

ARGENTINE COMMISSION for HUMAN RIGHTS

COMISION ARGENTINA POR LOS DERECHOS HUMANOS (CADHU)

Washington, D. C. Information Bureau



International Offices:

Geneva
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January 27, 1977

Washington, D.C.

President Jimmy Carter
White House
Washington, D.C.

Dear President Carter,

We have been very heartened by your statements on human rights throughout your long campaign, and more recently, by your inaugural address. We believe that your stated commitment to protect human rights at home and abroad is truly the expression of the real values which the American public wants to see implemented.

That is why we must convey our concern about the State Department report which the past Administration released on the situation of human rights in Argentina.

We are particularly dismayed by this report as it clearly understates the gross violations of human rights carried out by the present Argentine military government, and completely ignores some of the best-informed and documented sources on the subject. The inadequacies of the report compel us to challenge both its content and its conclusions.

The State Department's justifications for continuing security assistance to Argentina are insufficient and ill-grounded. We believe that our national interests are best protected by supporting democratic governments instead of continuing to associate our country with dictatorial regimes.

We are aware of the sentiment in Congress which has led to cut-off of military assistance to countries such as Chile and Uruguay where violations of human rights were proven. We urge you to join Congress in its efforts to disassociate our government from such regimes by encouraging the State Department not to request any military assistance to Argentina. This would be the first positive step for your Administration to start on a course different from that of the past Administration which consistently reflected its insensitivity for human rights.

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We are confident that you will act on your stated commitment to protect human rights by showing "a clearcut preference for those societies which share with us an abiding respect for individual human rights", as you so expressed on Inauguration Day.

Therefore, in the case of Argentina, we urge you and your new Administration to take these three immediate steps:

1. Require the new Carter State Department to review the report on Argentina and submit new reports for public release, giving greater details on human rights violations and giving specific assessments of the impact of continued U.S. security assistance on human rights in Argentina.
2. Do not request any monies from Congress for security assistance to Argentina on the basis that the military government there engages in a consistent pattern of gross violations of internationally recognized human rights.
3. Appoint diplomatic personnel to Argentina who will be sensitive to the democratic aspirations of the Argentine people and will represent well the values of the American people.

Respectfully yours,

Olga Talamante
Olga Talamante
Representative

Argentine Commission for Human Rights

Horacio Lofredo
Horacio Lofredo
Representative

Argentine Commission for Human Rights