the name of

securityFundamental human rights cannot be derogated from even in times of crisis, said Amnesty International today after the President of Argentina declared a nation-wide state of emergency. A state of emergency was declared yesterday following a series of protests and incidents of looting in several Argentinian cities. Some 16 people were shot dead and more than 130 wounded, some in clashes with the police. Witnesses reported that the police fired rubber bullets and tear gas at the demonstrators, including peaceful demonstrators, dozens of whom have been arbitrarily detained. "The Argentinian state has the right and the duty to maintain public order and to protect the security of its citizens", Amnesty International acknowledged. "However, it is imperative that measures taken in the context of the state of emergency do not infringe fundamental human rights," added the organization. Amnesty International wrote today to President de la Rúa asking him to clarify which constitutional guarantees will be limited during the emergency period and reminding him that the state of Argentina is under an international obligation to safeguard fundamental human rights even in emergency situations. "The Argentinian authorities are also obliged to ensure that law enforcement officials adhere to the international human rights standards which Argentina has committed itself to respecting," added the organization, calling for a thorough and impartial investigation into the circumstances surrounding the killings which occurred during the disturbances. *****For more information , please contact the Amnesty International Press Office in London, UK, on +44 20 7413 5562Amnesty International, 1 Easton St, London WC1X 0DW