

URGENT ACTION

33 PEOPLE CRIMINALIZED FOR PROTESTING IN ARGENTINA

A violent police operation during protests on June 12 resulted in 33 people being arbitrarily detained and charged with several offenses, including attacks on constitutional order and democratic life. We urge the prosecutor to immediately drop the charges against them.

TAKE ACTION:

- Write a letter in your own words or using the sample below as a guide to one or both government officials listed. You can also email, fax, call or Tweet them.
- [Click here](#) to let us know the actions you took on **Urgent Action 45.24**. It's important to report because we share the total number with the officials we are trying to persuade and the people we are trying to help.

The National Prosecutor for Criminal and Correctional Matters No. 4
Dr. Carlos Stornelli
Email: fisrcf4-nac@mpf.gov.ar

Embassy of Argentina in the United States
Ambassador Jorge Argüellos
1600 New Hampshire Ave NW,
Washington, DC 20009
Email: eeuu@mrecic.gov.ar
Salutation: Dear Ambassador Jorge Argüellos

Dear Mr. Prosecutor, or Dear Ambassador,

I am writing to express my deep concern about the criminalization of 33 people who peacefully demonstrated against the widely known "Ley de Bases" in Buenos Aires on June 12. Among those detained were university students, street vendors, and human rights defenders.

Evidence from public sources revealed that the operation included the unlawful use of "less lethal" weapons, such as chemical irritants and rubber bullets, resulting in many people being unnecessarily injured and needing medical care.

I urge you to immediately drop the charges against the 33 detained for protesting on June 12 and to immediately release those still in prison.

Yours sincerely,

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Since the new government took office in Argentina in December 2023, large-scale demonstrations have erupted protesting against fiscal cuts and the undermining of human rights. Against this backdrop, some very concerning regulations have been implemented criminalizing protesters and permitting the unlawful use of force against them.

At the same time, several protests have taken place in which the police violently repressed demonstrators with unnecessary and excessive use of force. In addition, the authorities are openly advocating further repression and discouraging the exercise of protest by reinforcing the idea that protesting should be criminalized. On June 12, 2024, while the Argentinean Senate was discussing the draft of the law "Ley Bases", social, political, and trade union organizations gathered in the vicinity of the Congress of the Nation to oppose the bill, exercising their right to protest.

The state response to this large demonstration followed the implementation of the recent "Protocol for the maintenance of public order in the event of roadblocks" ("the Protocol") issued by the Ministry of Security of the Nation and published on December 12, 2023. The Federal Police, the Naval Prefecture ("Prefectura Naval"), the National Gendarmerie, and the Police of the City of Buenos Aires participated in the operation. The operation was characterized by the unlawful use of less lethal weapons (chemical irritants, tonfas, rubber bullets, water cannon, which caused unwarranted injuries to demonstrators), arbitrary arrests, and attacks against press workers.

In this context, 33 people were arbitrarily detained, according to their lawyers and civil society organizations. Amnesty International documented the cases of Santiago Adano, Camila Juárez Oliva, and Juan Ignacio Spinetto. Santiago Adano is a 38-year-old musician, Camila is a 33-year-old college student, and Juan Ignacio Spinetto is a 44-year-old lawyer and teacher. All three of them were arrested and charged with attacks on constitutional order and democratic life, among ten other crimes. Santiago and Camila did not even have the chance to participate in the demonstrations. He was coming out of the subway entrance when he was arrested, and Camila was arrested ten blocks away from the gathering. Juan was arrested when he was returning home to escape the repression.

Santiago was released on Friday, however the criminal proceedings against him continue. Camila and Juan continued to be detained along with 14 other people who were denied release without sufficient justification, until June 18. Five people remain in custody.

All of them were accused of the crimes of public intimidation (art. 211 criminal law), incitement to collective violence (art. 212 criminal law), crimes against the public authorities and the constitutional order (art. 226 criminal law), attempt and resistance to authority (art. 237 and 239 criminal law) and disturbance of order in sessions of legislative bodies (art. 241 criminal law), among other charges. The Minister of Security and the President of the Nation publicly affirmed that the protest was a form of coup d'état and that the detainees are "terrorists". Charges continue to be pressed against the 33 individuals.

PREFERRED LANGUAGE TO ADDRESS TARGET: Spanish or your own language.

PLEASE TAKE ACTION AS SOON AS POSSIBLE UNTIL: August 14, 2024

NAME AND PREFERRED PRONOUN: They/them