

PUBLIC

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UA 201/02

Fear for Safety

3 July 2002

ARGENTINA

Claudio Pandolfi (m), Lawyer and Human Rights Defender

Killed: Dario Santillan (m)
Maximiliano Costequi (m)

Amnesty International is seriously concerned for the safety of Claudio Pandolfi, a lawyer working for the human rights organisation *Coordinadora Contra la Represión Policial e Institucional* (CORREPI), the Association against Police and Institutional Repression. On the weekend of 29 and 30 June, an unidentified caller left a recorded message at his office saying "we already know which hole you're hiding in, you will die like a dog" ("ya sabemos en qué cuevita te escondés, te vamos a matar como un perro").

Claudio Pandolfi is investigating the disturbances that took place in Avellaneda, Buenos Aires province, on 26 June, following protests at the continuing economic crisis that is crippling Argentina. Two demonstrators, Dario Santillan and Maximiliano Costequi were killed. Many others were injured during clashes between police and protestors, during which police fired both plastic and live rounds of ammunition (See News Service NS 109/2002, AMR 01/006/2002, 27 June 2002).

According to press reports, although police sources initially claimed that the men were killed by 'infiltrators' among the demonstrators, photos subsequently released to the media clearly demonstrated police involvement in the events leading to their deaths. Following the publication of these photos, two police officers were arrested and over 100 suspended.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

While Amnesty International recognises the duty of the Argentine authorities to maintain public order, the organisation has repeatedly expressed its concern over police killings and excessive use of force in the country. In December 2001, the organisation wrote to the Argentine authorities following the death of some twenty protestors and injuries to hundreds more during disturbances across the country.

CORREPI lawyers and members have been the targets of death threats and intimidation in the past (see UA 304/99, AMR 13/06/99, 24 November 1999; UA 55/97, AMR 13/03/97, 20 February 1997 and UA/HRD AMR 13/12/98).

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send appeals to arrive as quickly as possible, in Spanish or your own language:

- expressing your concern at the death threats received by CORREPI human rights lawyer Claudio Pandolfi;
- calling for an immediate and thorough investigation into these death threats, for the results to be made public and those responsible brought to justice;
- asking for assurances that the Argentine authorities take all necessary steps to protect Claudio Pandolfi;
- calling for prompt and impartial investigations into the events of 26 June 2002 in Avellaneda and the deaths of Dario Santillan and Maximiliano Costequi, that the results be made public and those responsible brought to justice;
- stating that while you recognise the duty of the Argentine authorities to maintain public order, call on them to ensure that all members of the security forces act in compliance with established international norms and uphold and respect fundamental human rights at all times;
- urging the authorities to publicly condemn all harassment and intimidation of human rights defenders, and to publicly recognise the important contribution that human rights defenders make to the protection of human rights and the promotion of a just, democratic and equitable society.

APPEALS TO:

Minister of the Interior
Sr. Ministro del Interior
Sr Jorge Matzkin

Ministerio del Interior

Balcarce 24

1064 Buenos Aires, Argentina

Telegrams: Interior Minister, Buenos Aires, Argentina

Fax: + 54 11 4346 1756 (If someone answers say 'Fax, por favor')

Salutation: Sr. Minstro/Dear Minister

Minister for Foreign Affairs

Sr. Ministro de Relaciones Exteriores, Comercio Internacional y Culto

Dr. Carlos Ruckauf

Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores

Esmeralda 1212

1003 Buenos Aires, Argentina

Fax: + 54 11 4819 7359

Telegrams: Foreign Minister, Buenos Aires, Argentina

Fax: + 54 11 4819 7619

Salutation: Sr. Ministro/ Dear Minister

Minister of Justice and Human Rights

Sr. Ministro de Justicia y Derechos Humanos

Dr. Jorge Reinaldo Vanossi

Ministerio de Justicia y Derechos Humanos

Sarmiento 329, 5º piso

1041 Buenos Aires, Argentina

Telegrams: Minister of Justice, Buenos Aires, Argentina

Fax: + 54 11 4328 6039

Salutation: Sr. Ministro/ Dear Minister

COPIES TO:

Under-Secretary for Human Rights

Sr. Subsecretario de Derechos Humanos

Dr. Oscar Fappiano

Secretaría de Derechos Humanos

Ministerio de Justicia y Derechos Humanos

Sarmiento 329

1041 Buenos Aires, Argentina

Fax: + 54 11 4381 4571 (There could be some problems getting through to this number. If someone answers say 'Fax, por favor')

The Association against Police and Institutional Repression

Coordinadora Contra la Represión Policial e Institucional (CORREPI),

Corrientes 1785 - 2C

(1042) Buenos Aires, Argentina

Newspapers

Clarín

Tacuvarí 1840

1139 Buenos Aires, Argentina

Fax: + 54 11 4309 7200

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Avenida Belgrano 673

1092 Buenos Aires, Argentina

Fax: + 54 11 4334 2330

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 14 August 2002.