

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

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UA 350/93 Fear of "Disappearance"/Fear for Physical Safety

1 October 1993

ARGENTINA Miguel BRU - aged 23, Student of journalism

Amnesty International is deeply concerned for the physical safety of Miguel Bru, reported missing since 17 August 1993. He was apparently last seen near the coastal resort of Punta Blanca in the locality of General Bavio, area of Magdalena, Buenos Aires Province. Miguel Bru's "disappearance" has been linked to the complaint he filed against members of La Plata 9th Police station (*Comisaria 9a*). Amnesty International is further concerned that the investigations do not seem to have made any progress in establishing his whereabouts and identifying those responsible for his "disappearance".

A friend of Miguel Bru who shared his accommodation in the city of La Plata, Buenos Aires Province, has reportedly stated that on 13 May, members of the 9th police station raided their house without a search warrant, arguing that neighbours had complained about noisy behaviour. Allegedly, when another lodger asked the police officers for the relevant search warrant he was grabbed by the scruff of the neck and threatened with a firearm. After the incident Miguel Bru filed a complaint for abuse of authority against members of La Plata 9th Police Station.

On 26 August Miguel Bru's parents reported his "disappearance" to several local police stations where the police authorities refused to accept the report. Their complaint was finally registered at the 4th Police station in the locality of Villa Arguello where they live and where Miguel Bru's father is a local police officer. Miguel Bru's parents have allegedly claimed that their son had expressed fear for his safety after filing the complaint against the police.

A police investigation was initiated into the "disappearance" of Miguel Bru and the case is now under the jurisdiction of the 7th Penal Court of La Plata. Miguel Bru's relatives have complained that although he is still missing, the judge in charge has stated that the investigation is exhausted ("*la investigación esta agotada*"). On 26 September the Argentine press reported that the Justice Attorney General of the Supreme Court in Buenos Aires has requested to an official prosecutor a written report on the case. However relatives and friends of Miguel Bru have publicly expressed their belief that the investigation is still open only because of pressure exerted by public opinion.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Amnesty International is seriously concerned by the apparent resurgence in Argentina of the practice of "disappearance" in recent years. In 1990 the organization urged the authorities to thoroughly investigate the "disappearances" in April 1990 of Adolfo Argentino Garrido and Raul Baigorria after they were allegedly detained by uniformed police in the city of Mendoza. It has also urged the authorities to clarify the whereabouts of Andres Alberto Nuñez who "disappeared" in September 1990 after being taken from his home in La Plata into custody by the Investigations Force of La Plata. Three years after their "disappearance" was denounced, the three men's whereabouts remain unknown. Amnesty International is not aware of any progress into the investigations initiated to locate

the three missing men.

In May 1992 Pablo Cristian Guardatti was allegedly detained in Mendoza and taken to a nearby police unit. Although four police officers were eventually detained and charged with his kidnapping, Pablo Cristian Guardatti's is still missing.

According to the official report *Never again (Nunca Más)*, 8960 people "disappeared in Argentina during the military government between 1976 and 1983. With the exception of five members of the Military Juntas those responsible for the "disappearances" have never been convicted.

Although there is no evidence indicating that Miguel Bru has been detained by the police Amnesty International is concerned by his "disappearance" which has been linked to his denunciation of police abuse. While welcoming the steps taken by the authorities to initiate investigations into this apparent "disappearance", the organization is urging the authorities to persist in their efforts until Miguel Bru is found, to guarantee his physical integrity and thoroughly investigate the circumstances surrounding his "disappearance".

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send telegrams/telexes/faxes/express and airmail letters either in Spanish or in your own language:

- Express concern at the reports of the "disappearance" of Miguel Bru in circumstances suggesting a link between his "disappearance" and a complaint filed by him against members of the 9th police station of La Plata;
- welcome the steps taken by the authorities but express your concern that after 46 days he remains missing and urge the authorities to continue the investigation until his whereabouts are clarified;
- express concern at reports which indicate that several authorities at several police stations refused to accept Miguel Bru's parents' denunciation of his "disappearance".

APPEALS TO

1) Minister of Interior

Sr. Ministro del Interior
Sr. Carlos Ruckauf
Ministerio del Interior
Casa de Gobierno
Balcarce 24, Buenos Aires, Argentina

Telegrams: Ministro Interior, Buenos Aires, Argentina

Telexes: 21194 (Via Ministry of Foreign Affairs)

Faxes: +541 331 1156

Salutation: Señor Ministro/Dear Minister

2) Governor of Buenos Aires Province

Sr. Gobernador de la Provincia de Buenos Aires
Sr. Eduardo Duhalde
Casa de Gobierno
Buenos Aires, Argentina

Telegrams: Gobernador Provincia Buenos Aires, Argentina

Salutation: Señor Gobernador/Dear Governor

3) Minister of Government and Justice Buenos Aires Province

Sr. Ministro de Gobierno y Justicia
de la Provincia de Buenos Aires
Dr. Carlos Francisco Dellepiane
Casa de Gobierno
Calle 6 entre 51 y 53
1900 La Plata, Argentina

Telegrams: Ministro de Gobierno, La Plata, Argentina

Faxes: +5521 211 272

Salutation: Señor Ministro/Dear Minister

COPIES OF YOUR APPEALS TO:

Under-Secretariat of Human Rights

Subsecretaría de Derechos Humanos

Dra. Alicia Pierini

Ministerio del Interior

Moreno 711, 5o. Piso

Buenos Aires, Argentina

El Día (Newspaper)

Diagonal 80 No. 817

1900 La Plata, Argentina

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 12 November 1993.