

PUBLIC

AI Index: AMR 13/01/2001

3 January 2001

Further information on UA 336/00 (AMR 13/18/00, 3 November 2000) - Health Concern / Fair Judicial Process

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The group of political prisoners who were protesting at having been denied the right to appeal against their 1989 conviction have ended their hunger strike after their sentences were reduced by a presidential decree.

On 29 December 2000, the Argentine President, Fernando de la Rúa, reduced the sentences of eleven political prisoners. Nine prisoners had their sentences reduced to 20 years' imprisonment, and two had theirs reduced to 25 and 22 years' imprisonment respectively. Most of them will now be eligible for provisional release.

The prisoners had been on hunger strike for 116 days and will reportedly remain in hospital for a further 10 days. It is not known if any irreversible damage has been caused to their health.

The hunger strikers were protesting against the Argentine government's failure to grant them the right to appeal against their sentence, as set out in international law. They were tried in 1989 under the Law of Defence of Democracy (Law 23.077), which restricts the right to appeal. This law contravenes the Inter-American Convention on Human Rights, to which Argentina is party. In 1997 the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) called on the Argentine government to "take the necessary actions under its constitutional system, to make fully effective ... the judicial guarantee of the right to appeal for persons tried under Law 23.077".

The hunger strikers are members of the *Movimiento Todos por la Patria* (MTP), All for the Fatherland Movement. They were sentenced for their involvement in an armed attack on a military barracks near Buenos Aires in January 1989, in which several people were killed.

Thank you to all who sent appeals. No further action is needed.