



Représentant les avocats d'Europe
Representing Europe's lawyers

01/05/2007

Governor of Mendoza Province
Gobernador de la Provincia
Ing. Dn. Julio César Cleto Cobos
Casa de Gobierno
Av. L. Peltier 351- 4to piso
5500 Mendoza, ARGENTINA

Re: Concerns regarding the case of Pablo Gabriel Salinas, human rights lawyer, and his family

Dear Governor,

I am writing to you on behalf of the Council of Bars and Law Societies of Europe (CCBE), which, through the national Bars and Law Societies of the Member States of the European Union and the European Economic Area, represents more than 700,000 European lawyers.

The CCBE, through its Human Rights Committee, places great emphasis on respect for human rights and the rule of law. The CCBE is particularly concerned by the situation of human rights defenders in the world.

The CCBE writes to express its serious concerns over human rights lawyer, Pablo Gabriel Salinas, and his family. He has received an anonymous threat apparently related to his work. His life and the lives of his family may be in danger. The following day, Pablo Salinas reported the anonymous threat to Mendoza's public prosecutor's office (Unidad Fiscal de Delitos Complejos de la Primera Circunscripción Judicial de Mendoza) and on the same day a petition was made on his behalf to the Inter-American Commission for Human Rights, asking the authorities to put in place measures to protect Pablo Salinas and his family.

The CCBE is alarmed by this situation because Pablo Salinas has repeatedly publicly condemned the use of torture and ill-treatment in prisons in Mendoza province. He has also worked on behalf of victims of police brutality, extrajudicial executions and other human rights violations committed by members of the security forces. Pablo Salinas has provided legal representation to victims of human rights violations committed during the period of military rule in Argentina (1976 – 1983). Due to his work in these areas, he has repeatedly been the victim of threats and harassment. In December 2005, he received threatening telephone calls, and the office he shared with human rights lawyers María Angélica Escayola and Alfredo Guevara Escayola was daubed with graffiti.

Especially worrisome is that human rights defenders working in Mendoza are often the target of harassment and threats.

Finally, the CCBE would like to draw your attention to the UN Basic Principles on the Role of Lawyers (1990) which provides in particular in Article 16 (a) that lawyers shall be:

“Able to perform all of their professional functions without intimidation, hindrance, harassment of improper interference”.

And Article 17 states that:

“When the security of lawyers is threatened as a result of discharging their functions, they shall be adequately safeguarded by the authorities”.

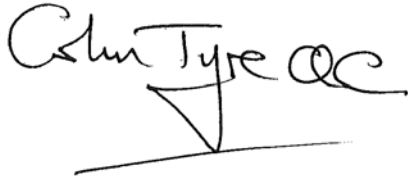
Conseil des barreaux européens – Council of Bars and Law Societies of Europe

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In view of the above, the CCBE respectfully urges you to take immediate and effective steps to guarantee the safety of lawyers in order to preserve the independence and integrity of the administration of justice in Argentina, and to ensure that all attempts to discredit lawyers for the legitimate exercise of their professional duties are promptly and effectively stopped.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Colin Tyre QC". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized 'C' and 'T'. Below the signature is a horizontal line.

Colin Tyre QC
President

Copy to:

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