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# The State of Memory, Truth, and Justice Policies in Argentina Today

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Assessment of regressive measures on  
Human Rights and the Right to Identity



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# Table of Contents

The role of Argentina in the processes of Memory, Truth and Justice and the advocacy for the Right to Identity in the world.....	5
The Systematic Plan of Illegal Repression and Child Appropriation .....	8
The impact of regressive policies. The process of Memory, Truth and Justice in danger .....	12
Violence and Hate-Fueling Rhetoric .....	22
A Government That Turns Its Back on The Civil Society .....	26
A Call to Solidarity .....	29



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# **The role of Argentina in the processes of Memory, Truth and Justice and the advocacy for the Right to Identity in the world**

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Since the return of the democratic institutions in 1983, the Republic of Argentina, as a State and a people, has made a great effort to investigate, judge and sanction the violations of human rights perpetrated during the last civil-military dictatorship (1976-1983)

Just to cite some achievements, we can mention the trials to the military Juntas, the trials searching for the Truth in times of impunity, and the resumption of the trials for crimes against humanity after the repeal of the Due Obedience and The Full Stop Laws.

The struggle of the Madres and Abuelas de Plaza de Mayo (a.k.a. Mothers and Grandmothers of May Square) for the memory and the search for their relatives has allowed for the identification of hundreds of disappeared persons, in a collaborative work effort with the Argentinian Team of Forensic Anthropology (EAAF: Equipo Argentino de Antropología Forense).

Thanks to the impetus of the Abuelas de Plaza de Mayo, the Right to Identity is now recognized in the articles 7, 8 and 11 of the International Convention of the Rights of Children and Adolescents (1989). In Argentina, these organizations achieved the creation of the National Commission for the Right to Identity (CoNaDi: Comisión Nacional por el Derecho a la Identidad) created to aid in the search of the children disappeared by the estate terrorism and for the protection of the Right to Identity (1992). The activism of the Abuelas also propelled advances in the science of genetics. As a result of their struggle, a group of scientists in the United States achieved the formulation of the “Grandparentage Index” (1984), that allowed to determine the connection of a child with his family even in the absence of the parents’ generation, something impossible until that moment.

This advancement resulted in the creation in Argentina in 1987 of the National Bank of Genetic Data (BNDG: Banco Nacional de Datos Genéticos), a pioneer in the world, that collects and keeps the genetic profiles of the relatives, to ensure the identification of the grandchildren of the Abuelas de Plaza de Mayo.

The search started by Abuelas has spearheaded improvements in the legislation that gives the possibility that adopted persons can now find their biological origin. It has also had an impact in the society at large that now understand clearly the difference between “adoption” and “ap-

appropriation”, as well as clarifying that children and adolescents are subjects with rights, not objects at the disposal of the adults as it was wrongly proposed by appropriators and their advocates.

Together with the other organizations that form the movement of human rights in Argentina, Abuelas has maintained alive the memory through multiple avenues and ideas such as the Sites for Memory, spaces for reflection so that these events don't repeat again. The better known of them is the ESMA (Museum and Site of Memory <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1681>, declared World Heritage Site by UNESCO in 2023).

In this same venue, Abuelas has a building dedicated to the children and youngsters in which the history of the search, its actuality and its legacy as well as the education on the Right to Identity are explained and transmitted. Opened in 2014, the House for Identity receives each week hundreds of children and adolescents that arrive in school groups to visit in the company of guides and to participate in cultural activities related to human rights according to their age.

Something similar takes place in the Space for Memory in the former Police Detachment #5 in the city of La Plata, Province Buenos Aires. Inaugurated in 2019, this place was used as a clandestine detention center; but today is one of the five branches of Abuelas in the country. It is also here that guided visits take place daily for the transmission of the memory so that these events never repeat again. Abuelas teams up, in a similar way, with organizations and public and private institutes to offer formation in human rights and the Right to Identity for teachers and the public.

For reasons like the ones presently detailed, among others, Argentina has built a reputation as a referent at the international level in respect to the work for the memory and the processes of Memory, Truth and Justice as well as the promotion of the Right to Identity.

In fact, many other governments and organizations in the region come to receive advice from the Argentinian organizations that delve in human rights. But not just them, but also the instruments created together with the State, such as CoNaDi and the BNDG to understand how to resolve in their countries the aftermath from the violations of the human rights that hurt Latin America during the 1970 decade.

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# **The Systematic Plan of Illegal Repression and Child Appropriation**

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Almost 49 years ago, Argentina suffered the bloodiest and darkest dictatorship in its history. For eight years, the state carried out systematic and organized violence against the population, primarily targeting workers and students. The brutality knew no limits and included among its victims a large number of disappeared children and adolescents, as well as women—some of them pregnant. Entire families were decimated.

The repressive plan involved the participation of all Armed and Security Forces and coordinated action with forces from other countries to ensure the persecution of activists and political opponents of the civic-military dictatorship beyond the limits of national jurisdiction.

The entire structure of the state was used to forcibly and massively disappear people suspected of belonging to or sympathizing with political organizations opposed to the military regime; to transfer them to clandestine detention, torture, and extermination centers located within or under the control of military units; and to interrogate victims under torture to obtain further information that would allow the execution of the plan. Additionally, they were subjected to inhumane living conditions with the aim of breaking their moral resistance.

People were kept chained and blindfolded, given food sporadically and insufficiently, deprived of the possibility to wash themselves or use the bathroom, and were frequently beaten beyond the torture inflicted during interrogations. In most cases, the victims' final fate was the grimly known "death flights," which involved throwing them—still alive—into the Río de la Plata.

There is a universe of cases in which victims were kept alive: the children who were abducted along with their parents and the babies who were born in clandestine detention and torture centers under brutal circumstances.

The plan implemented included the systematic and widespread practice of abducting, retaining, and concealing newborn babies and young children. They were torn from their families and given to others who belonged to the repressive forces or had ties to them. To perpetuate their disappearances, their true identities were altered or erased, making it impossible for them to be found and for them to even suspect that they were not who they had been told they were.

The perpetrators of the grave crimes committed during the civic-military dictatorship operated clandestinely. They used aliases to avoid identification, kept victims of forced disappearance in complete isolation, and systematically denied any information about their detention and whereabouts to family members or anyone seeking them.

Despite all the measures they took to guarantee their impunity, through meticulous work carried out over many years and a consolidated process based on the principles of Memory, Truth, and Justice, it has been possible to identify, prosecute, and sanction more than 1,100 people for their involvement in the crimes against humanity committed during the last civil-military dictatorship.

Initially, the execution of the plan was documented through the reports prepared by the National Commission on the Disappearance of Persons (CONADEP: Comisión Nacional sobre la Desaparición de Personas), which was created to investigate the fate of the disappeared.

## Argentina has achieved recognition as a reference at the international level for its work in preserving the memory of these events

Later, the information was corroborated and expanded through the successive criminal trials that have taken place since 1985 and continue to this day. Notable among them are the historic trial against the members of the Military Juntas that same year and the landmark trial known as the “Systematic Plan for the Appropriation of Children,” which proved the systematic and widespread nature of this practice.

For the crimes of state terrorism, since 2006—when trials were reopened after a period of impunity—328 verdicts have been issued in Argentina, resulting in the conviction of 1,187 people, while 192 were acquitted.<sup>1</sup>

1. <https://www.fiscales.gob.ar/lesa-humanidad/las-condenas-por-crimes-de-lesa-humanidad-alcanzaron-a-1-187-personas-desde-la-reapertura-de-los-juicios-en-2006/>

## Close to 352 women were pregnant at the time of their disappearance or assassination and around 77 children were abducted together with their parents

Some 815 sites have been identified as clandestine detention and torture centers or places where significant events related to state terrorism took place. Among them are those used as clandestine maternity wards, where children were born in captivity and later handed over to families belonging to the Armed and Security Forces or connected to them. Many of these children are still being searched for today by the Abuelas de Plaza de Mayo.

Around 352 women were pregnant at the time of their disappearance and/or murder, and approximately 77 children were abducted along with their parents<sup>2</sup>. Most of these parents remain disappeared, as do many of the detained-disappeared victims.

Through immense effort and the essential coordinated work of society at large as well as the three branches of government, Abuelas de Plaza de Mayo have resolved to date, 137 of the nearly 500 cases under investigation. They are still searching for about 350 grandchildren—now adult men and women who may have children of their own. As a result, they are also searching for the generation of great-grandchildren, who likewise experience a violation of their Right to Identity.

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2. According to the records compiled through the coordinated work of the Asociación Civil Abuelas de Plaza de Mayo, the National Commission for the Right to Identity (CONADI), and the Argentine Forensic Anthropology Team (EAAF).

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**The impact of  
regressive policies.  
The process of  
Memory, Truth and  
Justice in danger**

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Since the day he took office, in December 2023, the government of Javier Milei has deployed measures that affect these processes of Memory, Truth and Justice, mainly through the reduction of the human and financial resources to agencies and specialized units dedicated to exposing human rights violations committed during the last dictatorship.

The emphasis on the economic crisis should not mean the limitation of resources for areas of crucial importance when it comes to transitional justice processes. The Milei administration measures could imply a risk of guaranteeing the right to truth, justice, reparation, and non-repetition.

Article 2 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights determines the obligation of the State to investigate and punish violations of human rights and to fight against impunity for these crimes. Furthermore, as established by the Human Rights Committee in its general comment No. 31, States have the obligation to investigate and punish violations of human rights, classified as crimes in national or international law, in particular, genocide, war crimes, crimes against humanity and other serious violations of human rights, including enforced disappearance. Impunity can be an important element contributing to the repetition of such violations.

Deep concern is generated by the repeal of Decree 715 of 2004, which created the Special Investigation Unit (UEI) within the CoNaDI, to guarantee operational support for the tasks carried out by CoNaDI, for judges and prosecutors involved in the different cases on the restitution of the identity of the victims, the clarification of criminal acts and the individualization and prosecution of those responsible.

Recently, the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child has expressed its concern regarding the dissolution of the UEI, highlighting, at the same time, that Argentina is an international reference in the search for missing children.

Also causing concern is the safeguarding of the valuable collection of the National Memory Archive (ANM), dependent on the National Human Rights Secretariat, which has custody of public and private documents and collections linked to the last military dictatorship, among which those of CONADEP stand out, as well as 6,300 blood samples collected within the framework of the Latin American Initiative for the Identification of Missing Persons.

The preservation of memory sites is another cause for deep concern. Due to budget cuts, infrastructure works, archaeological excavations and conservation tasks have been interrupted in these spaces.

On another note, it is cause for alarm the repeated introduction of legislative proposals that could compromise the prosecution and criminal punishment of crimes against humanity.

Finally, there is concern about the rhetoric of authorities who seem to trivialize or relativize the crimes of the dictatorship and question the trial processes of those responsible, which has a re-victimizing impact on survivors of the dictatorship and, in addition, affects the right to memory of the society as a whole.

All these changes, it is important to emphasize, could undermine the transitional justice process, which has been and remains crucial for the region and the world, and could pose a risk to the goal of ensuring non-repetition of this recent history.

Since the beginning of their struggle, Abuelas has developed various strategies, mechanisms and tools to search for their grandchildren. This struggle is upheld by the collective efforts of civil society and the State, which has simultaneously promoted public policies to support this cause. The search and location of the victims is extremely complex due to the secrecy that characterized State terrorism and the difficulties inherent to identification, especially of those babies born in clandestine centers or other facilities under the control of repressive forces, where there were no records whatsoever of the entry of the pregnant woman, her data and those of her son or daughter. This situation made it almost impossible to reconstruct how the births occurred and under what circumstances the babies were stolen and given to third parties.

For these reasons, Abuelas has turned to forensic genetics to be able to reliably identify them. The aforementioned “Grandparent Index” allows the identification of grandchildren without having the genetic data of their parents’ generation (disappeared), through the comparison of biological samples and genetic sequences of the alleged grandchildren with those of the grandmothers (Abuelas) and their relatives.

To carry out these genetic tests and conclude the investigations for the search of the missing grandchildren, there are two governmental agencies that are key, the BNDG and the CoNaDI, although all areas and powers of the State are required.

Today these fundamental pillars of this entire search are at risk, and we see with great concern the destruction of these hard-won institutional tools.

There are setbacks that directly harm the Memory, Truth and Justice process by hindering and delaying ongoing investigations to find the granddaughters and grandsons, who are victims of forced disappearance.

In this way, Argentina's commitment to its international obligations is at risk, including its duty to investigate, prosecute, punish, and ensure adequate reparation, as well as to implement measures preventing the recurrence of crimes against humanity.

These setbacks occur in a context where the national government openly and publicly promotes denial, spreads hate speech and stigmatizes and persecutes Human Rights defenders.

## **CoNaDI and Its Role on Human Rights Investigations**

In addition to investigating cases of possible sons and daughters of missing persons, CoNaDI carries out tasks to identify women who were victims of illegal repression anywhere in the country, with the aim of incorporating their genetic data into the BNDG. CoNaDI also completes the records of the searching families, so that their samples integrate the BNDG files. Thus, the aim is to ensure that the records are complete so that they can then be compared with the genetic samples of possible sons and daughters of missing persons.

The CoNaDI receives and assists people with doubts about their identity and eventually, if necessary, requests the BNDG to carry out genetic tests. In addition, it provides psychological support and legal advice to people in judicial identity restitution processes.

On the other hand, CoNaDI receives and assists all individuals searching for their children, regardless of the date or circumstances of birth, that is, even when the cases are not linked to the last civil-military dictatorship. Over the years, CoNaDI has provided answers in more than 2,000 cases in which the biological origins of individuals were determined, many of them being mothers searching for their children

## National Commission for the Right to Identity (CONADI)

The CoNaDI is the commission of the Executive Branch created to fulfill the commitments of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance, and the Inter-American Convention on Forced Disappearance of Persons. To this end, it carries out investigative tasks aimed at clarifying or ruling out suspicions in cases involving individuals who have doubts about their identity, including cases related to state terrorism.

Since 2001, through National Law No. 25.457, its objectives have been established as fo-

llows: a) To contribute to fulfilling the commitment assumed by the national government when ratifying the Convention on the Rights of the Child—Law 23.849—which has had constitutional status since 1994, particularly regarding the right to identity. b) To promote the search for children of disappeared persons and individuals born while their mothers were in captivity, in order to determine their whereabouts and identity. c) To intervene in any situation where a minor's right to identity has been violated. (Article 1 of the law, emphasis added)

Currently, CoNaDI faces significant obstacles that delay the investigation of enforced disappearance cases and the restitution of identity for grandchildren. One major challenge stems from the Executive Branch's decision to shut down its investigative unit, the UEI<sup>1</sup> (Unidad Especial de Investigación), which had worked in coordination with the Judiciary and the Public Prosecutor's Office for over 20 years.

As previously explained, the UEI was created to provide maximum operational support to CoNaDI's work, as well as to judges and prosecutors involved in cases investigating victims of enforced disappearance who were appropriated. Its purpose was to locate these individuals, restore their identities, fully clarify criminal acts, identify those responsible, and bring them to justice.

This unit conducted pre-judicial investigations through document and archive analysis, allowing for the exclusion of individuals who were proven to be biological children of those who had registered them, as well as those for whom there were no indications to suggest they might be victims.

1. The UEI was created by Decree 715/2004. Available at: Decree 715/2004 | [Argentina.gob.ar](http://Argentina.gob.ar). And it was shut down by Decree No. 727/2024, which repealed the decree that established it. Available at: <https://www.argentina.gob.ar/normativa/nacional/decreto-727-2024-402821/texto>

**Since its creation, the UEI has handled a total of 6,938 investigations into potential victims, some of which are still ongoing.** These include cases initiated based on anonymous reports received by Abuelas de Plaza de Mayo, suggesting that certain individuals might be grandchildren still being searched for. Others stem from investigations carried out by the organization itself.

Of this total, the UEI **resolved 2,468 cases**, with only 25% requiring referral to the Judiciary for resolution. This approach ensured that resources were used effectively and efficiently, preventing an unnecessary overload of the judicial system with cases that could be resolved through administrative channels.

## CoNaDI faces significant obstacles that delay the investigation of enforced disappearance cases and the restitution of identity for the grandchildren

The closure of the UEI also impacts on the investigations carried out by the Judiciary and the Public Prosecutor's Office, which will now receive around 6,000 cases, overwhelming their capacity and delaying their resolution.

Nevertheless, the obstruction of CoNaDI's investigations began even before the closure of UEI. The Ministries of Defense and Security have restricted CoNaDI's access to crucial documents for its investigations. They refuse to provide records from the Armed Forces, Federal Police, and Security Forces to CoNaDI in administrative cases investigating the fate of stolen children. This documentation is essential, considering that the vast majority of these children were handed over to families of military or security force or individuals connected to them, as confirmed through the cases of restored grandchildren.

These refusals have been publicly acknowledged by Executive Branch officials in aggressive statements, where they accused CoNaDI of being a "militant organization."<sup>2</sup> This clearly signals a political stance against in-

2. This can be seen on the official Argentina.gob.ar website: <https://www.argentina.gob.ar/noticias/el-ministerio-de-seguridad-rechazo-entregar-legajos-de-efectivos-de-las-fuerzas-la-comision>. <https://www.pagina12.com.ar/740038-bullrich-busca-entorpecer-la-busqueda-de-los-ninos-robados-d>

vestigations into the appropriations committed during the last dictatorship, ultimately benefiting the perpetrators of crimes against humanity.

This, beyond being a serious setback, represents a shift from the stance maintained for over 20 years on these investigations—one that has persisted across the administrations of successive constitutional governments in Argentina, regardless of their political affiliations.

As it happened in other Argentinean state institutions, CoNaDI workers suffer from job insecurity and are being offered severance packages with exploitative clauses under the threat of dismissal. The agency could see a 67% reduction in staff, which would severely impact ongoing investigations.

Since June 2024, the Executive Branch has been granted powers to modify or eliminate CoNaDI's functions, intervene in its operations, or even dissolve it. In 2024, through the enactment of the so-called 'Law of Bases and Starting Points for the Freedom of Argentines,' extraordinary powers were granted to the Executive Branch, effectively dismantling the separation of power and overriding the role of the Legislative Branch—both fundamental principles of Argentina's National Constitution, which establishes the country's federal and republican character.

### **Budget Cuts to the National Genetic Data Bank (BNDG)**

The BNDG was created in the early years of democracy by decision of President Raúl Alfonsín, following a meeting with Abuelas de Plaza de Mayo, where they presented the scientific discovery of the "Grandparentage Index" and stressed the need to store their genetic profiles to ensure the identification of the missing children—now adults—even after the grandmothers were no longer alive.

A year after this meeting, the National Congress reaffirmed its commitment to the search for the stolen grandchildren, making it one of the first public policies of Argentina's democracy by unanimously passing the law creating the BNDG (Law No. 23.511), which was later amended in 2009 by Law No. 26.548.

## What is the BNDG?

The National Genetic Data Bank (BNDG) holds all genetic samples from families searching for children who disappeared due to state terrorism, as well as from individuals who suspect they may be the children of disappeared persons. Its objectives include the collection, storage, and analysis of genetic information to uncover crimes against humanity committed up until December 10, 1983. This ap-

plies both to cases of children of disappeared persons and to assisting the judiciary and/or organizations in identifying the remains of disappeared individuals. In recent years, the BNDG's scope has expanded to include genetic samples from mothers who were not victims of enforced disappearance but who were also deprived of their children during that period.

However, the Executive Branch's 2025 Budget Proposal shows a reduction in the funds allocated for its operation.

The budget allocated to the BNDG for 2025 is 2.333 billion pesos (initial credit). While this appears to be an increase compared to the 2.049 billion pesos effectively executed in 2024, the projected annual inflation for 2025 is 37.3%, meaning that in real terms, the budget represents a 17.1% reduction.

This cut adds to the 40.2% real decrease suffered in 2024. Combined, these reductions result in a total budget drop of 50.4% from 2023 to 2025. The allocated budget falls short of what is necessary to ensure the BNDG's proper functioning, to the extent that it may be unable to carry out its mission.

Besides being insufficient, the allocated funds undermine the predictability of the BNDG's work, leaving any potential additional funding entirely at the discretion of the Executive Branch.

A sharp decline of over 20% is also observed in the salary budget, while other expenses have also been reduced, though to a lesser extent. This cut jeopardizes the operation of the BNDG, as it directly affects the income of the professionals responsible for its work.

### Dismantling of Other Key Investigation Units

Among the regressive measures impacting investigations into crimes committed during the dictatorship is the dismantling of the Documentary Survey and Analysis Team (ERyA), which specialized in analyzing Armed Forces archives<sup>3</sup>.

Since its establishment in 2010, ERyA produced over 170 reports, many of which contributed to judicial proceedings investigating these crimes, leading to convictions of those found responsible. The team played a crucial role in confirming the transfer of disappeared detainees through clandestine detention centers and reconstructing the operational structures behind the so-called “death flights”. These are just a few examples of the contributions that this team has made to the effective safeguarding of the right to the truth.

The Ministry of Defense terminated ERyA's work through Ministerial Resolution 680/2024, branding it a “persecution group engaged in McCarthyism” and questioning its legality, calling its work “para-judicial”. Using these justifications, the government dismissed all 13 experts in Armed Forces archives who made up the team.

The search and location of the victims is extremely complex due to the clandestine nature of state terrorism and the inherent challenges of identification

Additionally, the working group on intelligence documents related to human rights violations—which operated within the State Intelligence Secretariat (SIDE, formerly the Federal Intelligence Agency)—has been discontinued. This group was created through Resolution 467/2021 and included members from SIDE, the National Secretariat for Human Rights, the National Memory Archive, the General Archive of the Nation, and human rights organizations. Its purpose was to facilitate access to information regarding the role of intelligence agencies in the grave human rights violations committed during the last dictatorship in Argentina

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3. Created in March 2010 (Resolution 308/2010).

All these measures have taken place alongside the defunding as well as widespread and growing precarity of institutions connected to the Memory, Truth, and Justice process. Particularly affected are various offices directly under the National Secretariat for Human Rights, including: the Directorate of Memory Sites and Spaces, the “Haroldo Conti” Cultural Center, the Directorate of Reparatory Policies Management, the National Directorate of Legal Affairs and the “Fernando Ulloa” Center for Victims of Human Rights Violations.

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# **Violence and Hate- Fueling Rhetoric**

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Human rights organizations, social change movements, as well as women and many other groups, are being attacked by the current Argentine government, which seeks to discredit their struggles, stigmatize them, and violate the right to freedom of peaceful assembly and association in order to defund the public policies created to address these issues.

These hostile narratives occur in a widespread global context that reflects growing authoritarianism and the shrinking of civic space, as recently reported by the Special Rapporteur on the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and association, Gina Romero<sup>1</sup>.

Since this political party took office, and even previously – during the election campaign –, political leaders of La Libertad Avanza (LLA), now transformed into government officials, have been supporting a campaign of grievances and stigmatization of the human rights movement.

As an example of such grievances, it is worth remembering a post by the Vice President of the Nation, Victoria Villarruel, in the social network X, addressed to the head of the Abuelas de Plaza de Mayo, Estela de Carlotto, published on March 24, 2024, National Day of Remembrance for Truth and Justice: “Carlotto NO ONE voted for you, they voted for @JMilei. Respect the Argentine people who said NO to you too. #NOFUERON30000.” <https://x.com/VickyVillarruel/status/1771990064748277931>

“The message, both hostile and offensive in nature, disregards the legacy of Carlotto, a world-renowned figure recognized for her peaceful struggle to uncover the truth, preserve historical memory, and achieve justice for the crimes of the dictatorship. Furthermore, Villarroel denies the extent of state terrorism—an even graver act, given that she makes these comment in her role as Vice President.

In another stigmatizing turn, the Minister of Justice, Mariano Cúneo Libarona, on the same social network, with fallacious arguments wrote: “The previous government gave the Abuelas de Plaza de Mayo the equivalent today of \$2.3 billion. This administration is not going to allow Argentines’ money to be wasted for this purpose. For that reason, we decided to terminate the contract and end that rip-off” (see [https://x.com/m\\_cu-neolibarona/status/1840825900327186476?s=08](https://x.com/m_cu-neolibarona/status/1840825900327186476?s=08))

1. Report A/79/263 of the Special Rapporteur on the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and association, Gina Romero of the United Nations, July 31, 2024.

It deeply offends and dishonors Abuelas and its institution that a public official baselessly and unfairly discredits them, calling “rip-off” the work that Abuelas has carried out peacefully for 47 years, searching for victims of forced disappearance who were stolen as babies. A search that has always been carried out with the objective of reconstructing the truth, strengthening memory, access to justice and reparation for victims.

Messages such as those mentioned ignore and overlook the construction of democratic instruments agreed upon during 40 years of democracy to uncover, slowly but steadily, the crimes of the dictatorship.

Since it took office, the present government has employed a similar *modus operandi* with each of the symbolic enemies it seeks to create—deliberately smearing them, often accusing them of corruption, and then defunding them. This happened earlier in 2024 with social movements, which were stripped of financial support for soup kitchens that feed thousands of Argentine families, as well as with public universities, a key instrument of social mobility and citizenship building in Argentina.

They tried the same with Abuelas de Plaza de Mayo, the vast majority of the areas and dependencies of the National Human Rights Secretariat and the National Disability Agency, just to mention some governmental and non-governmental organizations that suffered cuts or defunding. Other State agencies suffered worse luck and were directly eliminated, such as the Ministry of Women, Gender and Diversity of the Nation and the National Institute Against Discrimination, Xenophobia and Racism (INADI).

In line with these actions, it is unavoidable to mention the visit of six LLA legislators (La Libertad Avanza, President Milei governing party) to those convicted of crimes against humanity at the Ezeiza prison<sup>2</sup>, at the beginning of 2024. These meetings were held without being previously informed and were later reported as humanitarian visits. However, it later emerged that these were meetings to work on a law that would reduce penalties and close the justice process for crimes against humanity. The entire narrative of the visits revolved around the trivialization of the crimes of the dictatorship, the discrediting of the Memory, Truth and Justice process and the victimization of those convicted.

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2. Libertarian deputies must explain why they visited repressors in prison. Published note. Article published September 3, 2024. <https://www.ambito.com/politica/diputados-debaten-sanciones-libertarios-que-visitaron-represores-la-carcel-n6055898>

In addition to this there was a persistent campaign of these sectors for a “complete memory” about what happened during the dictatorship, with the clear objective of reinstating the “theory of the two demons”, which maintains that a war occurred between two sides and does not recognize that it was a genocide, with the force of the State put at the service of the annihilation of dissidents of the regime.

In this sense, the actions of the Argentine State in the hearing granted by the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) to Argentine human rights organizations, on November 14, 2024, have caused much concern. The space for dialogue proposed by the IACHR, within the framework of its 191st Period of Sessions, ended up being a scenario in which the LLA administration exhibited its contempt for human rights organizations, making accusations about an alleged search for revenge against the Armed Forces and adhered to the need for a “complete memory”, as demanded by pro-impunity sectors supporting actions by the military during the dictatorship.

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# **A Government That Turns Its Back on Civil Society**

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Public policies related to the process of Memory, Truth and Justice are about the present, not the past. Of all, its importance in ensuring the non-repetition of aberrant crimes committed.

The objective is, on one hand, to uncover the truth and deepen our understanding of the genocide that occurred during the last dictatorship—widely substantiated in dozens of trials for crimes against humanity—and, on the other hand, to make amends to the victims of these crimes. Not only to them but to society as a whole, including future generations.

In the case of Abuelas de Plaza de Mayo, the urgency is indisputable. The crime of identity substitution continues until the truth is known. And as previously stated, it is not only the grandchildren of the Abuelas who have yet to be restored who suffer; the grandchildren's sons and daughters also endure the consequences, thus perpetuating the false genealogy imposed by State terrorism. Furthermore, their legitimate families, who have been searching for them for more than four decades, have the right to the truth and reunion, as does society as a whole. The democratic state must guarantee the restitution of the identity of the grandchildren, even when the government in power does not acknowledge its responsibility in doing so.

## The crime of identity substitution continues until the truth is known.

This is why it is essential to develop and sustain public policies over time, beyond the guidelines of successive governments, since we are talking here about imprescriptible crimes, that is, that they are as serious today as they were when committed, which do not prescribe unless the truth is found, and there are international commitments by the State itself that need to be fulfilled, whether or not the incumbent authority is in agreement with them.

However, public policies of reparation, as in other fields, cannot be reduced to guidelines established by a government and, much less, to mere economic criteria. On the contrary, civil society, through its organizations, must be able to participate in the direction of policies, its opinions must be heard and taken into account in order to establish, in a consensual manner, the priorities, even more so in a context of crisis.

The daily work of thousands of civil society entities - Abuelas is one of them - must be taken into account. The State must enable channels of dialogue to configure public policies that concern the life of the entire population. These almost 41 years of uninterrupted democracy in Argentina have been possible because, with advances and setbacks, the different governments, of different political signs, built bridges with society.

It is certainly worrying that a government does not listen to or consider what civil society has to say. The democratic ideals cannot be an aspect to be resigned or set aside, and if it were, the other powers of the State should take action on the matter.

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# **A Call to Solidarity**

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This report is a call to human rights advocates and defenders, representatives of states, organizations, and institutions with democratic traditions, who are concerned about the rise of fascist right-wing movements around the world.

We ask all of you to listen to us, to join forces to stop the advance of those who seek to turn their fellow citizens into enemies through stigmatization and dehumanization. We urge you to help us denounce and take action against the regressive policies that will lead to the violation of international treaties designed to protect humanity.

Abuelas de Plaza de Mayo is a victims' organization founded almost 50 years ago to search for their grandchildren, stolen during the State terrorism in Argentina. We turned to international solidarity when, under the dictatorship, all doors were closed to us, and the grave human rights violations being committed were denied.

Since then, for us and for all human rights organizations, the support of international institutions and allied countries has been essential. Only in democracy were we able to begin a dialogue with Argentine political representatives and, gradually, build the tools and public policies that the government of Javier Milei now seeks to dismantle.

As we highlight in this report, the setbacks in Argentina regarding human rights and the historic process of Memory, Truth, and Justice are deeply concerning.

Unlike in the early years of our struggle, we are now supported by a significant portion of society, which over time has committed itself to upholding the pillars of Memory, Truth, and Justice—foundational principles of this democracy, the longest-lasting in Argentina's history.

However, we recognize the limitations faced by many local political representatives. That is why we once again call for international solidarity, so that the world listens to what is happening in Argentina and takes action accordingly. We need global support to ensure that our country can uphold the democratic values rooted in the defense of human rights, Memory, Truth, and Justice—values that we have fought so hard to achieve.



# A Year of Action and Resistance

<p><b>15/12</b> The national government establishes a new <b>security protocol</b> that restricts citizens' freedoms.</p> <p><b>20/12</b> The national government announces a mega <b>executive order of necessity and urgency (DNU)</b>, which intervenes in all sensitive areas of society.</p> <p><b>27/12</b> The national government sends to Congress the <b>Omnibus Bill project</b>, which aims to transform all the attributions of the State.</p>	<p><b>24/3</b> The Vice President of the nation, Victoria Villarruel, attacked the President of Abuelas, Estela de Carlotto, after the massive event in Plaza de Mayo, marking 48 years since the coup d'état. "Carlotto, NO ONE voted for you, they voted for @JMilei. Respect the Argentine people who also told you NO. #ThereWereNot30000," she wrote on the social media platform X.</p>		
2023	2024		
DECEMBER	JANUARY	FEBRUARY	MARCH
<p><b>16/12</b> Abuelas <b>condemns</b> the "Protocol for the maintenance of public order in the face of road closures."</p> <p><b>21/12</b> Abuelas <b>repudia</b> el megadecreto del gobierno: "No podemos callar ante semejante atropello a la institucionalidad y a la división de poderes".</p> <p><b>27/12</b> Abuelas <b>condemns</b> the Omnibus Bill: "Exercising the highest authority of the country demands responsibility and adherence to the Constitution."</p>	<p><b>16/1</b> Estela de Carlotto <b>speaks</b> in the Chamber of Deputies at the National Congress against the Omnibus Bill: "<b>We ask you memory.</b>"*</p> <p><b>24/1</b> Abuelas marches to Plaza del Congreso to condemn the DNU and the Omnibus Bill.</p>		<p><b>22/3</b> Abuelas condemns the brutal <b>aggression against a member of H.I.J.O.S.</b> and calls for unity to stop the escalation of violence: "Never again hatred, never again political violence."</p>
<p>* "Memoria" in Spanish translates here as "memory" which means both "to remember" and "remembrance"</p>			

**5/4**

The government **dismantles the Task Group on Armed Forces Archives**, which established unrestricted access to the facilities where each force's archives are stored.

**26/4**

Presidential spokesperson Manuel Adorni states that the **Bases Bill** sent by the Executive Power to Congress "will become a reality."

**29/5**

The Ministry of National Security, through a statement, **denies CoNaDI the right to request personnel files from the Federal Police and Security Forces** to investigate the fate of children stolen during the period of State terrorism.

**27/6**

The government announces **its decision to eliminate the "Special Unit for the Investigation of the Disappearance of Children as a Consequence of State Terrorism" (UEI)** from CoNaDI.

**17/7**

It is revealed that six deputies from the ruling party, La Libertad Avanza (LLA), met with convicted human rights violators in Ezeiza prison to discuss evading sentences and obstructing the Memory, Truth, and Justice process.

APRIL

MAY

JUNE

JULY

**16/5**

The president of Abuelas, Estela Carlotto and the restored grandson Guillermo Perez Roisinblit **speak in the debate on the "Bases" bill** in the Nation's Senate. "We are concerned about the scope it has, among others, over the National Genetic Data Bank and the CoNaDI."

**18/5**

Together with other Human Rights organizations, we condemn the **celebratory act conducted by former ESMA students** on Navy Day.

**21/5**

Abuelas condemns the **shut-down of websites and social media of Public TV**, Canal Encuentro, PakaPaka, and National Radio stations: "This represents yet another step towards silencing the plurality of voices."

**14/6**

Abuelas demands the immediate release of the people detained during the repression of the social protest against the Bases Bill in the vicinity of Congress.

**27/6**

Abuelas participates in consultations with Latin American actors in preparation for the **World Congress on Enforced Disappearances (WCED)**, scheduled for January 15-16, 2025.

**3/7**

Abuelas calls for the traditional "Thursdays' round" to defend human rights.

**17/7**

Abuelas condemns the visit of ruling party deputies (LLA) to convicted human rights violators: "It would be good if the Deputies demanded valuable information from the detainees to reach the truth we have been seeking for 46 years."

**25/7**

Miguel Santucho represents Abuelas in a **hearing at the Italian Chamber of Deputies** to inform and raise awareness about the current situation of the search for the grandchildren in Argentina.

**14/8**

The national government officially **eliminates** by Executive Order the Specialized Investigation Unit for the Search for Children Appropriated During the Dictatorship within CoNaDI.

**3/9**

The closure of CoNaDI's investigation unit raises **concerns at the United Nations**.

**30/9**

Justice Minister Mariano Cúneo Libarona publishes lies and slander about Abuelas de Plaza de Mayo on social media platform X.

2024

AUGUST

**5/8**

Grandson Guillermo Pérez Roisinblit, other relatives, survivors, and human rights organizations participate in the public hearing convened by National Deputies following the meeting of six pro-government legislators with imprisoned genocidaires.

**15/8**

Human rights organizations submit a request for an investigation into the Vice President of the Council of Magistracy of the Nation, Agustina Díaz Cordero, and her participation in meetings to benefit human rights violators.

**28/8**

On International Day of the Disappeared, we speak with Ana Lorena Delgadillo Pérez, a member of the Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances.

**28/8**

**The Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) urges States** to avoid relativistic or denialist positions regarding contexts where serious human rights violations occurred.

SEPTEMBER

**18/9**

Together with other organizations, Abuelas meets with the Working Group on Enforced Disappearances (Grupo de Trabajo sobre Desapariciones Forzadas o Involuntarias)\*\* to warn them about official rhetoric and government measures against Memory, Truth, and Justice policies.

\*\* <https://www.ohchr.org/en/special-procedures/wg-disappearances>  
<https://www.ohchr.org/es/stories/2025/01/global-voices-unity-first-world-congress-enforced-disappearances>

OCTOBER

**3/10**

Abuelas brings to the attention of the Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances and the Rapporteurship (Relatoría) on the Promotion of Truth, Justice, and Reparation the comments made by Minister Cuneo Libarona on X against Abuelas.

**9/10**

**Abuelas informs the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner** for Human Rights and the Regional Office for South America about Minister Cúneo Libarona's social media posts against Abuelas.

NOVEMBER

**14/11**

Abuelas, alongside other human rights organizations and supported by civil society, participates in a hearing on the impact of Memory, Truth, and Justice policies in Argentina, granted by the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR).





**ABUELAS**  
DE PLAZA DE MAYO