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Argentina: Amnesty International welcomes terms of reference for DaimlerChrysler commission

Amnesty International welcomes the terms of reference set up for the commission of investigation established by US-German car maker DaimlerChrysler to examine the conduct of Mercedes-Benz and its officials in Argentina between 1975 and 1978. The Commission is expected to investigate the "disappearance" of some 14 workers in the Mercedes-Benz factory -- now owned by DaimlerChrysler -- at González Catán, Buenos Aires Province, in 1976 and 1977.

The Commission's terms of reference include provisions for it to "report independently, impartially and completely about the events, their background and the role of the company".

The Commission -- which will work for a period of 12 months until September 2003 -- will also address the following points:

Have Mercedes-Benz employees actively or with tacit connivance contributed to the disappearance of workers?

What was the situation in the factory between 1975 and 1978 as regards the general economic situation, the social situation of the workers, personnel policy, and cooperation between workers, trade union and management?

Were there any implicit or explicit guidelines for the company's policy vis-à-vis the Argentine state and the Argentine military? Has the company in any way actively contributed to the coup by the Junta or to keeping them in power?

The report will be made public and will be made available to the Argentine and German authorities.

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For more information please call Amnesty International's press office in London, UK, on +44 20 7413 5566

Amnesty International, 1 Easton St., London WC1X 0DW. web: http://www.amnesty.org

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