Argentine Forensic Anthropology Team
EQUIPO ARGENTINO DE ANTROPOLOGÍA FORENSE

2007 ANNUAL REPORT
Covering the period January to December 2006
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14 MISSION REPORTS

14 Argentina
EAAF continued its work in Argentina to identify people who disappeared during the last military regime, moving investigations forward in the provinces of Buenos Aires, Catamarca, Chaco, Córdoba, Corrientes, Entre Ríos, Formosa, Jujuy, La Rioja, Mendoza, Misiones, Santa Fe, and Tucumán. EAAF is providing evidence in new and reopened prosecutions.

- Introduction
- Province of Buenos Aires
- Province of Catamarca
- Province of Chaco
- Province of Córdoba
- Province of Corrientes
- Province of Entre Ríos
- Province of Formosa
- Province of Santa Fe
- Province of Tucumán

50 Bolivia
EAAF conducted two missions to Bolivia, advising the Santa Cruz de la Sierra District Attorney’s Office on forensic aspects of the investigation of Bolivians who disappeared between 1964 and 1982. EAAF also assisted the Association of Families of the Disappeared and Martyrs for National Liberation in the José Luis Ibsen case.

54 Chile
EAAF formed part of a panel of experts established by Chile’s Presidential Advisory Commission on Human Rights to make recommendations on possible problems related to the identification of disappeared persons found in Plot 29 of Santiago’s General Cemetery in 1991 and 1997.

60 Cyprus
At the request of the United Nations Committee on Missing Persons in Cyprus, EAAF is leading a forensic project on the search for Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots missing since the 1963-1964 and 1974 incidents.

64 El Salvador
EAAF conducted a mission to El Salvador at the request of Tutela Legal, the human rights office of the Archdiocese of San Salvador, to carry out a preliminary investigation into the 1932 massacre of Izalco.

72 Mexico
EAAF worked in Chihuahua State on the recovery and identification of over 60 female remains associated with the investigation of murdered and disappeared women in Ciudad Juárez and the city of Chihuahua.

80 Morocco
EAAF conducted a mission to Morocco on contract with the International Center for Transitional Justice to assess current and future forensic work resulting from the Equity and Reconciliation Commission, a governmental truth commission investigating state-sponsored disappearances and killings between 1956 and 1999.

86 Paraguay
EAAF conducted three missions to Paraguay to collaborate with the Commission for Truth and Justice on the search for persons who disappeared during the regime of General Alfredo Stroessner, carrying out forensic investigations and assisting on historical research and database management.

90 South Africa
At the request of the National Prosecuting Authority (NPA), EAAF conducted a mission to South Africa to investigate apartheid-era crimes. Together with the Missing Persons Task Team, an agency of the NPA, EAAF carried out exhumation, performed anthropological analysis, and trained post-graduate students.

96 Uruguay
At the request of the Office of the President of Uruguay, EAAF provided assistance in the identification of the remains of Ubagesner Chaves Sosa and Fernando Miranda. These are the first identifications of remains of disappeared persons found in Uruguay.

102 SPECIAL SECTIONS

102 Right to Truth
EAAF’s work supports the fundamental rights to truth and justice of victims of human rights violations, their families, and societies at large. This section provides an update on prosecutions in Argentina for human rights abuses during the last military government.

120 Awards
EAAF received a B’nai B’rith Foundation award in recognition of its work to promote human rights. Team member Mercedes Doretti received a prestigious MacArthur Foundation Fellowship in 2007.

122 Documentation and Outreach
Visual documentation and outreach activities are part of EAAF’s effort to share the results of forensic investigations, along with the personal stories accompanying them, to affected communities, associations of families of victims, human rights organizations, related institutions, and society at large. This year, we focus on recent EAAF published articles.

125 International Psycho-Social Work Conference
EAAF participated in the conference held in Antigua, Guatemala. The conference aimed to strengthen the practical and theoretical development of psycho-social assistance through the exchange of ideas and experiences among those active in accompaniment during the search for the disappeared.

130 LIID
The Latin American Initiative for the Identification of the Disappeared (LIID) was launched in Argentina, Guatemala, and Peru. EAAF spearheaded the highly successful first stages of the LIID in Argentina, leading an ad campaign, collecting blood samples, depositions, and planning for future work.
Introduction

The Argentine Forensic Anthropology Team (*Equipo Argentino de Antropología Forense*, EAAF), established in 1984, is a nongovernmental, nonprofit, scientific organization that applies forensic sciences, mainly forensic anthropology, archaeology, and genetics, to the investigation of human rights violations in Argentina and around the world. The team was founded in response to the need to investigate the disappearances of at least 9,000 people by the military regime that ruled Argentina from 1976 to 1983. Applying forensic anthropology and related sciences, and working closely with victims and their relatives, the team seeks to shed light on human rights violations, contributing to the search for truth, justice, reparation, and prevention of future abuses.

Forensic anthropology uses methods and techniques from physical anthropology and forensic medicine to investigate legal cases involving skeletal or almost skeletonized remains. EAAF also draws from forensic archaeology, which applies traditional archaeological methods to legal contexts. The work involves a range of other disciplines, including forensic pathology, odontology, genetics, ballistics, radiology, social anthropology, and computer science, among others. EAAF applies knowledge from these fields to exhume and identify victims of disappearances and extrajudicial killings, return their remains to relatives of victims, present evidence of violations and patterns of abuse to relevant judicial and non-judicial bodies, and train local professionals. EAAF members work as expert witnesses and/or advisors for local and international human rights organizations, national judiciaries, international tribunals, and special commissions of inquiry, such as truth commissions.
The Founding of EAAF

In early 1984, CONADEP (The National Commission on the Disappeared, a presidential truth commission) and the Grandmothers of Plaza de Mayo, a nongovernmental human rights organization searching for children that disappeared with their parents, requested assistance from Eric Stover, the former director of the Science and Human Rights Program at the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS). Stover organized a delegation of forensic experts to travel to Argentina, where they found several hundred exhumed, unidentified skeletons stored in plastic bags at several medical legal institutes. Many bags held the bones of more than one individual. The delegation called for an immediate halt to the exhumations because of improper excavation, storage, and analysis.

Among the AAAS delegation members was Dr. Clyde Snow, one of the world’s foremost experts in forensic anthropology. Dr. Snow called on archaeologists, anthropologists, and physicians to begin exhumations and analysis of skeletal remains using traditional archaeological and forensic anthropology techniques. Snow returned to Argentina repeatedly over the next five years, trained the founding EAAF members, and helped to form EAAF. Dr. Snow and EAAF continue to work together in other countries and projects. In addition, Snow has helped to start similar teams in Chile, Guatemala and Peru.

Following Dr. Snow, EAAF is among the groups that pioneered the application of forensic sciences to the documentation of human rights violations. In 1986, the team began to expand its activities beyond Argentina and has since worked in almost 40 countries throughout the Americas, Asia, Africa, and Europe.

One of EAAF’s guiding principles is to maintain the utmost respect for the wishes of victims’ relatives and communities in regards to the investigations, and to work closely with them through all stages of the exhumation and identification processes. The team’s work is grounded in the understanding that the identification of remains is a great source of solace to families suffering from the “disappearance” of a loved one.

EAAF also works for the improvement of international and national forensic protocols, transparency of criminal investigations, and the inclusion of independent forensic experts in human rights investigations.

New Developments

Twenty-three years after its foundation, EAAF is undergoing a structural overhaul in response to expanding demands. Since its beginnings the team has operated with a non-hierarchical staff that made decisions by consensus and worked collectively across program areas. As of 2005, the team created seven key divisions headed by one or two members: Preliminary Investigation, Archaeology, Laboratory, Genetics, Institutional Planning and Finances, Administration and Accounting, and Documentation and Outreach.

In addition to 12 core members, EAAF hired 17 part- and full-time students and recent graduates who have been trained by EAAF over the years to assist in each area. In addition, EAAF hired a full-time and a part-time accountants to improve bookkeeping and reporting, two part-time consultants to digitize EAAF photo archive, and a part-time translator. EAAF has also opened an office in the province of Córdoba, Argentina, to handle investigations outside the province of Buenos Aires, and has doubled its Buenos Aires space to store remains from a massive recovery initiative the team is undertaking in 2006 and 2007. EAAF continues to maintain a New York office.
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Objectives of EAAF’s Work

- Apply forensic sciences to the investigation and documentation of human rights violations.
- Provide this evidence to courts, special commissions of inquiry, and international tribunals.
- Assist relatives of victims in their right to truth and justice by providing an independent forensic investigation and the possibility to recover the remains of their loved ones so that they can carry out customary funeral rites and mourn.
- Collaborate in the training of new teams and forensic professionals in countries where they are needed.
- Conduct seminars on the human rights applications of forensic sciences for humanitarian organizations, judicial systems, and forensic institutes around the world.
- Strengthen the field by participating in regional and international forensic activities.
- Contribute to the historical reconstruction of the recent past, often distorted or hidden by the parties or government institutions that are themselves implicated in the crimes under investigation.
Countries Where EAAF

Angola
Argentina
Bolivia
Bosnia
Brazil
Chile
Colombia
Croatia
Cyprus
Democratic Republic of Congo
East Timor
El Salvador
Ethiopia
French Polynesia
Guatemala
Haiti
Honduras
Indonesia
Iraqi Kurdistan
Ivory Coast
Kenya
Kosovo
Mexico
Morocco
Namibia
Panama
Paraguay
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Romania
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Has Worked 1984-2006
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EAAF Recommendations

Based on our experiences working as forensic anthropologists for truth commissions, special commissions of inquiry, and national and international tribunals, we would like to put forward a number of recommendations. We think that the effectiveness of these institutions can be improved through the following:

1. Improve the relationship between families of victims and forensic teams.

We strongly recommend direct contact between forensic teams and the relatives of victims. In many cases involving human rights violations, particularly in cases of political disappearances, the relatives of the victims have been mistreated by officials, who often deny the very fact of the disappearance. It is important to reestablish a link of trust and respect.

1.1 Facilitate the right to truth for families of victims.

Forensic investigators should assist victims’ families whenever possible by (1) facilitating access to sites where investigations are being carried out; (2) providing basic information before, during, and after the forensic work is conducted, informing them of the many possible outcomes of any given forensic investigation (i.e., the likelihood of locating or identifying remains), and taking into account their expectations; (3) considering and addressing their concerns, doubts, questions, and objections; and (4) promoting the means to provide them with the results of forensic investigations, following international recommendations and forensic protocols.

1.2 Seek consensus from families and/or communities for exhumations and respect cultural and religious funeral rites.

Investigators should request the families’ and/or affected communities’ approval in cases when there are no legal constraints, and when the identities of the bodies to be exhumed are known or strongly suspected. EAAF’s experience in different countries, involving diverse cultures, religions, and political situations has shown that exhumations and reburial ceremonies relating to human rights violations have a strong healing effect on families of victims and communities. However, in some situations and for a variety of reasons families do not want exhumations; in others, exhumations must be performed respecting relatives’ or communities’ cultural and religious practices with regard to the dead, such as reburial ceremonies. If these issues are not taken into account before embarking on a forensic investigation, the work may fail and produce more suffering for those we are trying to assist.

There are often non-conflicting ways to respect the victims’ families’ or communities’ decisions in the extreme case of their total opposition to exhumations, while still documenting human rights violations. From a legal standpoint, this is often possible as (1) most tribunals and commissions will only order forensic work in a very select number of cases; and (2) to prove that a massacre took place, for example, not all of the victims’ remains need to be found and examined. From historical and documentation standpoints, we can often provide an estimation of the number of victims through other means.

2. Create mechanisms to continue the recovery and identification process beyond a commission’s or tribunal’s mandate.

The time in which a truth commission or tribunal operates tends to be very short in comparison with the time necessary to exhume and identify victims in a given conflict. Twenty-five years after the peak of the repression in Argentina, for example, EAAF is still working on the search for the disappeared. Similarly, the work in Chile and Guatemala will continue for years. Most commissions do not set up mechanisms or include in their recommendations specific ways to continue the work after their investigations come to an end. At times, the forensic work continues with difficulties and
interruptions, and in other circumstances, it ends with the
commission. However, locating and identifying the victims is
a right of their families and an obligation of the parties
involved in a conflict. It is also an essential first step in the
process of reparation that helps a society to deal with its
tragic past. We encourage commissions to provide specific
guidelines in their final recommendations in order to contin-
ue the process of finding and identifying the victims of
human rights violations after their initial work is completed.

3. Whenever possible, improve contacts
between the independent forensic experts
and the local judiciaries, prosecutors,
judges, and lawyers.

It is essential to give presentations to local judiciaries and
lawyers with basic information about how the forensic sci-
ences, mainly forensic anthropology and archaeology, can
contribute to judiciary investigations. This also provides a
valuable opportunity to discuss the way evidence is handled
in a particular country, to discuss exemplary cases from other
parts of the world, as well as local ones, and to understand
the concerns of the legal community.

4. Whenever possible, train and promote
local teams and local forensic experts.

The role of international forensic teams should not be lim-
ited to forensic investigation and analysis, but should also
emphasize working with, training, and promoting local
teams and local forensic experts. In countries where mas-
sive human rights violations occurred and forensic work is
needed, it is vital to reinforce existing forensic units or
help to train new local teams. This is essential for a variety
of reasons:

a. In most of these countries, the forensic work of identi-
ifying victims of violations takes decades. International
teams will usually spend only a limited amount of time
during each mission, and only for a few years; a nation-
al team can dedicate itself full-time to this work.

b. In many of the countries where we work, forensic sci-
ence is less developed or almost nonexistent and, in
most cases, the use of archaeological and anthropolog-
ical techniques is uncommon or absent. The use of
physical evidence in court is, in general, limited and
most testimony is oral. Therefore, by training or creat-
ing a national forensic team or forensic professionals
who can address this problem, there is usually a gener-
al improvement in criminal procedures and, as a result,
in the rule of law.

c. National teams may serve the families of the victims
and their communities in more effective ways as
experts who speak the language, are from the same or
a similar culture, have often lived through comparable
experiences, and often have a strong commitment to
improving the rule of law in their countries.

At the same time, in cases where the national teams are
governmental, it is always important to have independent
local experts or teams as well, since many individuals
involved in medical legal systems where massive human
rights violations occurred have been complicit or unable to
act independently during previous non-democratic regimes
under investigation.

5. Whenever possible, maintain contact with
local human rights organizations.

At the time of the occurrence of massive human rights vi-o-
lations in a given country, the judiciary normally loses much
of its capacity to impartially investigate crimes committed by
the state or by armed parties in a civil conflict. On the other
hand, truth commissions are usually created in transitional
moments, such as at the end of civil conflicts, wars, or state
terrorism, for example. Thus, local non-governmental organ-
izations (NGOs) often fill part of the gap. At times, at great
risk to their members, they form a bridge between the investi-
gative body and the witnesses, survivors, and relatives of
victims. Even in democratic transitional moments, witnesses
and relatives of the victims will frequently feel more comfort-
able releasing information to a local NGO or presenting tes-
timony before a court of law or national or international
commissions of inquiry with the support or mediation of an
NGO. Truth commission investigators usually rely on the
work of NGOs as a starting point for their investigations.
6. Improve access to DNA.

Informing relatives of a disappeared person that the remains being analyzed do not correspond to their loved one is very difficult. However, it is equally difficult to tell them that we are uncertain about whether these remains match their loved one’s, and that, since we have no way to resolve this doubt, the remains must be placed in a box to be stored once again.

This was often the situation before major genetic breakthroughs, given that traditional forensic anthropological techniques are limited without sufficient ante-mortem information. In the early 1990s, it became possible to recover DNA from skeletal remains. Genetic testing quickly became a critical tool in human rights investigations.

However, DNA analysis can be very expensive and time consuming when applied on a large scale. Few laboratories in the world have sufficient experience in processing bone and tooth samples, a more complicated process than extracting DNA from soft tissue. With few exceptions, these laboratories are not located in the countries where they are most needed. Since 1991, EAAF has benefited from the generous pro bono work of laboratories in the United States, Canada, and the United Kingdom. More recently, EAAF raised additional funding for DNA analysis and began processing cases successfully through a private Argentine genetic laboratory, LIDMO. However, only a limited number of cases can be accommodated annually. As a result, several dozen cases remain unresolved each year due to a lack of DNA analysis.

To address this problem in Argentina, in 1998, EAAF began to collect three blood samples from each relative of a disappeared person who visited our Buenos Aires office. We are creating a genetic blood bank from these samples, which is being used to conduct genetic analyses to help us make identifications. The blood bank will also enable identifications in the future as more gravesites are discovered, whether or not all relatives are available. This approach could become important in many projects, such as in countries where HIV is affecting large portions of the adult population.

Also, the recent Balkan conflict and the September 11, 2001, attack on the World Trade Center resulted in the need to identify hundreds of thousands of individuals. Access to major laboratories and funding contributed to an important upgrade in DNA technology, making the processing of bone samples faster and cheaper. This new technology also allowed for the inclusion of difficult cases that had been left behind in the recent past. EAAF is working to use these improvements in DNA technology to substantially increase the availability of genetic analysis in human rights cases.

7. Protect possible killing and burial sites.

Whenever possible, it is important to protect possible killing and burial sites if they are not to be investigated at the time of discovery. In this way, they will be available to families of victims and researchers working on future investigations.

8. Preserve crucial evidence and forensic reports for possible ongoing and future investigations and prosecutions.

Uncovering evidence of human rights crimes does not necessarily mean that justice is immediately achieved. Many human rights violations are investigated under a judicial framework but are not prosecuted—mostly because of amnesty laws that limit the role forensic evidence can play in judicial processes. However, as new mechanisms are developed in the field of international criminal law and old cases are brought back to trial (as in Argentina and Chile, for example) it is important that vital evidence, documental archives, and forensic reports be preserved by the court, human rights NGOs, truth commissions, and other institutions involved in pre- or related trial investigations, in order to be used as needed in future trials.

9. Create witness and informer protection programs.

In each commission or tribunal, there is usually a core group of ten to fifteen key witnesses to major incidents who provide information to investigative bodies and forensic teams. Often these individuals need protection, including, in some cases, eventual safe emigration to another country. In most
cases, this type of commission has no mechanism for dealing with witness safety. An *ad hoc* measure may eventually be enacted, depending upon the commission’s specific mandate, how it is interpreted, and the flexibility of the international, national, and regional bodies that may assist in this process. Though setting up a Witness Protection Program is complicated, it is extremely important to include some sort of mechanism from the planning phase as a matter of course.

10. Provide counseling or psychological support for persons who testify, and for families and friends of victims before, during, and after exhumations.

These are all very difficult and painful moments involving complicated and unusual mourning processes, at the individual, community, and national levels. Community and/or individual counseling have already been developed by local NGOs in places such as Guatemala and Zimbabwe. We believe that contracting a local or regional NGO that is already familiar with the culture, language, religion, and individual situations of the victims will offer extremely valuable benefits to the families and communities involved. Local organizations usually also have a first-hand understanding of the political climates arising from conflicts. Finally, providing counseling through a local or regional NGO can also lead to a more effective reparations stage in the resolution of a conflict.

11. Provide counseling or psychological support for staff members who receive testimonies and for forensic personnel.

Sometimes the overwhelming weight of the testimonies of witnesses, victims, and their families can produce conflicting feelings of exhaustion, guilt, and depression in the researchers who are investigating atrocities for truth commissions. In some instances, international investigative missions have provided psychological support, but this is still the exception. Counseling may prove especially helpful when these commissions extend their work to a year or more, as they often do.

12. Promote the incorporation of international forensic protocols for human rights investigations into domestic criminal procedures.

The incorporation of international forensic protocols and guidelines for human rights investigations into domestic criminal procedures is essential. This will ensure that scientific tools and mechanisms developed for human rights investigations will have a more long-term effect. In support of this effort, the United Nations and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) have produced several documents relating to forensic science and human rights.

CONCLUSION

In Latin America, the origin and practice of forensic anthropology was drastically different from other regions. The Latin American experience resulted in the pioneering of the application of forensic anthropology to large human rights investigations. When we started our work twenty-two years ago, we needed to distance ourselves from legal-medical systems and other governmental institutions that had reportedly committed crimes and/or had lost credibility during lengthy periods of human rights violations. We worked outside these organizations, incorporating new scientific tools for human rights investigations. In order to have a long-term effect, and taking advantage of increased interest in international criminal law and its domestic incorporation, we are now working towards adopting international protocols for human rights work into domestic criminal procedures. In a way, then, in the past two decades we have come full circle.
During the last military dictatorship, a disappeared person would typically be kidnapped by security forces, taken to a clandestine detention center, tortured, and usually killed. The National Commission on Disappeared Persons (Comisión Nacional sobre la Desaparición de Personas, CONADEP) created in 1984 documented the existence of more than 350 clandestine detention centers (CDCs) operating in the country during the military rule, located mostly in police precincts, military bases, and private residences. Reconstructing the numbers of kidnappees that passed through a CDC...
and their identities, as well as the duration and the function of these CDCs, is a major task for EAAF. Most of the bodies of “disappeared” persons were disposed of in one of two ways: they were thrown from military aircrafts into rivers and the Argentine Sea, in operations that became known as “vuelos de la muerte” (death flights); or they were buried in public cemeteries throughout the country as “N.N.” (John/Jane Doe).

EAAF is primarily dedicated to investigating these cases, since it is more likely that the team will be able to recover the remains.

The bodies that met the latter fate often first “appeared” on the streets or barren lots in urban areas. After an extrajudicial execution, security forces from the CDCs would dump the bodies in a public space. Upon discovering a cadaver or group of cadavers—often after receiving an “anonymous” call—the police, the judiciary, or other government officials followed most of the procedures routinely conducted on John/Jane Doe cases before their eventual burial. These included writing a description of the discovery, taking photographs, fingerprinting the corpse, conducting an autopsy or external examination of the body, producing a death certificate, making an entry in the local civil registry, and issuing a burial certificate. In other words, the state that was committing the crime was bureaucratically recording its clandestine activities, oblivious or indifferent to the paper trail it was creating. It is through access to these documents that EAAF has been able to reconstruct the whereabouts and eventually identify the remains of disappeared persons. EAAF has prioritized “N.N.” records that indicate violent or suspicious cause of death and/or death at a young age, categorizing them as “highly probable to correspond to disappeared persons.” These criteria are based on the typical features of the disappeared population.

In a very few cases, EAAF has been able to recover the remains of disappeared people who were sedated and dumped from the armed forces airplanes into the Argentine Sea, and whose bodies washed up on the Argentine and
Uruguayan coasts. After appearing ashore, the remains of these individuals were likewise buried as “N.N.” following state bureaucratic requirements.

The fact that most disappearances in Argentina occurred in urban areas with a high concentration of population, where there were governmental and judiciary offices, and that the “appearance” of remains for the most part did not exceed 30 individuals, may have helped facilitate and/or forced the production of bureaucratic documentation. This bureaucratic documentation occurred even with official denial of the disappearances, and despite a lack of visibility for families of the victims seeking legal action. In other countries, where the majority of the state terrorism took place in rural areas—such as in Central America, where in the 1980s, entire hamlets or villages were massacred as part of a different repression strategy—there was a greater public visibility for human rights abuses, at least within the countryside, but there was also less official bureaucratic documentation. Both policies were enacted to terrorize the local population and to repress dissent.

For most of the military rule, the Argentine armed forces divided the country into five command zones, each containing at least one major population center. Zone One covered the Federal Capital, most of Buenos Aires province, and part of the province of La Pampa. Zone Two included the northeastern provinces, with headquarters in Rosario, province of Santa Fe. Zone Three, which was controlled by the Third Army Corps headquartered in Córdoba, encompassed the central, west, and northwest regions. The headquarters of Zone Four, located at the Campo de Mayo army base on the outskirts of the city of Buenos Aires, were the most important military installations in the country, and had jurisdiction over the northern region of the province. The Fifth Army Corps controlled southern Argentina or Zone Five. EAAF has concentrated most of its investigative efforts in the city of Buenos Aires and the province of Buenos Aires, contained within Zones One and Four, given that over 70 percent of kidnappings of disappeared persons occurred in these areas. Since 2004, EAAF has been working more intensively in other provinces.

The complexity of the pattern of repression in Argentina, involving mainly urban disappearances, usually results in the need for extensive historical research before EAAF can form a hypothetical match between remains and a particular family. Frequently, the targets of state persecution were the political and armed organizations active in the 1960s and 1970s. These include the Montoneros, who were the largest armed organization in Argentina, and were mostly decimated by the clandestine repression, as well as the smaller groups, such as the Workers’ Revolutionary Party (PRT) and its military arm, the People’s Revolutionary Army (ERP), the Marxist-Leninist Communist Party (PCML), the October 17 Revolutionary Front (FR 17), the Communist Vanguard, and the Agrarian Leagues. Through interviews and informational meetings with individuals formerly active in these organizations, EAAF has been working to reconstruct their organizational histories in order to understand state repression.

Also, lack of sufficient ante-mortem information about victims, such as medical and dental records, often makes a positive identification of the remains using traditional anthropological and odontological techniques not possible, allowing only a tentative identification. In 1991, EAAF began confirming identifications through genetic analysis conducted pro bono by foreign DNA laboratories. Since 2003, while still relying on the generous assistance of foreign laboratories, EAAF has been able to process more cases each year by working with LIDMO S.R.L., an Argentine private genetic laboratory. As of this writing, this collaboration has resulted in 80 identifications, most of them in 2005 and 2006. In 2007, the team launched a large DNA initiative to dramatically increase the number of annual identifications. To read more about this program see the Latin American Initiative to Identify the Disappeared (LIID) chapter among the Special Sections of this report.

EAAF Investigation Process

EAAF members and staff dedicated to investigation in Argentina work in five areas: preliminary investigation, archaeology, laboratory, genetics, and documentation.
Preliminary Investigation

To understand the *modus operandi* of the repression, it is necessary to take into account the logistical and administrative structures organized by the state for that purpose. Since the beginning of the investigation in Argentina, EAAF has emphasized the difference between the state as clandestine repressor and the bureaucratic state. This distinction has permitted the team to learn a lot about the disappearances in Argentina, as the same government that was practicing clandestine repression was documenting its consequences. EAAF has had relatively easy access to some of these documents, such as death certificates and cemetery records, whereas intelligence documents have been harder to access. The official documentation is characterized by an impersonal and uniform language, full of euphemisms, that appear to present the facts objectively, while hiding the partiality of the state and its involvement in these crimes. These documents have a crucial value to EAAF investigation and at the same time cannot be taken at face value and always have to be compared between them and with other sources, particularly, with the testimonies of survivors, witnesses, and relatives of victims.

To uncover patterns of repression in
Argentina, EAAF investigates the illegal detention centers operating in these zones as well as a variety of documents, including judicial files, morgue registries, federal and provincial police, hospital, and cemetery records, and publications—particularly newspapers—of the time.

In 2006, the team continued its extensive historical research in three regions of Argentina: the city and province of Buenos Aires, the northeastern and the central regions of the country, where the First, Second, and Third Army Corps operated, respectively, during the last military dictatorship. EAAF also analyzed 11 cemetery registries in the province of Buenos Aires and 12 registries in other parts of the country in search of “N.N.” burials that could belong to disappeared persons.

Interviews with political prisoners and relatives of victims are one of the best ways to uncover who was held at different clandestine centers and the ultimate fate of particular prisoners.

Through historical reconstruction, EAAF tries to establish the circumstances behind each act of clandestine repression (Who? What? Where? How?), and the reasons for it (Why this person? Why that day? Why in that place?). The differences between oral and documental information makes their comparison useful. Often, the documents have been distorted and interpreted, but at times the information from the two types of sources is complementary.

In Buenos Aires, EAAF held in-depth interviews with 60 released prisoners and political activists from the 1970s and met with approximately 120 relatives of the disappeared during 2006. The team also held several hundred interviews with families of disappeared.
survivors, and local human rights organizations in 12 Argentine provinces.

By law, every Argentine is issued two federal forms of identification, one by the police and the other by the National Registry of Persons. Both require fingerprinting. Further, as part of police procedures outlined above, a large number of “N.N.” individuals collected by the police were fingerprinted before being buried and these records were kept by the police on microfilms. Since 1998, EAAF has been able to make initial identifications by comparing the fingerprints taken from the bodies that appeared on the street during the dictatorship with earlier ones on documents issued by the government to disappeared persons. Using information from documentation produced by police and other official agencies, and collected from interviews, EAAF attempts to link the dumping and appearance of remains to specific political incidents, special events and dates, guerrilla attacks, and/or the closing of CDCs, among other possibly related incidents. This allows the team to establish hypothetical associations between remains and victims, which are to be confirmed or disproved by anthropological and genetic analysis.

In 2006, the team continued analyzing fingerprint comparisons using records from the registry of the Federal Police, which resulted in the correlation of federal document fingerprints to “N.N.” fingerprints for nine individuals.

Finally, it is important to stress that knowing the fate of a disappeared person does not always involve the recovery of the individual’s skeletal remains. At times an EAAF investigation can arrive at a preliminary association between a disappeared person and an individual described in cemetery records, especially if fingerprints are available. But, in many cases the remains cannot be located to confirm this identification either through anthropological or genetic analysis. This is because, due to municipal ordinances in Argentina, cemeteries disinter remains that have not paid burial fees for five years (which are commonly “N.N.” burials) and move them to the general ossuary, where remains are mixed and unidentified. Early “N.N.” burials of the disappeared during the last military dictatorship were relocated due to this policy. In addition, after the end of the last military dictatorship the government ordered that “N.N.” burials remain undisturbed, but a number of municipal cemeteries ignored the order, so that they did not preserve the burials of unidentified persons or have relocated the remains to the general ossuary. Once this happens, locating remains, even with cemetery records, becomes extremely difficult. However, once EAAF realizes that remains have been moved to the general ossuary and are inaccessible, the team informs the victim’s family of the identification and location of their loved ones.

EAAF members working mainly on Argentina preliminary investigation includes Carlos Somigliana and Daniel Bustamante.
Search and Recovery of Remains

At the beginning of 1984, when democracy was reinstated in Argentina, Federal Tribunals ordered numerous exhumations of “N.N.” graves where there was a presumption that they might correspond to people who had been disappeared. However, these procedures were problematic in many ways. First, the forensic officials did not have significant experience with archaeological methods for the recovery of skeletal remains. The exhumations were done by people without expertise, such as firefighters or cemetery keepers, and in a rapid manner, often under the direction of forensic doctors. In some cases they used bulldozers on entire sections of the cemeteries. As a result, many bones were lost, mixed up, left in the grave, or broken. In addition, the forensic doctors had little or no professional experience in the analysis of skeletal remains because their daily work was to conduct autopsies of cadavers. Hence, the evidence necessary to identify the remains and to support legal cases against those responsible for the crimes was often being destroyed, left behind, and/or poorly analyzed.

In 1984, a group of American forensic scientists visited Argentina at the request of the presidentially appointed Comisión Nacional sobre la Desaparición de Personas (CONADEP) and The Grandmothers of the Plaza de Mayo, who were searching for children that had been disappeared. The scientists visited the Medical Legal Institute of La Plata, saw the bags of dusty remains that had come from the poorly executed exhumations, and made an immediate call to stop the exhumations and ask for archaeologists and physical anthropologists to be contracted to recover and analyze the skeletal remains. Among these scientists was US forensic anthropologist Dr. Clyde Snow, who organized the first investigations using archaeological and forensic anthropology techniques to exhume and analyze the remains of disappeared people, at the request of judges and families of victims. Over a period of five years, he trained and helped found the Argentine Forensic Anthropology Team.

In applying its archaeological expertise, the team is able to properly excavate, map and document the exhumation process. Archaeological techniques prevent the breaking of the skeletal and artificial material during recovery, and ensure the proper collection of material onsite. Careful and documented excavation is important in determining the association of recovered objects to remains, and whether these can be connected to trauma around time of death or to the potential cause of death, as well as for identification purposes. All these methods are important to successful laboratory analysis. Furthermore, archaeological expertise aids in searching for graves with unknown or poorly mapped locations through systematic survey methods.

In 2006, EAAF conducted excavations in six cemeteries of the province of Buenos Aires, and in 12 sites in the provinces of Chaco, Córdoba, Corrientes, Entre Ríos, Jujuy, Tucumán, and Santa Fe, recovering a total of 143 remains believed to correspond to disappeared persons. In addition, the team surveyed five other sites for possible future excavations.

EAAF members working mainly on the search and recovery of remains in Argentina during 2006 included archaeologist consultant Claudia Bisso, and EAAF anthropology members Darío Olmo, Miguel Nieva, Silvana Turner, and Anahí Ginarte.

Laboratory Analysis

Anthropological analysis in a laboratory setting is very important for identifying remains. Using information gathered from the exhumation, the team rearticulates the skeletal remains. From the remains, the team assesses the individual’s sex, age, stature, and ancestry. Further, they identify skeletal pathologies and traumas and ascertain whether these are pre-, peri-, or post-mortem (that is: before, around the time of, or after death). These assessments can be compared to medical and dental records, if available, of any hypothetical matches among the disappeared, and thus can strengthen or rule out potential identifications.

In 2006, EAAF conducted anthropological analysis on skeletal remains corresponding to a minimum number of 221 individuals. This included cleaning, cataloging, and analyzing remains exhumed from the cemeteries of San Martín, Rafael Calzada, and General Lavalle, all in the province of Buenos Aires. EAAF also concluded the analysis of the skeletons exhumed in 2004 from San Vicente cemetery, located in the outskirts of the city of Córdoba. At the
request of provincial courts, EAAF worked in Catamarca, Corrientes, Salta, Santa Fe, and Tucumán on close to ten cases requiring anthropological analysis.

EAAF members mainly dedicated to the laboratory work in Argentina in 2006 include EAAF anthropologists Patricia Bernardi and Sofia Egaña, and EAAF consultant anthropologist Mercedes Salado Puerto.

**Genetics**

EAAF has been utilizing DNA analysis for identification purposes since 1991. In 2006, EAAF sent bone and tooth samples from 108 individuals and 131 samples from relatives of the disappeared to LIDMO for genetic processing, resulting in 23 identifications thus far. For a fuller examination of EAAF’s genetic work, see the Latin American Initiative for the Identification of the Disappeared (LIID) chapter among the Special Sections of this report.

EAAF members working on this area in Argentina during 2006 included EAAF members Miguel Nieva and EAAF consultants Mercedes Salado, Carlos Vullo, Alicia Borosky, and Laura Catelli.

**Documentation Center**

In 1997 EAAF negotiated access to documents related to the repression stored by the federal government and the government of the province of Buenos Aires. Since that time, the team has made steady advances in the retrieval of these documents. EAAF emphasizes the digital archiving of material related to the disappeared and also to activities of the team’s missions inside and out of Argentina. In 2006, **EAAF digitized approximately 9,700 negatives and 11,200 slides** taken by team members over the last 20 years in almost 40 countries.

These represent a historical record of the development of the team and its activities, and also exemplify the proliferation of forensic work and teams associated with human rights violations.

Also, in 2006, the team continued expanding and digitizing its documentation database related to source material from the years of the military dictatorship, such as 1970s intelligence reports, newspaper and magazine articles, testimonies, and photographs of the disappeared.

EAAF also collects ante-mortem information of the disappeared, such as fingerprints and dental records. During 2003, the number of reported political disappearances during the last military regime reached 9,225. This was primarily due to the one-year extension of Law 24.411, which enabled relatives of disappeared and killed persons during the era of state terrorism to officially list the individual and to claim economic reparations. EAAF has been working continuously to collect fingerprints for all the disappeared. With the country’s major financial crisis in 2002, and the accompanying scarcity of paper and toner, EAAF received permission to use digital imaging to collect the records of fingerprints. As of 2005 the team had collected 7,200 (of the 9,225) records. In 2006, EAAF scanned close to 800 fingerprint records.

This ever-growing archive is already available to a select public. By storing original materials into more durable and lasting formats, EAAF aims to make the archive available to relatives of victims, the judiciary, journalists, and academics, among others, in the near future.

EAAF personnel working mainly on this area in 2006 in Argentina included computer scientist Rafaela Mazzella, photographer and EAAF consultant Viviana D’Amelia, and architect Marcelo Pablo Castillo.

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**ENDNOTES**

1. The occasionally cited figure of nearly 30,000 disappearances is an approximation given by human rights NGOs that estimated for every one of the disappearances reported, there could possibly be two more cases unreported at the time. After numerous efforts to collect more testimonies, it has become increasingly unlikely more disappearances will be reported, and the number of disappearances has remained close to 9,000 to 10,000.


4. According to the findings of the presidentially-appointed Comisión Nacional sobre la Desaparición de Personas (CONADEP), and EAAF investigations.

5. EAAF identifications where LIDMO conducted the genetic analysis: 4 cases in 2003; 8 in 2004; 21 in 2005; and 23 in 2006.
As explained above, most EAAF investigations in Argentina have focused on the city and province of Buenos Aires, where roughly two-thirds of all disappearances occurred.

**Avellaneda Cemetery, Sector 134**

In 1986, at the request of the Prosecutor conducting the trials against Junta members, EAAF began an investigation in Sector 134 of Avellaneda municipal cemetery. This cemetery is located in a densely populated area in the southern suburbs of Buenos Aires, 12 kilometers away from the Federal Capital. An initial investigation for an individual grave resulted in the excavation of a mass grave. EAAF exhumed a number of remains and recommended excavation of the full sector, as it was very likely that more mass graves containing remains of the disappeared could be located. In 1988, EAAF was authorized by a judge to resume its work at the Avellaneda cemetery and launch a deeper investigation into Sector 134.

Based on testimonies, during the last military government, Sector 134 was used by the security forces as a burial site for bodies of disappeared persons. These testimonies were confirmed as EAAF’s work advanced and the remains found at Sector 134 were identified as disappeared people. Although these burials were to some extent clandestine, neighbors across the street witnessed military trucks and police vehicles entering Sector 134 on a regular basis. Many of the bodies in this section were registered in the cemetery records and buried as “N.N.” (John/Jane Doe). Sector 134 was also used to bury the remains of regular “N.N.” cases.

EAAF’s review of the Avellaneda cemetery records and death and burial certificates from provincial and national registry offices showed that despite efforts to keep the repression secret, over 220 people were issued death certificates and recorded as buried in Sector 134 during the military regime. The majority of these were buried in 1976 (96 individuals) and 1977 (110 individuals). The number of recorded burials in Sector 134 decreased significantly after 1978—only six individuals were recorded as buried that year—and very few more were registered.
until 1982, when the sector stopped being used for this purpose. The concentration of burials in Sector 134 in the years 1976 and 1977 coincides with the peak of the military government repression. Of the 220 individuals recorded as buried in Sector 134, 160 individuals were unidentified young people with multiple gunshot wounds listed as their cause of death, and were often brought to the site by police or military personnel. The remaining individuals fit the biological profile of regular John/Jane Does, e.g. older individuals not showing traumatic signs of death, and often brought by hospital personnel.

**Excavation’s Main Findings**

The EAAF excavations of Sector 134, which ended in 1992, resulted in the recovery of 336 skeletons—116 more than cemetery records indicated. Sector 134 did not have any signs indicating plots or sepultures, but surface depressions helped EAAF locate the graves. The remains were recovered from 19 mass graves and 18 individual graves. In the cemetery registry, some graves were labeled “vaqueras” (“cow holes”), a euphemism that was apparently used to describe large mass burials. These challenges further complicated the exhumation process.

322 of the skeletons were found in an anatomical layout, meaning that the bodies were deposited when they still had soft tissue. Only 30 percent of the individuals exhibited remnants of clothing, with personal effects being very rare. Wedding rings were found on the hand bones of two individuals and metal crosses associated with two others. Three coins, one dated 1958 and the other two 1976, were also recovered. Ballistic evidence consisted of more than 300 bullets fragments; no cartridge cases were found.

The laboratory findings show that from the 336 individuals recovered, 252 corresponded to men, 71 to women, and 13 remains were undetermined. The age distribution ranged from fetuses to individuals over 50 years of age. The age at death estimates were concentrated largely in the 21 to 35 years age group, with 135 skeletons or 40 percent of the total in this category. The next largest concentration of remains was in the over 50 year old classification, composed of 108 individuals, or 32 percent of the total recovered remains.

None of the fetuses and newborns were found directly associated with any female skeletons, though several were exhumed from the same grave and had hospital paraphernalia associated with them.

Forensic evidence of gunshot wounds to the head and/or the chest was found for 178 individuals—53 percent of the total—almost all of whom were under 50 years of age at the time of death. In fact, in gunshot wounds to the head and/or chest were found in 75 percent of the cases for individuals under 50 years of age at the time of death. Conversely, gunshot wounds were rare among the remains with an estimated age over 50, being present in only 10 percent of these individuals.

The remains of some of the younger individuals also exhibited blunt force trauma and skeletal charring. The cases that showed no signs of peri-mortem lesions may correspond to people who died under physical torture, such as electric shock, and water and air induced asphyxiation tortures—known as “dry”- and “wet submarines”—that were widely used by security forces and do not leave marks on bones.

These age, sex, and peri-mortem trauma findings are consistent with independent statistical analyses conducted by Snow and Bihurriet that contrast the biological and traumatic profile of “N.N.” populations from municipal cemeteries located in the province of Buenos Aires during the last military dictatorship and during democratic years. In contrast to the profile of “N.N.” populations in these cemeteries during “normal” years, Snow and Bihurriet showed that during the peak of the repression of the last military regime, “N.N.” populations were far greater in number. This “N.N.” population included a new group of individuals: younger people (many between 20 and 35 years old), a higher percentage of who were women. These age and sex characteristics are consistent with the biological and traumatic profiles of the disappeared population in Argentina, described in the CONADEP archives.

Snow and Bihurriet’s study indicated that most recorded deaths were violent, mainly resulting from gunshot wounds. In addition, the bodies were often brought to the cemeteries by
military or police personnel rather than by personnel from hospices, hospitals, or fire departments.

In sum, the characteristics of the remains found at Sector 134 exhibit the two groups of “N.N.” described at Snow and Bihurriet analysis: an older one, in which most individuals show no signs of violent death, very likely representing a “normal” or “traditional” “N.N.” population, and a younger one, illustrating in most cases a violent cause of death, very likely corresponding to disappeared people.

Thus, the overall pattern supported the hypothesis that Sector 134 was used as a burial ground during the six-year period from 1976 to 1982 and that the bodies of “ordinary” people, predominantly elderly male indigents, were buried along with the suspected disappeared. The team estimated that 60 percent of the remains found in this sector of the Avellaneda cemetery belonged to disappeared persons.

Individual identification of the remains from Sector 134 is a much more complicated process than assigning which remains may correspond to disappeared people. Although the team has started to discern patterns in the ways that people were kidnapped and transferred between illegal detention centers, as explained above, finding the connection between these centers and the final location of the remains of people who passed through them are among the most difficult hypotheses to establish.

As in other cases, EAAF used two strategies in its efforts to make identifications using information collected in historical investigations of individual fates. First, the team compared the ante-mortem or physical information of the victims when they were alive provided by the victims’ families with the data from the exhumation and laboratory work. However, the ante-mortem data for these cases is often scarce or not always conclusive enough to make a positive identification. Second, the team attempted to correlate cemetery and judicial records about the remains (for those remains that have such records) with both information about individuals prior to death gathered from police reports, and interviews.

EAAF conducted historical research to establish possible CDCs that could have used Sector 134 to dump remains of disappeared people, in order to narrow the lists constructed for identification hypotheses. EAAF started to put together these lists of disappeared people seen in CDCs by interviewing survivors and checking depositions at CONADEP and local human rights organizations. This research allows the team to compare prisoner exits from a CDC with entries registered in cemetery records. EAAF also checked hypotheses against judicial proceedings, autopsy reports, Federal Police archives, and through interviews conducted with families of the disappeared and former activists.

EAAF and LIDMO obtained five new identifications from Sector 134 in 2006. Including those from 2006, EAAF has identified a total of 22 disappeared persons from Sector 134.

### 2006 Sector 134 Identifications

**Marchini, Isabel Alicia:** Born March 2, 1951, Alicia was abducted along with her husband on July 21, 1976. She was a 25-year-old teacher. There are no details about her abduction or testimony about her being seen in any CDC.

Peri-mortem trauma (e.g. occurring around time of death) consisted of multiple gunshot wounds to the chest and skull, which could have been sufficient to cause her death.

The comparison made between the genetic profiles from blood samples of her father and from one of her sisters with one of female remains exhumed from Sector 134 enabled EAAF to identify Isabel Alicia in April 2006. Anthropological data from the remains were consistent with her ante-mortem information.

**Ortiz, Rodolfo:** Born September 6, 1949, Rodolfo was an architecture student and an activist in a political organization, Juventud Guevarista (Guevarist Youth). He was abducted on March 29, 1976. He was 26 years old and the father of two girls. On the day he was abducted, he had been participating in a Central Committee meeting of the Partido Revolucionario del Pueblo (Revolutionary Party of the People, PRT) the political branch of the guerrilla group Ejercito Revolucionario del Pueblo (Revolutionary Army of the People, ERP) in a country house in Moreno, in the province of Buenos Aires, which was broken into by the Army. In 2005, EAAF was contacted by two young women who had seen Rodolfo Ortiz. The women provided the last address of Rodolfo (a friend’s house) and said that Rodolfo had been in this place on the day of his abduction. EAAF's team set out to verify this information. Rodolfo was identified in April 2006.
had identified the remains of two other individuals known to be abducted in the same incident, one of whom had exhumed by the team from Sector 134 at Avellaneda cemetery. On the basis of the preliminary investigation, EAAF sent Rodolfo Ortiz’ fingerprints\(^3\) to be compared with those from the Police File for Cadaver 47.196—which stated that the corpse had been found in Bernal. The results were positive, which led to the conclusion that most likely those remains corresponded to Rodolfo and that if confirmed, he was murdered on May 12, 1976 after 45 days of captivity. His remains had been buried as “N.N.” in Sector 134.

The laboratory findings regarding peri-mortem trauma indicated multiple gunshot wounds to the chest, which could have been sufficient to cause his death.

The comparison between the genetic profile obtained from blood samples of Rodolfo's daughters and from one of the remains of the exhumed male skeletons from Sector 134 allowed EAAF and LIDMO to identify Rodolfo on July 19, 2006. Anthropological and odontological information was consistent with his ante-mortem data.

Ridao, Lidia Manuela; Lidia was born on November 16, 1945. She was a psychologist at the La Plata Children Hospital. Lidia was kidnapped from her home in Diagonal 74 Nº 1286, 10th floor, city of La Plata on April 19, 1976. She was with her husband, who was unaware of his wife’s political affiliation and was not abducted. From the testimony of survivors, her family learned that Lidia was allegedly taken to the CDC on streets 1 and 60 in La Plata, premises of the Infantry Corps of the Police of the Province of Buenos Aires.

According to a judicial file and the Avellaneda cemetery records, a female body was found on May 1, 1976, in the corner of J.B. Justo and Costa streets in Villa Dominico, and buried as “N.N.” in Sector 134 7a of the Avellaneda cemetery. Fingerprints were taken form the corpse and resulted in the identification as Lidia Manuela Ridao. Anthropological and odontological information was consistent with her ante-mortem data. The identification was later confirmed by EAAF and LIDMO through DNA analysis in November 2006.

The team’s laboratory finding revealed peri-mortem trauma in the form of multiple gunshot wounds to the skull, which could have caused her death.

Secaud, Diego Hernando; Diego was born in 1951. He was kidnapped from the street on May 1, 1977 in the province of Buenos Aires. He had been a teacher in the south of the country and was also a militant member of the guerrilla group Montoneros. He was 25 years old. Testimonies from family members and acquaintances supported a hypothesis that he had taken a cyanide capsule at the time of his kidnapping to avoid being captured alive and tortured, a practice known to be used on Montoneros.

Using this information, EAAF searched cemetery records for a young male “N.N.” that had entered the cemetery around mid-May of 1977 indicating “cyanide intoxication”, “poisoned”, or undetermined as the cause of death. In mid-May 1977, three bodies had appeared near the Lanus train station and been brought to Sector 134 for burial, one of which had an undetermined cause of death.

Diego Hernando was identified through DNA analysis by EAAF and LIDMO in September 2006. Anthropological and
odontological information was consistent with his ante-mortem data.

Tiseira, Francisco Enrique; Francisco was born on October 21, 1946. On April 19, 1976, he was kidnapped from the house of his colleagues in Grand Bourg. Two couples were abducted along with him. The remains of one of the women was identified as Norma Benavides in 2005 by EAAF.

According to EAAF investigation, Francisco was killed on May 6, 1976, in a faked confrontation with security forces. The official communiqué, published in La Opinión newspaper, informed that:

7/5/76, Friday: EZEIZA.- “Extremist group tried to take the highway patrol post No. 12 of the provincial police, located on the highway that joins the city with the Ezeiza Airport. The attack took place at 2:25 yesterday night. Five rebels, three women and two men, were killed in the confrontation. Attacks had also taken place several hours before on police stations 11, 20 and 28 in the Federal Capital”.

The cemetery records at Avellaneda show an entry under his name, and that he was buried in Sector 134, though his relatives were never informed.

Francisco Enrique’s remains, exhumed from grave 5 in Sector 134, were identified through DNA analysis in October 2006. Anthropological and odontological information was consistent with his ante-mortem data. EAAF laboratory findings indicated multiple gunshot wounds on the remains as peri-mortem trauma.

The Monte Chingolo Case

On December 23, 1975, the Ejército Revolucionario del Pueblo (People’s Revolutionary Army, ERP), an armed organization, attempted an assault on the army arsenal “Domingo Viejobueno” in Monte Chingolo, located in the municipality of Lanús, province of Buenos Aires. The attack, on an army base and shortly before Christmas, was received with shock in parts of Argentina. Official figures placed the number of deaths between 54 and 165. According to the investigation by Argentine researcher Plis-Sterenberg, an unclear number of civilians that lived near the battalion were caught in the crossfire. Estimates of civilian casualties range from 4 to 40 persons and at least seven soldiers were killed.

EAAF is conducting investigations of records from the judiciary file “Barbate, Daniel Roberto and others” for the Federal Appellate Chamber of La Plata, province of Buenos Aires. Currently, the court’s aim does not include prosecutions, but focuses on historical clarification and the effort to identify remains and return them to their families. The judiciary file indicates that between December 23 and December 24, 54 people were killed in this incident, although one individual’s name appears to be listed twice, which would put the total at 53. The remains were first taken to the morgue operating at the Avellaneda cemetery, where officials severed their hands and took them to
As a large assault on a sizable military base in the province of Buenos Aires coming shortly before Christmas, the Monte Chingolo attack was a front-page news item. EAAF Archive.
Laboratory of Necropapiloscopy at the Federal Police to be fingerprinted, a standard practice at the time. Copies of the fingerprints were also sent to the National Registry and to the Province of Buenos Aires Police. Forty-four of the remains were identified at the time by fingerprints. Four cadavers were identified by their relatives and returned to the families. The remaining 50 or 49 individuals were buried at the Avellaneda cemetery in two rows of individual coffins; 30 individuals were buried in one row and 19 in the other one.

Exhumations of several of these remains took place in 1976. Shortly after the incident, from January to March of 1976, around 20 families of the victims sought and received their relatives’ remains, relying mostly on the existing fingerprints for identifications. Authorizations for these exhumations are found in the judicial file, and were apparently conducted by cemetery personnel though there is no information on that respect in the dossier.

The remains were located from the judicial file map, though there was doubt as to whether they corresponded to the correct victim because in some cases the remains were received in closed coffins. In 1984, after the end of the military dictatorship, exhumations in Avellaneda cemetery were ordered by the Federal Tribunals, and included excavations by a bulldozer of some of those from the Monte Chingolo attack. EAAF does not yet have full information on the extent of this exhumation, but information indicates thus far that no remains were returned to families.
At the request of families of the dead, and authorized by the court, between June 26 and September 5, 2006, EAAF exhumed the burial site, recovering 19 complete and 27 partial skeletons. The incomplete skeletons most likely are the result of the exhumations conducted in 1976 and 1984, possibly as a result of the use of a backhoe for excavation. In the course of the excavations, EAAF found that the map from the judicial file contained numerous mistakes, with female skeletons appearing where the map identified the remains of a male individual, partial remains as mentioned above, and incorrect alignments between the burials and the map. The team remapped the placement of remains based on its work. Problems with the judicial file map have cast more doubt on the restitution of remains in 1976.

EAAF has also found some preliminary evidence from fingerprint comparisons that the burials included in the judicial file were not all of individuals from the Monte Chingolo case, but include other individuals disappeared prior to the incident. Through fingerprint comparison, EAAF has been able to identify eight of the remains thus far. Genetic testing and anthropological analysis are needed to confirm these initial matches.
In exhuming the graves, EAAF found discrepancies between the map from the judicial file (below right) and the team’s findings from excavating (above). There were several remains that are missing or incomplete, and further a large disturbance in the burials in the longer row may have been caused by excavations in 1984 with a backhoe. EAAF archives.
The Coast Cases: General Lavalle, General Madariaga, and Villa Gesell Cemeteries

Through testimonies from survivors of several CDCs and from military personnel it became known that the bodies of an as-yet undetermined number of “disappeared” persons were disposed of by dumping them, sedated or already deceased, out of military aircraft into rivers or the Argentine Sea. These became known as “vuelos de la muerte” (death flights). Testimonial evidence collected by CONADEP had indicated that this practice was mostly used by two CDCs, one operating inside the Navy School of Mechanics (ESMA) and another one at Campo de Mayo, an army base. Through historical research, EAAF had found that some of these bodies had washed up along the coasts of Argentina and Uruguay and had been buried as “N.N.” In 2002, EAAF traveled to Uruguay and recovered the remains of eight individuals believed to have been victims of death flights over the Río de la Plata. In 2005, for the first time, EAAF was able to identify the remains of five disappeared that were found on the Argentine coast. They had been seen at ESMA and, after being washed ashore and recovered by the authorities, were buried in the General Lavalle cemetery. In 2006, EAAF made new identifications of remains found along the Argentine coast. Through these identifications, the team found evidence that another CDC, known as El Olimpo, located in Buenos Aires, was also using death flights.

According to an EAAF investigation of cemetery records in numerous coastal cemeteries, in mid-December 1978, 15 bodies washed ashore along different points of the southern coast of the province of Buenos Aires. Recovered by local police, they were given “N.N.” burials at regional cemeteries. Eleven were buried at General Lavalle cemetery, three at General Madariaga cemetery, and one at Villa Gesell cemetery. In 1984, the judiciary ordered exhumations of “N.N.” thought to correspond to disappeared people to be conducted at eight cemeteries in the province of Buenos Aires, including those at Lavalle and Madariaga cemeteries. Unfortunately, the remains were exhumed in a non-systematic manner, and sent to the Medical Legal Institute of the city of La Plata. In 1993, the Institute reportedly returned 18 bags of skeletal remains for reburial at General Lavalle cemetery. In December 2005, EAAF conducted exhumations at General Lavalle, recovering 17 bags of skeletal remains.
remains in a good state of preservation. EAAF’s laboratory analysis concluded that they contained the bones of a minimum of 12 individuals, probably corresponding to the original 11 skeletons exhumed from General Lavalle cemetery in 1984, plus one from Madariaga cemetery. As for the other cases, in 2006, EAAF recovered one skeleton from the cemetery in the coastal town of Villa Gesell, which had also washed out on the coast during the dictatorship. In sum, of the original 15 bodies, EAAF has been able thus far to recover 13 of them from new exhumations at these two cemeteries. The two remaining ones, which were originally buried and exhumed from General Madariaga cemetery in 1984, had been stored at the Medical Legal Institute of La Plata.

Concurrent with this investigation, EAAF collected fingerprints records from bodies washed up on shore. These records are relatively difficult to work with, as sustained submersion in water can complicate the proper taking of fingerprints because of distortion. EAAF requested the assistance of the Federal Police who were able to produce a strong association of federal and morgue fingerprints for Jesús Pedro Peña and a preliminary association for Helios Hermógenes Serra Silveira. According to testimonials, Peña and Serra were reported to have been part of a group “transferred”, a euphemism for extrajudicially executed, from El Olimpo in mid-December 1978. Based on these preliminary investigations, EAAF hypothesized that the 15 corpses, found along the shore in mid-December 1978, belonged to disappeared persons also detained at El Olimpo. With the aid of survivors from this CDC, the team compiled a list of 30 to 40 individuals who were thought to have been executed as part of the December 1978 El Olimpo “transfer” and requested blood samples from the relatives of these detainees to run DNA tests. Consequently, EAAF sent to LIDMO for genetic processing bone samples from these skeletons along with the blood samples taken from relatives of detainees seen at the CDC at the time, which have resulted thus far in the following identifications:

**Carreño Araya, María Cristina;**

María Cristina was born on June 3, 1945 in Chile. Until 1973 she was active in the Communist Youth of Chile. Her father, Andrés Alfonso Carreño Díaz, leader of the Communist Party, was detained by DINA, the Chilean secret police, and died from torture at the end of July 1974. After the September 1973 military coup in Chile, María Cristina had problems with her own safety. She left Chile and came to Argentina on January 19, 1978. She spent a month in Buenos Aires and then travelled to Europe with a false Argentine passport.

In early July 1978 she came back to Buenos Aires with the plan to continue on to Chile. According to her relatives, she estimated that 6 months was enough time for security forces to lose interest and stop looking for her. She had to come back through Argentina to recover her identification documents. On July 25, 1978 she went to the Ecumenical Committee of Social Action (Comité Ecuménico de Acción Social, CEAS) in Buenos Aires, part of an ecclesiastical and NGO network that coordinated with the UN on refugee issues. According to relatives, she applied for political refugee status and told them that she was being pursued by the DINA and feared for her safety. Her only identification was an Argentine passport in the name of Montero, she had no Chilean documents with her to prove her identity. She went back to CEAS the next day after having gone to the Chilean Consulate to request identification documents. She applied for refugee status again, but this could not be granted to her without identification documents in hand. She was accompanied to a taxi that took her back to her hotel. That was the last time she was seen in public.

Maria Cristina had been seen by survivors of the CDCs El Banco and El Olimpo.

The laboratory analysis provided as peri-mortem information multiple fractures along several sections of the skeleton, consistent with falling from a height and landing on a hard surface.

Based on a comparison of genetic profiles take from the sample of one of the exhumed skeletons in the General Lavalle Cemetery and from the blood samples of two of her sisters, EAAF and LIDMO identified María Cristina in May 2006. Anthropological and odontological information was consistent with her ante-mortem data.
Peña, Isidoro Oscar; Isidoro was born on September 19, 1948, and abducted on July 10, 1978, under unknown circumstances. He was 29 years old.

Survivors of the CDCs El Banco and El Olimpo last saw him alive in December 1978.

The laboratory analysis provided as peri-mortem information multiple fractures along several sections of the skeleton, consistent with falling from a height and landing on a hard surface.

In November 2006, his remains were identified by EAAF and LIDMO using DNA analysis. Anthropological and odontological information was consistent with his ante-mortem data.

Peña, Jesús Pedro; Jesús was born on June 29, 1942, and abducted on June 26, 1978, under unknown circumstances. He was 35 years old. He was active in the Workers’ Revolutionary Party (Partido Revolucionario de los Trabajadores) and, like his brother, was seen by survivors in the CDCs El Banco and El Olimpo.

The Laboratory of Necropapilloscopy of the Buenos Aires Province Police was requested by EAAF to make a dactiloscopic comparison of his fingerprints with those of one of the bodies found on the coast and buried as “N.N.” in the General Madariaga cemetery. The comparison resulted in a positive association. In November 2006, EAAF and LIDMO identified him by DNA analysis, comparing the genetic profiles from the remains with that of his brother. Anthropological and odontological information was consistent with his ante-mortem data.

Serra Silveira, Helios Hermógenes; Helios was born on December 16, 1954 in the city of Montevideo, Uruguay. In 1974 he moved to Buenos Aires where his father and one brother lived.

He worked in the accounting area of El Hogar Obrero. He was kidnapped off the street on June 27, 1978. He was 23 years old.

Survivors of El Banco and El Olimpo had seen him alive until December 1978.

He was identified by EAAF and LIDMO through DNA analysis in November 2006. Anthropological and odontological information was consistent with his ante-mortem data.

The laboratory analysis provided as peri-mortem information multiple fractures along several sections of the skeleton, consistent with falling from a height and landing on a hard surface.
Villanueva, Santiago; Santiago was disappeared on July 25, 1978 at age 32. He was married and worked in a bank. A group of six men, in plain-clothes, who identified themselves as members of the Federal Police, broke into his home in the city of Buenos Aires and abducted him and his wife. Both were taken to the CDC El Banco and while she was released on August 14, 1978, Santiago was taken to the CDC El Olimpo where he was seen by survivors up until December of that year.

His body appeared without any identification documents on the coast near Villa Gesell on December 17, 1978, and he was buried as a “N.N.” in the municipal cemetery of Villa Gesell.

Through historical research, EAAF was able to establish that his “N.N.” remains had not been relocated. Authorized by the Federal Criminal and Correctional Appeal Chamber of the Federal Capital his remains were exhumed July 13, 2006 by EAAF and taken for anthropological examination.

In February 2007, EAAF and LIDMO were able to confirm his identity using DNA analysis. Anthropological and odontological information was consistent with his ante-mortem data.

The laboratory analysis provided as peri-mortem information multiple fractures along several sections of the skeleton, consistent with falling from a height and landing on a hard surface.

Lomas de Zamora Cemetery

In 2006, EAAF continued to exhume “N.N.” remains presumed to correspond to disappeared persons from Lomas de Zamora cemetery, located in the south of Greater Buenos Aires. Previous historical and documental research conducted by EAAF indicated that a large number of remains, probably corresponding to disappeared people, were buried as “N.N.” in this cemetery. Since 2004, EAAF has recovered the remains of 49 individuals—35 male and 14 female—located in 14 graves throughout the cemetery. Over 70 percent of the remains corresponded to individuals between 21 and 35 years of age. Additionally, 43 of the 49 (88 percent) remains presented peri-mortem gunshot wounds. Most of the bodies exhumed were buried between the years 1976 and 1978, the three peak years of the repression during Argentina’s last military government. According to the military chain of command under the repression, this region of Buenos Aires province was under the jurisdiction of the Mechanized Infantry Regiment No. 3, located in La Tablada, county of La Matanza. During 2006, EAAF conducted laboratory analysis on the remains and is currently working on their identifications. In 2006, the team made the following identifications:

Berardi de Lojo, María Teresa; María Teresa was born on November 17, 1945. She was a university student at the National University at La Plata, Province of Buenos Aires. She was a member of the revolutionary branch of the Peronist Party (Peronismos revolucionarios) and had been a council member for the FREJULI at the La Plata city council in March 1973.

She was killed along with her husband on April 29, 1977 at the house of another couple—Soler Guinar Juan Marcelo and Moreno Graciela—in the municipality of Lomas de Zamora, in an operation conducted by security forces. She was 31 years old.

The following information was published in local newspaper La Opinión on May 3: LOMAS DE ZAMORA.- It was officially established that when security forces arrived early morning last Saturday to the house on Lituania 811, the occupants started shooting against the security forces. In the shooting two extremists died and others escaped.

María Teresa had a son, who was in the house at the time of the police operation, and was later raised by relatives. The police reportedly found Montoneros pamphlets in the house.

In August 2006, María Teresa was identified as one of the remains exhumed in the cemetery by EAAF and LIDMO through genetic analysis. Anthropological analysis proved consistent with her ante-mortem information. Peri-mortem trauma analysis con-
ducted by EAAF showed multiple gunshot wounds, which could have been the cause of her death.

Hansen, Alfredo Alejandro; 

Alejandro was born on August 26, 1950. On April 19, 1977 the Army was waiting for him in his friends’ house in Turdera. According to the neighbors, there was a shoot-out. The neighbors did not know if Alejandro and his friends were abducted alive or killed in the ambush. His wife, who escaped from the house, was later abducted and taken to ESMA.

EAAF based its investigation on the hypothesis that this event probably corresponded to an article in the newspaper La Opinión on April 21, 1977 that stated:

TEMPERLEY, Bs. As.– The Army’s First Command Zone reported that ‘on the 19 of this month, at approximately 9 pm, during a patrol the joined forces were on in Temperley, they attempted to find out the identity of two individuals at the intersection of Guido Spano and San Joaquin streets. The suspects began to run away and opened fire, thereby causing a brief confrontation.’ The note adds that ‘as a result of this, the two individuals they had requested to identify themselves were killed.’ The documents on their bodies revealed that they belonged to ‘a band of self-proclaimed Montoneros.’

Both bodies were buried as “N.N.”s in the Lomas de Zamora cemetery.

Peri-mortem trauma analysis conducted by EAAF showed multiple gunshot wounds, which could have been sufficient to cause his death.

Comparison made by EAAF and LIDMO between samples from one of the exhumed skeletons in the Lomas de Zamora cemetery and genetic profiles from the blood samples from Alejandro’s two daughters made Alfredo Alejandro’s identification possible in June 2006. Anthropological and odontological analysis proved consistent with his ante-mortem information.

Jeanneret, Fermín; 

Fermín was born on January 15, 1910 and abducted on April 6, 1977 from his home in Quilmes, in the province of Buenos Aires. He was 66 years old. When he was younger he had been the secretary of the Peronist Party and had been detained in 1956. At the time of his abduction he was not active in any organization. His family thinks that he was probably helping members of a political organization.

Fermín’s age was essential for the team’s historical research in the case, as most “N.N.” corresponding to the disappeared were between 21 and 35 years old. The team investigated cases that included an older male “N.N.” entering a cemetery in the southern parts of Buenos Aires. There was record of such an individual among a group of 8 people whose bodies appeared in Temperley, in the province of Buenos Aires on April 22, 1977, less than three weeks after Fermín’s disappearance. The remains were buried at the Lomas de Zamora cemetery as “N.N.” In August 2006, Fermín was identified through DNA analysis by EAAF as one of the skeletons exhumed from the cemetery. Anthropological and odontological analysis proved consistent with his ante-mortem information.

The team’s laboratory analysis of peri-mortem trauma found multiple gunshot wounds that could have caused his death.

Ezpeleta Cemetery

In 2001, the La Plata Federal Chamber of Appeals requested EAAF to investigate “N.N.” burials in the municipal cemetery of Ezpeleta, province of Buenos Aires. Since then, the team conducted a preliminary investigation, collecting and analyzing official records from different administrative archives, such as cemetery books, death certificates, judicial cases, criminal records, and fingerprints.
Based on this information, from August 2 to 21, 2005, EAAF exhumed 116 “N.N.” skeletal remains from individual graves (except for three double graves). Following forensic anthropological analysis, 29 skeletons were selected as possibly belonging to disappeared persons based on their age and peri-mortem trauma.

In 2006, the identity hypotheses formed on the basis of historical research and anthropological analysis of the following individuals were confirmed by DNA tests:

**Martínez, Norberto Nelson;**
Norberto was born on February 16, 1941. On October 21, 1977, there was a raid on his home in the locality of Ezpeleta. According to a neighbor, gunshots were heard and the soldiers left carrying a bulk and telling him it was Norberto’s body. His wife and two daughters were abducted during the same operation. Though she is still missing, the children were returned to their grandparents. Norberto was active in the Montoneros guerrilla group. His body was buried as “N.N.” in the cemetery of Ezpeleta.

He was identified by LIDMO through DNA in September 2006. Anthropological analysis proved consistent with his ante-mortem information. The team's laboratory analysis found multiple gunshot wounds as peri-mortem trauma that could have caused his death.

**Pinto Rubio, María Angélica;**
María Angélica was born on February 10, 1956. Her family was informed by authorities that she had allegedly committed suicide by taking a cyanide capsule, though a member of a guerrilla organization told the family that she had been killed during a clash in Berazategui, province of Buenos Aires in mid-February 1977. She was 21 years old. Her brother, Reinaldo was also disappeared; his remains have yet to be identified.

Historical research allowed EAAF to establish the hypothesis that one of the female skeletons buried as “N.N.” in Sector 215-bis of the cemetery could be María Angélica, because a death certificate record indicated the presence of “N.N.” burial in this section of Ezpeleta whose cause of death was recorded as “poisoned”, the term sometimes used for those who had taken cyanide capsules—a practice used by Montoneros to avoid being captured alive and tortured.

She was identified by LIDMO through DNA analysis in December 2006. Anthropological and odontological analysis was consistent with her ante-mortem data.

The investigation of cases from Ezpeleta cemetery continues.

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**Berazategui Cemetery**

The county of Berazategui lies in the southwest of Greater Buenos Aires, on the coast of the Río de La Plata. As part of the investigation of the repression in the province, EAAF researched Berazategui cemetery records and death certificates of unidentified people in the county’s civil registry for the years under military dictatorship. In 2006, EAAF found in cemetery records five death certificates and five “N.N.” burials for the 1976 to 1978 period that matched the biological and traumatic profile of disappeared persons. In April and September 2006, the team exhumed four male remains and one female remains thought to correspond to disappeared persons from this cemetery. Following forensic anthropological analysis and with a strong identity hypothesis, the team sent samples from the female skeleton to LIDMO for genetic analysis. These resulted in the identification of:

**Pugliese, Susana;** Born on October 30, 1949, Susana was abducted on September 19, 1977 in Plátanos, in
the province of Buenos Aires. She was 27 years old. Her husband, Eduardo Rosen, identified by EAAF in 2005, had been abducted three days earlier. They had two children who were cared for by an aunt after their disappearance. EAAF’s preliminary investigation made it possible to hypothesize that Death Certificate 403 in the Berazategui Civil Registry might correspond to Susana’s remains. The certificate documents the death of a young female “N.N.” that took place on September 19, 1977 at 5 pm due to “cardio-respiratory insufficiency” in the southern suburb Plátanos. EAAF exhumed grave 80 in Sector 21 of the Berazategui cemetery on March 3, 2006. The recovered skeleton was female and had anthropological characteristics (sex, age, stature, and dental) consistent with those of Susana. This allowed EAAF to hypothesize that it could be her, but it was necessary to corroborate this association through genetic analysis. According to a testimony collected by EAAF, it was possible that she had taken a cyanide capsule upon realizing that the police had come to abduct her.

Comparison by EAAF and LIDMO between the genetic profile of her son’s blood sample and that of the remains exhumed in Berazategui made it possible to confirm in July 2006 that the remains belonged to Susana Pugliese. Anthropological and odontological analysis was consistent with her ante-mortem data.

EAAF’s investigation to identify the other individuals continues.

Province of Catamarca

In July 2005, EAAF worked in the municipal cemetery of San Fernando del Valle de Catamarca on the investigation related to Judicial Case 4148/05 “Mirtha de Clérici and others on procedural measures” from the local Federal Court. The project included the search, exhumation, and forensic anthropological analysis of “N.N.” individuals buried in the local cemetery following an assault by the guerrilla group, the Revolutionary People’s Army (ERP), on the Army barracks in San Fernando del Valle de Catamarca in August 1974. Survivors’ testimonies suggest that some of the guerillas were reportedly shot after surrendering to the Army and Federal Police forces, in an incident known as Parish of the Rosary Massacre.

The remains of 11 individuals, of the 16 who died as a result of the attack, were returned to their families. The other five were buried without being identified. There are strong indications that one or two of the unidentified individuals were Uruguayan citizens who belonged to the group of attackers. The original case file, no. 6047/74 “Summary Instructed by Homicide, Serious Wounds, Illicit Association and Infraction, Articles 189 bis, 229, 292, 213 of the Penal Code,” contained photographs and fingerprints. However, these were no longer among the judicial documents EAAF examined.

In the 1980s, cemetery workers exhumed and reburied the five bodies in another part of the cemetery to reutilize the space, as was routine practice. According to one of the workers, the bodies were kept in their individual metal boxes.

In 2005, EAAF exhumed remains corresponding to four male individuals in metal boxes. Possibly because the skeletons were incomplete, the team was not able to identify any perimortem gunshot wounds in the recovered remains.

On June 21, 2006, based on historical research, and anthropological and genetic analyses, EAAF identified the remains of:

Betancourt, Dardo Rutilio; Rutilio was a 24 year old citizen of Uruguay. In 1972, he had been released from Uruguayan prison, where he was being held for his involvement with the guerrilla group Tupamaros. The Uruguayan government had given him the possibility of exile. Rutilio initially went to Chile, under Allende, and then from there went to Cuba, where he spent almost a year training. He entered clandestinely into Argentina in order to fight with ERP in the mountainous region of Tucumán. He died in the province of Catamarca when the group failed in their attempt to take the headquarters of the 17th Airborne unit. After a day of fighting against the police and military, Rutilio and 15 other combatants surrendered due to lack of ammunition. They had agreed to a negotiated surrender with the security forces, but were reportedly
Following testimonies from witnesses and written accounts that were used in the case before the Federal Court of Catamarca, close to 14 guerillas were extrajudicially executed and five of them were buried as “N.N.” in the cemetery of the capital, San Fernando del Valle de Catamarca.

In July 2006, EAAF and LIDMO confirmed with genetic analysis the identification of Rutilio’s remains among the four recovered bodies. On the Sept 8, 2006 his remains were returned to his four sisters who traveled from Sweden and Uruguay in order to recover their disappeared brother.

**Province of Chaco**

**Margarita Belén Massacre**

On December 12, 1976, at least ten political prisoners either in official or clandestine detention were reportedly extrajudicially executed by security forces in the northeast province of Chaco. The final number killed may be as high as 22. An Army communiqué stated that on December 13, 1976, “subversive elements” attacked a convoy transporting prisoners from Chaco to Formosa provinces, resulting in the death of three “subversives,” the wounding of two guards, and the escape of several prisoners. In 1983, when democracy returned to Argentina, and further judicial investigation became possible, it was found that the prisoners identified in the Army communiqué were removed from the federal prison in Resistencia and from the Police Brigade of Investigations of Resistencia and executed in the town of Margarita Belén. The incident became known as the Margarita Belén Massacre.

EAAF’s investigation revealed that 10 victims were buried in individual graves at Francisco Solano cemetery, in the city of Resistencia, capital of Chaco. In the aftermath, seven were
identified and returned to their families in sealed coffins. In 2005, EAAF exhumed the remaining three: Luis Alberto Díaz, a male “N.N.”, and a female “N.N.” The team is working to identify the remains by comparing fingerprints taken from the cadavers with the fingerprints on the victims’ national identification documents.

In 2006, EAAF performed four separate excavations at the same cemetery in search of the other 12 individuals who may have been killed in the same incident and buried in clandestine graves, with negative results. EAAF met with the judge in the Margarita Belén case, and continues to conduct historical research and interviews, as well as to collect samples from relatives for future genetic analysis.

Province of Córdoba

In 2006, EAAF continued to analyze and try to identify the remains exhumed from 2002 to 2004 from several mass graves in the San Vicente cemetery, on the outskirts of the city of Córdoba. The city, which is the second largest in Argentina and capital of Córdoba province, was seriously affected by the repression. Responsible for administering these human rights violations was the Third Army Corps, which was headquartered in Córdoba and had jurisdiction over the central, west, and northwest regions of the country.

Reportedly, 59 CDCs operated in the region between 1975 and 1980.7 According to extensive historical research undertaken by EAAF in 2002, most of the “disappeared” in and around the city of Córdoba were taken to two army CDCs, La Perla and Campo La Ribera. A military prison, Campo La Ribera began detaining the “disappeared” from December 1975, a few months before the coup. From 1976 until the end of 1979, La Perla, a military post between the cities of Córdoba and Carlos Paz, operated as a CDC. CONADEP estimated that approximately 2,200 disappeared people were detained there, making it one of the largest CDCs in the country.
San Vicente Cemetery

In 1984, the existence of at least one mass grave in San Vicente cemetery, thought to contain the remains of disappeared persons, became public when morgue and cemetery employees submitted official testimonies to CONADEP. They declared that many bodies received in 1976 and 1977 exhibited gunshot wounds, clear signs of torture, and ink stains on their fingers, implying that they had been fingerprinted. The majority of these bodies arrived at the morgue without papers, so there was no indication of which state agency had sent them, although reportedly the security forces delivered the remains. At the morgue, the bodies were entered as “N.N.” and recorded as “found on the street” or “killed in confrontations with security or military forces.” In some instances, the bodies were identified at the morgue and military judges delivered the remains to their families. Police physicians signed the death certificates. However, EAAF found documentation indicating that in 1976 approximately 200 bodies not returned to their families were sent instead from the judicial morgue to San Vicente cemetery in four mass transfers; similar figures were recorded in 1977.

In conjunction with ARHISTA, a local human rights organization, EAAF conducted interviews with survivors from La Perla and Campo La Ribera and the relatives of disappeared persons. EAAF also conducted extensive historical research into the “N.N” burials of San Vicente in order to hypothesize possible identities. In late 2002, the team began the process of exhumations, coordinating with past and current morgue employees. The team used cemetery records and eyewitness testimonies to locate individual and common graves, and exhumations were then carried out. The cemetery contains the largest common grave so far sourced to the Dirty War, in Sector C of San Vicente cemetery. In this grave, EAAF found remains corresponding to a total of 91 individual skeletons and numerous clusters of incomplete remains from two different “floors” or layers, presumed to be from different burial dates. EAAF also uncovered a second mass grave, located 12 meters south of Sector C, with the remains of 32 individuals. The team estimated that approximately 30 percent of the skeletons exhumed from these graves most likely correspond to persons disappeared at the end of 1975 and during the last military dictatorship (1976 to 1983).

In the larger common grave, the skeletons were intertwined, overlapping one other, with lower and upper limbs in different positions. This confirmed...
the witness testimony that the bodies had been thrown into the graves. Additionally, markings found in the sediment, as well as the sediment’s consistency and coloration, indicated that the graves had been dug with mechanical shovels or bulldozers.

During 2006, EAAF completed the long-term laboratory analysis at the Córdoba Institute of Legal Medicine of over 300 remains exhumed between 2002 and 2004 at San Vicente cemetery. To date, the team has identified 10 individuals from these sets of remains and returned them to their families.

In 2006, EAAF identified one of the remains exhumed from San Vicente cemetery as corresponding to:

**Bártoli, Guillermo Enrique**

Guillermo was 25 years old when his body appeared on Las Heras Boulevard on May 27, 1976, in the city Córdoba, after what was possibly a faked confrontation with security forces. His family was unsure if he was disappeared prior to appearing in the street. He was a member of PRT-ERP.

His brother, Eduardo Daniel Bártoli, a member of the guerrilla group Montoneros, was assassinated three months prior, after being detained by the state. A third brother, Bernardo, remained a political prisoner in the Córdoba prison system for many years.

EAAF analysis on Guillermo’s remains showed peri-mortem trauma consistent with multiple gunshot wounds, which could have been his cause of death. He was identified through DNA analysis by LIDMO and EAAF in December 2006. Anthropological and odontological analysis was consistent with his ante-mortem information. He was buried by his relatives at the Monument to the Memory, dedicated to the individuals who disappeared or were killed during the last military dictatorship in the province of Córdoba.

EAAF continues to conduct historical research in search of clues that could lead to the identification of other remains exhumed from San Vicente cemetery. In 2006, the team compiled a contact list of the living relatives of about 400 individuals who disappeared in the province between August 1975 and September 1976. As of this writing, EAAF has interviewed and collected DNA samples from over 400 family members of the disappeared in Córdoba. The EAAF investigation to identify the other remains from San Vicente continues.

**Province of Corrientes**

In 2006, EAAF traveled on three occasions to the province of Corrientes. In June, at a local court’s request, EAAF exhumed five graves at Empedrado cemetery, a small cemetery to the south of the city of Corrientes, said to contain the graves of the disappeared in witness testimonies. The team recovered four male remains while the fifth grave was empty. Three of them are believed to correspond to three bodies which appeared floating on the Paraná River in separate incidents between December 1976 and July 1977 and were buried in the cemetery. According to testimonies provided to EAAF by police officers who collected the corpses and oversaw their

**Other Work Conducted in the Province of Córdoba**

At the request of provincial courts, EAAF exhumed remains belonging to a male individual in Los Cielos, a neighborhood in the city of Córdoba. The burial turned out to date from the pre-colonial period.

At the request of his family, EAAF also worked on a case to determine whether remains returned to the Piotti family at the time of death in fact belonged to Jorge Luis Piotti, who was killed by military forces in 1977. The team analyzed the remains, buried at La Calera cemetery, and confirmed the identification.

The team also oversaw excavations on land belonging to the Third Army Corps, but recovered no human remains. In 2004, at the request of the 3rd Federal Court, EAAF had participated in surveying the land on the Third Army Corps’ Guarnición Military Base, also known to contain the CDC La Perla. The team had suggested some sites that could potentially contain archaeological material related to the activities of the CDC during the last military dictatorship.
transfer to the cemetery and the physician who issued the death certificates at the time, they were found with incisions in their abdomens and missing fingertips; they also exhibited signs of having been bound. This investigation is linked to a CDC which operated during the last dictatorship at the Infantry Regiment No. 9, in the same city. As of this writing, 12 military officers have been arrested in connection to this case. EAAF performed anthropological analysis, has a strong identity hypothesis, and is awaiting DNA results. The identity of the fourth corpse is under investigation.

EAAF also worked in connection with several other judicial investigations. In April 2006, EAAF visited the Laguna Brava cemetery, to the east of the city of Corrientes, to conduct initial investigations into four “N.N.” burials, which had been relocated within the cemetery in 2000. No hypothesis for the identities of these individuals exists as of yet.

EAAF also spent time collecting information on the history of the CDC La Polaca. This CDC is located close to the border with Brazil, and research suggests it was involved with state activities relating to Operation Condor, a covert agreement among military governments in the Southern Cone for the exchange of information and political prisoners, and counterinsurgency operations of the 1980s.

Further, EAAF undertook work into the historical reconstruction of the disappearance of 15 Agrarian League members—an organization of farm laborers, teachers, and grassroots priests. Moving progressively through the province of Corrientes, EAAF interviewed Agrarian League members, former detainees, and relatives of the disappeared. During its missions, EAAF also collected 20 blood samples from victims’ families throughout the province of Corrientes.

The investigations are ongoing.
Province of Entre Ríos

In 2006, EAAF traveled twice to the city of Paraná, province of Entre Ríos, to assist in excavations, led by the local archaeologist Damián Vainstub, in search of the grave of a disappeared man. There were no significant findings resulting from the excavations.

In the cities of Paraná and Concordia, EAAF interviewed and collected blood samples from relatives of disappeared persons for eventual comparison with remains.

Province of Formosa

The investigations in Formosa focus on the criminal activities of the Second Army Corps and the two CDCs it operated between 1976 and 1977: the Infantry Regiment No. 29 and the San Antonio provincial police station.

In July of 2006, at the request of judicial authorities, forensic pathologist Luis Bosio, an expert witness for the national Supreme Court, conducted an initial survey of the Virgin of Itatí cemetery, located in the city of Formosa.

In 1982, new burials in this cemetery were discontinued because of a lack of space, and in 1992 some burials were moved to San Antonio cemetery to make room for a park. According to testimonials, the burials of “N.N” individuals from the Montoneros attack on May 10, 1975 were located in this cemetery. EAAF carried out exhumations in 2007 based on the assessment of cemetery records, from interviews with morgue employees, and from documents associated with the 1992 transfers.

While attending a meeting in July of 2006 in Formosa, EAAF met with the provincial human rights coordinator, reviewed current judicial files on past human rights abuses, interviewed relatives of disappeared people, and collected two new blood samples for genetic testing.

Province of Santa Fe

Command Zone Two was headquartered in the city of Rosario, province of Santa Fe, and included all of the northeastern provinces. At least 35 CDCs operated in the province of Santa Fe during this time.

In 2004, a federal judge in Santa Fe requested EAAF’s involvement in the investigation of a mass grave in San Lorenzo cemetery, near the city of Rosario. According to witnesses, in April or May of 1976, a military truck entered San Lorenzo cemetery and military personnel unloaded black sacks and coffins, burying them in a large grave in the northeastern corner of the cemetery. This claim initiated the judiciary file No. 654/02 regarding the investigation of clandestine burials in that cemetery.

At the time EAAF began work in Rosario in 2004, little was known about how the local repressive system operated. EAAF coordinated an investigation team with professionals from the National University of Rosario (UNR), the Association of Former Political Prisoners and Survivors, the Association for the Historical Recuperation of Argentina (ARHISTA), The Office for Historic Reconstruction of Human Rights under the Secretary of Santa Fe Province, HIJOS (representing sons and daughters of the disappeared), Mothers and Grandmothers of Plaza de Mayo, and the Municipal Museum of the City of San Lorenzo (MMCSL). Each group led research in a different aspect of the repressive apparatus, including historical reconstruction, archaeological investigation, collection of testimonies, and mapping the CDCs.

In the city of Rosario and its outskirts alone, EAAF compiled a list of over 440 disappearances. Through testimonies, EAAF learned that the majority of those kidnapped in Rosario were initially brought to the Servicio de Informaciones de la Unidad Regional No. II de la Policía de la Provincia de Santa Fe (Information Services of the Regional Unit No. II of the Police of Santa Fe Province), also known as El Pozo (“The Hole”) or La Favela (“The Shanty”). Two other large CDCs near Rosario were Fisherton and Quinta de Funes.
EAAF employed resistivity testing before exhumations took place at San Lorenzo cemetery in the province of Santa Fe. The section of the cemetery believed to contain remains of the disappeared did not have marked graves, and resistivity testing can be used to find irregularities and disturbances in the subsoil, possibly indicating the location of a burial. The use of resistivity testing for exhumations involves: staking electrodes along a testing line, and taking recordings of the readings (top right), in order to generate a computer profile of the soil resistivity along that line (bottom right). These test lines are repeated around the cemetery to generate multiple profiles (bottom left), which are then compared against the soil stratigraphy seen in test excavation pits (top left). EAAF Archives.
Resistivity Survey and Excavations

In 2004 and 2005, EAAF worked with a team of archaeologists led by Juan Mobile from the UNR and Pedro Mondoni of the MMCSL to complete the excavation phase in designated areas of San Lorenzo cemetery. The testimonials given indicated that the mass grave was located in the northeastern corner of the cemetery. The team also analyzed historical aerial photos and satellite imagery of the potential mass grave location. According to cemetery records, from 1974 until June of 1976, the I and J Sectors in the northeastern corner of San Lorenzo were utilized for the burial of children and older individuals, which were demarcated by crosses. Farther to the northeast of Sectors I and J, where testimonials had placed the mass grave, was the location of the cemetery’s trash heap. EAAF found no surface indications of burials in this section, in part due to the overlay of trash.

With the assistance of David Aquilera, Guillermo Sagrispanti, and Aldo Giaccardi, geology experts appointed by the federal judge in Rosario, the team conducted resistivity testing in the northeastern corner of San Lorenzo. Resistivity testing involves placing electrodes (typically a line of metal stakes) into the ground, and then inducing an electrical current through the soil. Variations in the electrical conduciveness of soils are measured and computer-generated graphics of the survey area map soil differences not apparent on the surface. The team also excavated test pits for the purpose of comparing the results of the resistivity survey to actual soil stratigraphy. As a result of the survey, EAAF identified resistivity patterns below the trash heap that could be consistent with the disturbances caused by removal and refill of soil potentially associated with a burial. These disturbances do not necessarily indicate the existence of a grave, but could simply indicate a variation in the stratigraphic layers below the surface.

In excavating, EAAF located a sector of unmarked children’s burials and a sector of unmarked adult burials. In the adult sector, the resistivity testing and excavations suggested 33 previously-dug graves, but the team was only able to locate 22 remains to exhume. The remains from the empty graves had been relocated.

In 2005 and 2006, EAAF analyzed the remains exhumed from San Lorenzo cemetery, concluding that three of them could belong to victims of state terrorism, based on biological profile and peri-mortem trauma. EAAF, in conjunction with the team of archaeologists UNR and MMCSL, also surveyed land near the city of Casilda and nearby the Fisherton CDC in search of suspected clandestine burial sites.

In addition in 2006, EAAF continued the preliminary investigation into the repression’s modus operandi in Santa Fe province, trying to narrow the list of possible disappeared persons whose remains may be among the ones exhumed at San Lorenzo cemetery. The team conducted interviews with relatives of victims, survivors, and former militants to collect information on the mass grave at San Lorenzo and the at least 35 CDCs that operated in the province.

In 2006, the team identified one of the three individuals exhumed from San Lorenzo cemetery:

Losada, Alberto Isidro

Alberto was born on February 25, 1953. He worked in the Fiat factory in the province of Córdoba. At the beginning of 1975, he travelled to the province of Santa Fe, reportedly because he was being pursued for his political activism in the Partido Revolucionario de los Trabajadores (Revolutionary Worker’s Party, PRT). He was abducted on March 22, 1975 on the outskirts of the city of Rosario, in the province of Santa Fe. On March 24, his parents’ home in the city of Córdoba was broken into by a group in civilian dress, and Alberto’s belongings were taken. When the father contacted the police for assistance, they were unwilling to interfere, and did...
not keep the intruders from taking Alberto’s things.

EAAF’s exhumation in the San Lorenzo cemetery began in 2004. Cemetery records showed three male “N.N.”s delivered by security forces and dated April 1975. Preliminary investigation led us to believe that one of them was Alberto. Comparison between DNA material obtained from blood samples from his family and of one of the remains exhumed in San Lorenzo proved Alberto’s identification in February 2006.

EAAF continues working on the identification of the other two individuals.

Province of Tucumán

Repression in Tucumán, located in the north of Argentina, began before the March 1976 military coup. During 1974 and 1975, social conflicts in the area worsened and guerrilla activity by armed and paramilitary groups intensified. In 1974, the ERP initiated an armed struggle in the rural forested areas of Tucumán. In February 1975, the Vice President of Argentina—acting as President—signed Decree 261 authorizing Operation Independence, which allowed for the “annihilation of the subversion” in the province, and led to the formation of the country’s first CDCs. After the coup, Tucumán was included in the Zone Three, centered in Córdoba and administered by the Third Army Corp.

In 1984, after the return of democracy,
the Tucumán parliament formed a Bicameral Investigative Commission focused on acts of state terrorism in the province. The commission compiled a list of 507 kidnappings, including 387 people who were illegally detained and continued disappeared,
96 who were detained and released, and 24 whose remains were recovered. In 2005, EAAF began to collaborate with District Attorney No. 1 in Tucumán in search of people disappeared in the province between 1974 and 1978. The preliminary investigation focused on North cemetery, in the provincial capital, San Miguel de Tucumán. EAAF focused its research on the section of the cemetery without a fee for burials, where disappeared people were usually buried as “N.N.”. EAAF reviewed all of the “N.N.” burials in cemetery records, which included all registries between June 24, 1975, and December 1983, estimating that about 200 disappeared individuals could be buried there, though EAAF has reason to believe some “N.N.” burials may not have been entered in the registry. This selection was largely based on the date they were buried as “N.N.” and whether the individual died in either a real or contrived confrontations with the armed forces. EAAF also conducted interviews and researched other documentary sources.

These investigations have led to two initial identifications by comparing fingerprints taken at the time from the cadavers with fingerprints of disappeared persons, kept in the National Registry of Persons. No further information can be provided at this time.

In 2006, EAAF began exhumations in three separate areas of North cemetery where “N.N.” individuals were buried during the 1970s. With the assistance of archaeology and anthropology student members of GIAAT and the National University of Tucumán, EAAF excavated 69 graves, exhuming 250 skeletons. Many of these graves had been reutilized, with one burial directly above another. Based on preliminary laboratory analysis, the team estimates that 25 of these remains could belong to disappeared persons.

Other Provinces

During 2006, EAAF also participated in ongoing judicial processes, conducted preliminary investigations, including interviewing and collecting samples for genetic analysis from relatives of the disappeared in the provinces of Jujuy, La Rioja, Mendoza, and Misiones.

ENDNOTES

1. Nine top members of the military government, the Junta, who ruled Argentina between 1976 and 1983, were tried by the State in 1985. See Right to Truth section of this report for more information.
3. Information collected by CONADEP in 1984 revealed that 80 percent of reported disappearances were registered in 1976 and 1977; that 30 percent of the about 10 thousand disappeared persons were women; and that 70 percent of the victims were between 21 and 35 years of age at the time of death.
4. His fingerprints were obtained by EAAF institutions processing some of the two national identification cards.
Between 1964 and 1982, Bolivia was primarily led by military rule. The reformist party, Revolutionary Nationalist Movement (Movimiento Nacionalista Revolucionario, MNR), had held the Bolivian Presidency from 1952 until 1964, but increasing conflicts between government-armed militias, and between political leaders within the MNR, forced the government to rely on the army to keep control. In 1964, General René Barrientos Ortuño led a military coup, claiming the need to restore social order. This began the 18 years of military governments lasting until 1982. During this time, security forces allegedly committed massive human rights violations, including torture, disappearances, forced exile, illegal detentions, and arbitrary executions. In 1971, segments of the MNR cooperated with the military to install General Hugo Banzer Suárez as President. In 1974, General Banzer consolidated his power by removing MNR civilian politicians from his government, replacing them with military

In 2006, EAAF conducted two missions to Bolivia. During its mission to Santa Cruz de la Sierra, EAAF assisted on the search for the remains of José Luis Ibsen at the request of ASOFAMD and CIEDEF. EAAF also participated in a seminar on forensic investigations organized by CIEDEF in La Paz.
appointments.5 During his rule, priority was placed on social order and there was a suspension of political activities and crackdowns on labor organizations.5 General Banzer was forced to call elections in 1978 due to economic instability. From 1978 to 1980, six subsequent interim and military governments were unable to hold power for prolonged periods.

In 1980, General Luis García Meza led another military coup, promising to hold democratic elections in one year. His time in office was allegedly marked by severe human rights abuses and corruption tied to the international narcotics trade.7 Upon announcing his Presidency would continue beyond the stipulated year, popular unrest forced him from office. Thereafter followed another series of short-lived military governments, which gave way to an elected civilian government in 1982.8

According to the Association of Families of the Disappeared and Martyrs for National Liberation (ASOFAMD), a Bolivian NGO, over 14,000 persons were illegally detained, at least 6,000 went into exile, and nearly 150 disappeared during the military dictatorships from 1964 to 1982.9 Further, during the 1970s, Bolivia was involved in Operation Condor, the covert exchange of intelligence and political prisoners among Latin American governments.10 According to ASOFAMD, of the 76 Bolivians who disappeared during General Banzer’s regime, 35 disappeared in Argentina and 8 in Chile.11

Accountability

Upon the return of democracy in 1982, President Hernán Siles Suazo appointed the National Commission of Inquiry into Disappearances,12 a bicameral congressional commission that was the first investigation of its kind in Latin America.13 The Commission investigated cases of disappearances, but not other violations such as torture or illegal detention.14 However, judicial cases related to the commission did not progress because of a lack of political or financial support and those indicted were released.15 The Commission disbanded after two years without presenting a final report.16

As part of a separate proceeding, in 1984, a group of civil, labor, and religious organizations lobbied Congress to launch the “Trial of Responsibilities against Luis García Meza Tejada” to investigate crimes committed during his regime.17 In 1986, Congress presented the case before the Supreme Court, but, reportedly to protect General Banzer, banned possible inquiries into human rights violations that occurred under other regimes.18 In 1993, the Supreme Court sentenced García Meza to 30 years in prison. His former minister of the interior, Luis Arce Gómez, and other close supporters, were also convicted.19 García Meza himself, having fled to Brazil, was extradited in 1995 to serve a 30-year jail term.20 Banzer later returned to serve as democratically-elected President from 1997 to 2001, before ill health forced him to step down and ultimately lead to his death in 2002.21

In 2000, the Inter-American Court of Human Rights of the Organization of American States held the Bolivian state accountable for the disappearance of the university student José Carlos Trujillo Oroza, which occurred in the city of Santa Cruz de la Sierra in 1971. The court ordered the state to pay reparations to the family, locate and return the remains, and prosecute those responsible.22 The decision was an important step towards overturning impunity in Bolivia.23

A map of the burials in the ASOFAMD Mausoleum, which allegedly contains the remains of persons disappeared during Banzer’s regime. Photo courtesy of ASOFAMD.
In 2003, the Bolivian government formed the Inter-institutional Council to Solve Cases of Forced Disappearances (CIEDEF) in order to investigate around 150 cases of state-sponsored disappearances that took place between 1964 and 1982. In 2006, the Inter-American Court declared that progress in this regard had been slow, specifically in relation to recognition of the legal necessity to locate and return remains.24

EAAF Participation


First 2006 Mission

At the request of ASOFAMD and CIEDEF, Silvana Turner traveled to Santa Cruz de la Sierra from September 5 to 8, 2006. The objective of the trip included advising the local District Attorney’s Office on the search for the remains of José Luis Ibsen Peña, who disappeared on February 28, 1973, and acting as a consultant for CIEDEF on the recovery of remains of people reportedly assassinated and/or disappeared between the 1960s and the 1980s.

Rainer Ibsen Cárdenas, a 22-year-old university student, was reportedly detained by state agents in Santa Cruz de la Sierra in October 1971 and executed in a staged escape on June 21, 1972. In 1973, while searching for his son, José Luis Ibsen Peña also disappeared. In 2005, the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights declared the Ibsen case admissible.25

As mentioned before, in 2000, the Inter-American Court of Human Rights of the Organization of American States held the Bolivian State accountable for the disappearance of the university student José Carlos Trujillo Oroza, which occurred in the city of Santa Cruz de la Sierra in 1971. The court ordered the state to pay reparations to the family, locate and return the remains, and prosecute those responsible.26 That same year, the case against those allegedly involved with the disappearance of Trujillo Oroza was expanded by the First Criminal Chamber of the Superior District Court of Santa Cruz to include the cases of Rainer Ibsen Cárdenas and José Luis Ibsen Peña.27 Investigations into their fates are being carried out in the 7th District Court of Santa Cruz.28 Both Trujillo Oroza and Jose Luis Ibsen Peña had been detained at the state prison El Pari, in Santa Cruz de la Sierra.

At the request of the District Attorney’s Office, EAAF visited La Cuchilla cemetery in Santa Cruz de la Sierra to evaluate the excavations conducted recently by members of the Institute of Forensic Investigations in relation to the Trujillo Oroza, Ibsen Peña and Ibsen Cárdenas case. The district attorney assigned to the case, Dr. Pilar Cuellar, had ordered the search for clandestine burials of disappeared persons in La Cuchilla in an effort to locate the remains of José Luis Ibsen Peña. According to testimonials, trucks were known to have entered the cemetery carrying corpses. The excavations in the section of the cemetery for unmarked burials was first done by hand and then with a backhoe. It produced inconclusive results, and it remained unclear whether or not the recovered skeletal remains are relevant to the current investigation. EAAF met with officials from the district attorney’s office in charge of the investigation, with the two forensic doctors involved in the case, with ASOFAMD representatives, and with relatives of the victims in order to assess the course of the exhumations. Based on this information, EAAF made recommendations to the District Attorney’s Office on how to continue the forensic investigation. These included ceasing excavation by backhoe and pursuing further analysis of the remains recovered. DNA testing at a Bolivian laboratory was planned at the time of EAAF’s visit.

In addition, EAAF met with Danilo Villamor, a physical anthropologist working for the National Archaeology Department of the Vice-Ministry of Culture (DINAR), and other Bolivian forensic scientists. They discussed collaborating on the investigation of past human rights violation cases and the strengthening of local forensic anthropology. EAAF would provide theoretical and practical training.

EAAF also gave a lecture on forensic anthropology to graduate legal med-
icine students at Gabriel René Moreno Science University, in Santa Cruz de la Sierra.

Second 2006 Mission
Between October 30 and November 1, 2006, Silvana Turner traveled to La Paz to participate in the CIEDEF-organized seminar “Application of Forensic Anthropology to the Investigation of Forced Disappearances.”

Following meetings with the justice minister’s legal advisor and CIEDEF’s technical team, CIEDEF requested EAAF’s technical assistance in the search for persons that disappeared between 1964 and 1982. The project entails investigating over 150 cases of Bolivians who disappeared during the military regimes of Hugo Banzer, Alberto Natusch Busch, and Luis García Meza, including guerrillas who disappeared at the end of the 1960s and the beginning of the 1970s in the regions of Teoponte and Ñancahuazú. The Teoponte case involves the exhumation and analysis of skeletal remains corresponding to 26 of the 47 guerrillas reportedly killed by the Bolivian army in 1970. As part of the preliminary staging, the team recommended advancing the historical investigation of the case, contacting and interviewing families of the persons killed in Teoponte, collecting their physical data, and gathering additional information on burial sites.

The request from CIEDEF includes also training local professionals in forensic anthropology.

The team also was requested by ASOFAMD to consult in 2007 about remains of the disappeared in the ASOFAMD mausoleum located in the General cemetery of La Paz. The government has given the alleged identities of these remains, among them Rainer Ibsen Cárdenas, but none of these identifications have been assessed scientifically.

ENDNOTES
6. ibid.
8. ibid.
14. ibid.
17. ibid.
18. In 1979, Representative Marcelo Quiroga Santa Cruz initiated a “Trial of Responsibilities against General Banzer” before the Bolivian Parliament; however, the trial did not progress and Quiroga was assassinated reportedly by security forces in 1980 during García Meza’s regime. Banzer was later elected president in 1997. ASOFAMD, “Testimonio histórico de la lucha contra la impunidad en Bolivia,” presented at the conference “Impunidad y sus efectos en los procesos democráticos,” Chile, December 14, 1996; http://www.nuncamas.org/investig/seminar/seminar_22.htm.
28. ibid.
Chile

In 2006, EAAF formed part of a panel of experts established by Chile’s Presidential Advisory Commission on Human Rights to make recommendations on possible problems related to the identification of remains of disappeared persons exhumed from Plot 29 of Santiago’s General Cemetery in 1991 and 1997.

BACKGROUND

After being elected president of Chile in 1970, Salvador Allende implemented far-reaching nationalization and Agrarian Reform programs.1 Right wing groups opposed these measures through media campaigns, strikes, and artificial shortages, covertly supported by the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency. Publicly, the United States expressed opposition to the socialist policies of Allende, and carried through an economic blockade on Chile.2

Santiago, Chile. A mourner at Plot 29 of the General Cemetery, where “N.N.” remains are buried. Photo courtesy of Punto Final.
On September 11, 1973, a military junta, headed by General Augusto Pinochet, took power after staging a military coup. Pinochet kept Chile in a state of emergency until 1980, claiming continued activity on the part of leftist guerrilla elements. In 1980 a constitution was enacted to consolidate Pinochet’s authoritarian rule. During the military dictatorship, the programs of industrial nationalization and Agrarian Reform were overturned, and the economy was put on a free market system. In the late 1980s internal and domestic pressure mounted on Pinochet as other military dictatorships in South America returned to democracy. In 1987, Pinochet allowed for political activity and parties to resume for the first time since 1973, in order to prepare for a vote promised in the 1980 constitution. A “Yes” or “No” referendum on Pinochet’s rule was won by the opposition, organized into the Concertación de Partidos por el NO (Coalition of Parties for NO), in 1988. In 1990, Patricio Aylwin became president following elections held in 1989. However, Pinochet remained Commander in Chief of the armed forces until March 1998, and a life senator until 2000, which granted him immunity from prosecution.

Accountability
Gross human rights violations were widespread during the Pinochet regime, particularly immediately after the coup, continuing until the late 1980s. The National Truth and Reconciliation Commission, appointed by President Aylwin in 1990, concluded that over 2,000 individuals were killed by security forces, of which 957 were disappeared by the state between 1973 and 1990. In 2004, The National Commission on Political Imprisonment and Torture, appointed by President Lagos in 2004 to collect more information on human rights abuses during Pinochet’s regime, recognized over 27,000 victims of illegal detention and torture by state agents during the same time period. The Aylwin government publicly accepted state responsibility for the disappearances and established in 1992 the National Corporation for Reparations and Reconciliation to compensate the victims’ families. However, neither the commission nor the corporation had prosecutorial authority.

Meanwhile, judicial proceedings initiated in 1996 against Pinochet and other South American high-ranking military officers involved inOperation Condor, a covert agreement between military regimes in the region to exchange intelligence and political prisoners, were progressing in Spain. In 1998, General Pinochet was arrested in London following a warrant issued by the Spanish Judge Baltasar Garzón, who charged Pinochet with genocide, terrorism, and torture, justifying his intervention on the principles of universal jurisdiction for grave human rights violations and/or double citizenship of the victims. The Chilean government strongly opposed Garzón’s request on the basis of national jurisdiction, arguing that crimes committed in Chile should be tried in Chile, as well as on the basis of Pinochet’s immunity as life senator. Following a long dispute within the judiciary and executive branches of Spain, the U.K., and Chile, and a
strong mobilization of human rights organizations worldwide, Britain’s House of Lords ordered Pinochet’s extradition to Spain in October 1999. However, the British Secretary of State decided against it, allowing his return to Chile on health grounds. Nevertheless, the Pinochet affair strengthened the application of principles of international law, such as universal jurisdiction and international human rights treaties, and led to a worldwide renewed hope for the prosecution of human rights violators who had, until then, enjoyed immunity in their own countries. Pinochet’s immunity within Chile was stripped by the Supreme Court in 2000. Court cases brought against him were repeatedly put off by claims that the defendant was unfit to stand trial. In 2005, these grounds were finally overturned and Pinochet was indicted. Pinochet died in December 2006 while under house arrest. At the time, he was being prosecuted in Chile on charges related to the torture, kidnapping, and homicide of political opponents in 1973, the disappearance of 119 individuals in 1975, tax evasion, and passport falsification.

As of October 2006, 109 military and police officials had been convicted of human rights violations during the military rule and 35 former generals had either been convicted or faced trials, including the former head of the Directorate of National Intelligence (DINA), ex-General Manuel Contreras Sepúlveda.

Investigation of Identifications from Patio 29

Upon the return of democracy in 1990, judicial investigations into the fate of state terrorism victims led to the discovery of remains suspected to correspond to disappeared persons. Between 1990 and 2004, Chilean forensic experts identified 220 of these remains with traditional forensic methods. Based on documentation by the Vicaría de la Solidaridad, the human rights office of the Catholic Archbishop in Santiago, which contains one of the most extensive archives of human rights abuses in Chile, a judge ordered the exhumation of over a hundred graves located in Patio 29 (Plot 29) of the General cemetery, in Santiago. In 1991, Chilean forensic anthropologists excavated 107 graves and exhumed 125 remains that could belong to persons disappeared in 1973. They recovered the remains of another individual in 1997.

Between 1993 and 2002, Chile’s Medical-Legal Service (SML) identified 96 of the 126 remains exhumed from Plot 29, which were based on anthropological and odontological analysis comparing ante-mortem and post-mortem data. In 2002, the SML established the Special Identification Unit to work on the identification of the remains of the disappeared. However, since 1994, some scientists and new developments in the historical investigation of cases began to raise doubts about the accuracy of the identifications. As a result, in 2005, Judge Carlos Gajardo ordered the re-exhumation of previously identified remains, which had been already returned to the families, for genetic testing. Mitochondrial DNA analyses conducted by the SML produced contradictory identification results on 48 of the 93 cases reexamined. The results were made public by the SML at a press conference in April 2006. Shortly thereafter, the SML was put under governmental administration in order to address problems with identifications. The former director, Dr. Óscar Vargas, resigned under pressure from the government and families of

Santiago, Chile. Patio 29 was declared a National Monument in 2006 because of its importance as a place of memory those disappeared during Pinochet’s regime. Photo courtesy of Mabel Vargas.
victims association. The families of victims associations urged countertesting on the remains and the restructuring of the SML. María Luisa Sepúlveda, former Vice President of the National Commission on Political Imprisonment and Torture, was appointed to administer the SML during its reorganization.

**EAAF Participation**

In April 2006, President Michelle Bachelet established The Presidential Advisory Commission on Human Rights, which was dedicated to the thorough review of these identifications. The Commission formed a panel of 12 local and international experts to advise the government on the best way to address the situation. The international experts were: Clyde Snow, Douglas Ubelaker from the US National Museum of Natural History, and EAAF team member Luis Fondebrider, acting as anthropology experts; Tom Parsons, director of genetic area of the International Commission on Missing Persons, Lance Gima, director of the Forensic Laboratory of the California Justice Department, and Ranajit Chakraborty from the University of Cincinnati, acting as genetics experts; Jose Luis Prieto, from the Madrid Institute of Anatomy, acting as the pathology and odontology specialist; and Maximo Duque, from the National Medical Legal Institute of Colombia, acting as the pathology expert. From Chile, the anthropologist Eugenio Aspillaga, the geneticist Pilar Carballo, and the archaeologist V. Standem participated in the panel.

Also involved to observe the panel were: representatives from the Association of Families of the Detained Disappeared; the Association of Families of the Detained Disappeared and Executed of Paine; the Association of Families of the Politically Executed; the Association of Detained Disappeared and Executed of the Victim of La Moneda; Morris Tidball-Binz, forensic coordinator for the International Committee of the Red Cross; Julio Ibáñez Burgos, the national director of the Police Division of Criminal Investigations; María Luisa Sepúlveda, director of the Presidential Advisory Commission on Human Rights; and various human rights legal experts.

EAAF member Luis Fondebrider served on the panel and participated in one meeting held in Chile between July 31 and August 5, 2006. The panel’s work focused on:

- Designing a comprehensive strategy to audit what had been done since 1990 with respect to the 126 remains exhumed from Plot 29, which included reviewing external reports, ante-mortem and background information, case expertise, some of the skeletal remains, and interviews with specialists involved in the identifications.
- Selecting scientists from among 40 international candidates to carry out the forensic audit on the Plot 29 remains.
- Proposing mechanisms to prevent future mistakes. This involves analyzing and proposing accreditation processes for the different areas of the Medical Examiners Institute, such as laboratory compliance with ISO 9000 and 17025 norms, and formulating an emergency strategy for future cases until the results of the forensic audit and the identification team has been properly qualified.
- Reviewing and offering a proposal to enhance the existing relatives of victims’ genetic blood bank, originally administered by the SML. Up until the panel’s work, the genetic bank contained approximately 1200 samples from relatives of victims, but mostly from the victims’ maternal families, as the SML was
only utilizing mitochondrial DNA for identification purposes.

- Recommending the application of nuclear DNA, rather than solely mitochondrial DNA, to identify the remains of suspected disappeared persons.

- Recommending protocols to improve the different areas of the SML, such as genetics and anthropology.

The auditors selected by the panel were: María Cristina Mendocina, forensic pathologist coordinator from the University of Coimbra, Portugal; Barnardo Arriaza Torres, anthropologist from the University of Tarapacá; Francisco Exteberria, forensic pathologist from País Vasco, Spain; Dina Alejandra Jiménez Mora, forensic odontologist with the National Medical-Legal Institute in Colombia; Baruch Arensbourg, forensic anthropologist at the University of Tel-Aviv; Rhonda Roby, forensic geneticist from the University of North Texas; and Marcelo Moraga, forensic geneticist at the University of Chile. The forensic audit on the scientific reports for the Patio 29 remains began in September 2006. The audit was to report which cases of the 126 would need full reexamination. In December 2006, the panel, which included Fondevrider, met again in order to evaluate the results of the audit. In addition to reporting its findings to the panel, the forensic audit acted as an expert witness in the case open under Judge Carlos Gajardo investigating the identifications from Patio 29. The families of victims organizations were kept up to date of the activities of the panel, and expressed satisfaction with the schedule and progress of the review.

With respect to reviewing the genetic database and taking blood samples, the panel had observations derived from its own work. The panel recognized a need to emphasize the following:

- Chain of custody, from the moment a sample is taken and through its handling by different agents and laboratories.

- The necessity to certify, with fingerprinting, the identity of family members giving blood samples, in accordance with international standards.

- The coding of samples and on how anthropologists make the selection of best bone samples for genetic testing.

- The limitations of mitochondrial
DNA in small or endogamous populations.

The necessity of a genetic mapping of local population.

The SML began to implement the recommendations of the panel, specifically in the work of the Identification Unit, in May 2007. The SML is currently remodeling laboratory facilities, updating lab equipment, and restructuring its management in order to improve the identification process.20

In August 2007, the International Committee of Experts (CIE) was formed from participants of the 2006 panel. EAAF member Luis Fondebrider will continue to work in Chile as a forensic expert on the CIE. The Committee will assess the efforts of the SML as it implements the recommendations of the panel from the judicial case for Plot 29. The families of victims organizations have been updated throughout the proceedings.

Chileans Disappeared in Argentina

As part of the team’s activities for the Latin American Initiative for the Identification of the Disappeared (LIID),21 EAAF has been contacting human rights NGOs and families of victims associations in neighboring countries that are thought to have had citizens disappeared in Argentina. Some of the cases resulted from Operation Condor, a covert agreement among military governments in the Southern Cone for the exchange of information and political prisoners.

This includes Chile, as well as Uruguay, Paraguay, Peru, Bolivia, and Brazil.

During its 2006 trip, EAAF met with the Presidential Advisory Commission on Human Rights, and discussed LIID and its implications for the estimated 111 Chileans who disappeared in Argentina. The team left a list of current Chilean citizens with the commission and families of victims organizations. These Chilean citizens had had relatives disappeared in Argentina during the last military dictatorship. The team is seeking pre-mortem and historical information and blood samples for future genetics work. The Blood Collection Center in Santiago will collect samples for the team as part of LIID and send them to Argentina so that they can be compared with remains found in the latter country.

In 2006, the team identified the Chilean María Cristina Carreño Araya in the Argentine province of Buenos Aires, as reported in the Argentina section of this report.

ENDNOTES

4. Ibid
9. Furthermore, an Impunity Law decreed by Pinochet in 1978, protected government officials in Chile for crimes committed between 1973 and 1978, during the state of siege.
10. Victims from Latin American countries that had Spanish citizenship or were entitled to it.
21. EAAF 2007 ANNUAL REPORT
With a population of 784,000, the Mediterranean island of Cyprus has experienced a long conflict between the Greek Cypriot majority (80 percent of the population) and the Turkish Cypriot minority (18 percent of the population). Following the end of the Ottoman Empire in 1878, the United Kingdom seized control of Cyprus, declaring it a colony in 1925. Efforts to seek independence from Britain grew throughout the 1950s. This led to intercommunal clashes, given that Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots advocated different solutions to the question of sovereignty.

Nevertheless, the Republic of Cyprus became an independent state on August 16, 1960.

The application of the provisions of the new constitution encountered difficulties almost from the birth of the republic and led to a succession of constitutional crises and to accumulating tension between the leaders of the two communities.

The 1964 Conflict
On December 21, 1963, the tension escalated into violence in Nicosia, the capital.

In efforts to end intercommunal strife, a Turkish, Greek, and U.K. joint peace-making force under British command was deployed on December 26, 1963. Following a ceasefire, a “green line”...
was established, effectively dividing the capital into Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot sectors.4

However, major clashes between the Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots continued, resulting in deaths on both sides.5 In 1964, the United Nations Security Council established a peacekeeping force of 6,000 (UN Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus, UNFICYP) “to prevent a recurrence of fighting, contribute to the maintenance and restoration of law and order, and contribute to a return to normal conditions.”6

The 1974 Conflict
“On 15 July 1974, the National Guard, under the direction of Greek officers, staged a coup d’état against the Cyprus government headed by President Makarios… On 20 July, the Turkish government [invoking previous treaties] … launched an extensive military operation on the north coast of Cyprus, which resulted eventually in the occupation of the main Turkish Cypriot enclave north of Nicosia and areas to the north, east and west of the enclave, including Kyrenia.7 A “ceasefire came into effect … on 16 August 1974. Immediately afterwards, UNFICYP inspected the areas of confrontation and recorded the deployment of the military forces on both sides. Lines drawn between the forward defended localities became respectively the National Guard and Turkish forces’ ceasefire lines.”8 The area between the lines, known as the UN buffer zone, is monitored by UNFICYP.9

Recent developments
“On July 8, 2006, the Greek Cypriot leader and the Turkish Cypriot leader met in the presence of the Under-Secretary General [of the United Nations], where they agreed on and signed a set of principles and decisions… By their agreement, they recognized that a status quo was unacceptable and that a comprehensive settlement was both desirable and possible.”10

The Committee on Missing Persons
According to the UN, over 1,400 Greek Cypriots and 500 Turkish Cypriots are listed as missing in Cyprus.11 The Committee on Missing Persons in Cyprus (CMP) was established in 1981 by an agreement between the Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot communities under the auspices of the United Nations as a humanitarian initiative “to investigate and determine the fate” of these missing persons. The Committee is composed of a member appointed by each of the two communities and a third member selected by the International Committee of the Red Cross and appointed by the UN Secretary-General. The “Committee [is] entrusted with the exhumation, identification and return of remains of missing persons from a dispute that spans more than four decades.”12

EAAF Participation

As part of the initiative, Luis Fondebrider and consultant Claudia Bisso led a group of international consultants.13 EAAF organized and is providing training to the Bicommunal Forensic Team (BCFT), composed of 14 Turkish Cypriot and Greek Cypriot archaeologists and anthropologists, to perform field and laboratory work. The bicomunal nature of the scientific team is unique in the island.

Under EAAF direction, BCFT has been conducting exhumations throughout the country since September 2006. Anthropological analysis is carried out at CMP’s laboratory, located in Nicosia within the UN buffer zone. As of December 2006, the BCFT has recovered over 350 remains from across the island. These have been sent to the CMP anthropological laboratory, where more than 250 remains have been analyzed. Skeletal samples from these remains were sent for DNA analysis to a local genetic laboratory. In addition, EAAF has designed a database containing ante-mortem information on each case, and data from archaeological and laboratory work.

Since late June 2007, the CMP initiative has resulted in 57 positive identifications of the remains of missing persons. The investigation is ongoing.
Cyprus, 2007. According to the Committee on Missing Persons (CMP); July 2007 marked a turning point of historical significance: the CMP began returning remains of Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot individuals to their families. These individuals had been missing since the tragic events of 1963-64 and 1974. The primary objective of this project is to enable relatives of missing persons to recover the remains of their loved ones, arrange for a proper burial and close a long period of anguish and uncertainty. Photos courtesy of Office of Turkish Cypriot Member, CMP (above and near right, page XX) and Office of Greek Cypriot Member, CMP (top and bottom, page XX).
ENDNOTES

5. Ibid.
9. Ibid.
13. Hugh Tuller, US forensic anthropologist; Oran Finnegan, Irish forensic anthropologist; Clea Koff, US forensic anthropologist; Cecily Cropper, UK forensic archaeologist; Andres Patiño, Colombian forensic anthropologist; Udo Krenzer, German forensic anthropologist; Mary Ballard-Johansson, US forensic anthropologist; Megan Bassendale, Canadian forensic anthropologist; Elvis Zanic, Bosnian data base expert; Christophe Tinguely, Swiss data base expert.
In 2006, EAAF conducted a mission to El Salvador at the request of Tutela Legal, the human rights office of the Archdiocese of San Salvador, to carry out a preliminary investigation into the 1932 massacre of Izalco.
BACKGROUND

In January 1932, a peasant uprising in western El Salvador led to the killing of between 10,000 and 30,000 indigenous people in the towns of Sonsonate, Izalco, Sonzacate, Nahuizalco, Juayua, Salcoatitán, Ahuachapán, Tacuba, Santa Ana, and La Libertad by government security forces, in an incident known as La Matanza. Many leaders were executed from these indigenous communities and from the Communist Party, which was also involved in the rebellion.

In a coup the year before, General Maximiliano Hernández Martínez had seized power from President Arturo Araujo, who had been elected on promises of agricultural improvements and industrialization. According to Anderson, Hernández, who had been Araujo’s Vice President, took advantage of unrest caused by collapsing coffee prices and the discontent among landed and military elites to depose Araujo.  

Public dissension continued after Hernández assumed power. Plans for a peasant uprising were uncovered by the government, and several organizers arrested, but fighting broke out nonetheless. According to several historians, indigenous communities were rebelling because of ethnic persecution from ladinos and in response to the depressed economy. 

In municipal elections held in early January 1932, many indigenous politicians were barred from office by fraud, and this served to focus discontent in some of the communities. The Salvadorean Communist Party was active in the uprising, and though the events of 1932 were construed by officials as a Communist plot, the party’s influence varies according to sources. Support for the Salvadorean Communist Party (Partido Comunista Salvadoreño, PCS) was mostly among ladino union workers in San Salvador, though the Party had achieved some success recruiting within the army as well. Because of these differences, the communists and the rural indigenous peasants were not a unified organization and the rebellion was not under a single coordinated leadership. The PCS believed neither group had sufficient weaponry or preparation for a revolution. According to the historian Erik Ching, “The rebellion appears to have been a conglomeration of uprisings by distinct communities, probably in contact with one another, striking at local power. The PCS apparently used what influence it had to convince the communities to synchronize their attacks and create the illusion of a single mass revolt.”

Still, under indigenous and communist leaders, the rebels seized control of several western towns in the first few days of the revolt, and some soldiers attempted to mutiny near San Salvador. But arrests among the communist ringleaders quickly disrupted their urban organization, and the mutinies were put down by officers in the Salvadorean Army. Once mobilized in the western region, the military response quickly overwhelmed the indigenous insurgents and brutal reprisals continued for several weeks. Hernández allegedly sent the army into the western region, with the support of civilian patrols
This is a controversial episode in Salvadorean history: while official versions describe it as a communist revolt, most scholars consider it a popular uprising that was violently repressed by the state. Historians often characterize the massacre as genocide.

composed of ladino men, with orders to decimate the indigenous population. Reportedly, the victims were made to dig their own graves before being shot dead. Others were left lying on the surface; some were buried later by their families.

This is a controversial episode in Salvadorean history: while official versions describe it as a communist revolt, most scholars consider it a popular uprising that was violently repressed by the state. Historians often characterize the massacre as genocide. In the 1980s, the Maximiliano Hernández Martínez Brigade was created as a death squad named after the military dictator. The Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front, named after one of the Communist Party leaders executed in 1932, was a coalition formed by five left wing guerrilla groups during the civil war, and it has become one of the country’s major political parties since the end of that conflict.14

On January 22, 2007, on the 75th anniversary of the Izalco massacre, representatives of eight organizations devoted to the recovery of the memory and culture of indigenous peoples (SIHUA, FAMA, Papaluate, Asdei, Atiamitac, and CRN, among others) joined together to form the “Commission to Establish the Historical Truth of the Events of 1932.” Since 2005, Tutela Legal, the human rights office of the Archdiocese of San Salvador, has been working with the Feliciano Ama Foundation (FAMA), named after one of the indigenous leaders killed during the incident, and the indigenous communities of Sonsonate to assist with the investigation and related legal proceedings. Tutela Legal plans to request that a judge order the exhumation of the remains of those killed in the massacre for humanitarian reasons.

EAAF Participation
EAAF has conducted nine missions to El Salvador since 1991. At the request of Tutela Legal, EAAF worked extensively on the forensic investigation of the El Mozote massacre, as well as the massacres of La Quesera and El Barrio—all dating from the 1980s civil war.

From August 12 to 24, 2006, EAAF team member Silvana Turner travelled to El Salvador at the request of Tutela Legal to conduct a preliminary investigation into the 1932 massacre in Izalco. During the mission, EAAF reviewed testimonies collected by three members of Tutela Legal working on the case and completed ten interviews with witnesses and victims’ relatives. Despite Tutela Legal’s efforts, gaining direct access and gathering testimonies from witnesses is a difficult undertaking given their advanced age. The investigators...
believe that they will be able to compile a list of several hundred victims. The current objective of the commission does not include the identification of remains, but does have a focus on historical documentation, and on establishing the sex, age, and minimum number of remains associated with the massacre. EAAF also met with representatives of two of the organizations forming the commission, FAMA and SIHUA.

EAAF researched documents that might offer information about the incident, such as newspapers from the time, photographs, chronicles, and historical and social analyses. Some of the material is housed at the Museum
of the Word and Image in San Salvador, which made a documentary, 1932: Cicatriz de la Memoria, about the massacre.

Tutela Legal focused its search for graves in the town of Izalco, one of the communities most affected by the killings. EAAF examined four sites for possible excavation. First, the team inspected an 80 by 10 meter outdoor area belonging to the Church of Asunción. The church site, emblematic of the massacre, is where yearly commemorations take place and a memorial plaque is located. According to testimonies, bone remains were found at the site in the 1970s and 1980s during construction work. The other three locations EAAF inspected in Izalco are currently streets, two of which had been paved since 1932.

EAAF also visited four possible burial sites in the town of Nahuizalco. The team examined a tree in the church courtyard, near which groups of people were reportedly executed and buried. Two sites visited were in open and broadly defined areas along coun-
try roads. At the Nahuizalco cemetery, EAAF inspected alleged graves of massacre victims, which had been reused for secondary burials.

In the town of Sacuatitlán, EAAF examined the patio and surrounding streets of San Miguel Arcángel Parish as a possible burial site. There was construction work underway on a building and an adjacent street. The parish priest informed EAAF that construction workers had uncovered what appeared to be human remains. The priest allegedly reburied the bones on church grounds without reporting the finding.

It is doubtful that the paved streets in Sacuatitlán and Izalco would contain intact burials. In Nahuizalco, the cemetery site and the two large areas along country roads are more promising, but it would be advisable to collect more testimonial evidence in order to better define the boundaries. The sites located on the church grounds in Izalco and Nahuizalco show the most potential for exhumations and may be worth surveying and testing archaeologically.

Based on the analysis of these prospective grave sites, EAAF recommended that Tutela Legal continue the preliminary investigation by collecting more testimonies and historical documents. It is also important to broaden the investigation to other affected towns where burial sites have been reported and to examine these other possible burial sites in order to determine whether remains from the massacre might be found in undisturbed contexts. Finally, EAAF recommended that Tutela Legal begin working to secure authorization from judicial officials to proceed with exhumations, and to do so with the support of local authorities. This is necessary, considering that exhumations may take place on public or ecclesiastical land, and would require technical machinery and personnel for the excavation.

ENDNOTES
2. Ibid.
3. The term “ladino” refers to someone of mixed Spanish and indigenous descent.
6. Ibid.
8. Ibid, pg. 228-229.
13. Ibid.
EAAF had the opportunity to work closely with María Julia Hernández and Their efforts were crucial to the investigation of the severe human rights for having known them and for their constant support and trust. Their

Maria Julia Hernández 1939-2007


María Julia Hernández, a sociologist and the director of Tutela Legal, died on March 30, 2007. At the Archdiocese of San Salvador, María Julia gathered the most extensive record of human rights abuses committed during the 1980-1992 conflict. She conducted investigations and provided legal representation to many victims of human rights violations, including the cases for the assassination of Monsignor Romero; the killing of six Jesuits, their housekeeper, and her daughter; and the massacres of El Mozote, El Sumpul, and El Barrio, among others.
Rufina Amaya over the last 15 years and greatly admired them. violations committed during El Salvador’s 12-year civil war. EAAF is grateful courage and unrelenting search for truth and justice will be deeply missed.

Rufina Amaya 1943-2007

Rufina Amaya. Photo courtesy of Susan Meiselas/Magnum Photos.

On March 6, 2007, Rufina Amaya passed away. Rufina was among the few survivors of the massacre of El Mozote, in which the armed forces killed over 800 Salvadoreans in December 1981. In 1989, represented by Tutela Legal, she and other survivors sued the Atlacatl Battalion, an elite counterinsurgency unit accused of being the main force implicated in the massacre. In December 2007, the film “I AM NOT AFRAID,” Rufina Amaya’s Testimony premiered at Austin College in Texas. Rufina narrated the film shortly before her death, recounting her experiences at El Mozote and thereafter.
In 2006, EAAF continued working on the identification of female remains associated with the investigation of murdered and disappeared women in Ciudad Juárez and the city of Chihuahua.

BACKGROUND

Since early 1993, between 400 and 500 young women disappeared and were found dead in Ciudad Juárez, Mexico, a city on the U.S.-Mexico border across from El Paso, Texas, and in the city of Chihuahua, the capital of the state of Chihuahua. Many of the bodies allegedly showed signs of sexual abuse and mutilation. The victims were largely young and poor. Some worked in assembly plants and disappeared after leaving work, others were students or informal commerce employees, victims of domestic violence, or women involved in prostitution, or forced into a combination of forced prostitution and drug trafficking.

Many of the murders in Ciudad Juárez reportedly remain unsolved. Moreover, the grounds for some high-profile arrests and prosecutions have been contested on the basis of trumped-up charges and confessions under torture. Serious problems in all stages of the investigations of these killings have prompted national and international organizations to recommend the involvement of independent forensic experts.

In 1998, a report by the governmental National Commission for Human Rights in Mexico (CNDH) concluded that city and state officials were guilty of neglect and dereliction of duty. In 2003, the CNDH released another report, including a detailed analysis of the legal and forensic work for more than 200 disappearances and for a similar number of homicides. For most cases, the CNDH found serious problems in both fields.

Since then, the Mexican government has worked with regional and international institutions to instate reforms to prevent further violence, including increasing public security, strengthening women’s legal rights, and conducting public education campaigns. However, according to the federal institutions and national and international NGOs following these cases, severe deficiencies continue to exist in the system. On June 3, 2004, two federal officials presented reports stating that the authorities had been
active in “harassing families and their advocates, as well as torturing and fabricating evidence against scapegoats,” emphasizing that “there was notorious inactivity and negligence…that led to the loss of evidence and the inadequate protection of crime scene.”9

In their 2005 report on Mexico, the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) stated that there is “ongoing impunity of those responsible, threats directed towards those calling for justice for women, [and] growing frustration on the account of the authorities’ lack of due diligence in investigating and prosecuting crimes in the appropriate manner.”10 A United States Congress resolution of May 2006 urged Mexican officials to end the impunity and conduct thorough and fair investigations. On a visit to Mexico in April 2007, the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights expressed concern about the rate of femicides throughout the country,11 and in October of the same year, the European Parliament called on Mexico to update its legal code to the standard of its international commitments, to eliminate gender violence, and to reform its judicial system.12

EAAF Participation
EAAF’s work focuses on a fraction of the total cases: those of the unidentified female remains and those where families of victims expressed doubts about the identity and/or cause of death of the remains they received and requested an examination by EAAF.

In December 2003, the Washington Office on Latin America (WOLA), a U.S.-based NGO, contacted EAAF on behalf of the nongovernmental Mexican Commission for the Defense and Promotion of Human Rights about providing forensic assistance on the Juárez cases. Justicia para Nuestras Hijas (Justice for Our Daughters), an NGO from the state of Chihuahua composed of relatives of victims and activists that represent them, and the federal Special Commission to Prevent and Eradicate Violence against Women in Ciudad Juárez, headed at the time by Guadalupe Morfín, later joined the project.

In June 2004, EAAF traveled to Ciudad Juárez on an assessment trip. Commissioner Guadalupe Morfín reached an agreement with the former attorney general of Chihuahua to allow EAAF to study 20 case files of unidentified female remains and three case files from families who expressed doubts about the identity of the returned remains. EAAF also met with local NGOs working on the disappearances and murders, as well as with families of victims and members of local forensic services.

EAAF’s assessment confirmed grave methodological and diagnostic irregularities in all phases of the forensic work on the unidentified remains, including recovery and analysis, and technical
In July 2005, through a contract with the attorney general of Chihuahua, Patricia González, EAAF gained access to most of the unidentified female remains found since 1993 and stored in the Forensic Services (SEMEFO) of Ciudad Juárez and the city of Chihuahua, as well as to sections of their judicial files. Access to full files was in many cases initially resisted by officials in Ciudad Juárez, even though it was part of the above-mentioned contract. EAAF was also authorized to exhume the remains of unidentified females buried in mass graves in municipal cemeteries in Ciudad Juárez. In addition, families doubting the identity of the remains they had received could request EAAF to reexamine their cases.

During 2006, EAAF continued implementing a plan to maximize the recovery and identification of remains and attempted to remedy methodological and scientific errors of past investigations. Crucial to EAAF’s strategy is to centralize all the available information on each case, and to analyze each case both individually and collectively to detect systematic patterns. EAAF gathers data from morgue and cemetery records, funeral homes, judicial files, and victims’ families.

For each case, EAAF performed a thorough forensic audit, which included comparing the results of its own laboratory analysis with all previous forensic reports. Unlike other situations where EAAF has worked, many of the remains and/or credibility problems with the results of the genetic analyses.13

Minerva Teresa Torres Albeldaño, (18), disappeared on May 13, 2001, in Chihuahua city on her way to a job interview at a maquiladora (assembly plant). EAAF identified her remains, found by officials in 2003, but only returned to her family in June 2005.
from Juárez have had previous anthropological, pathological, odontological, and/or genetic studies conducted on them. In some cases, the reports produced by official expert witnesses from one discipline contained results that contradicted the reports produced by official expert witnesses from another discipline working on the same case. Also, in some cases, multiple genetic tests conducted on a specific set of remains produced different results—indicating both exclusion from and inclusion to a biological relationship with a given family, thereby contradicting each other. The confusion resulting from these conflicting forensic reports created a lack of trust between families of victims and forensic officials. This can adversely affect the ability to conduct a forensic investigation. Thus, it became clear to EAAF as work started that, in order to provide credible answers to families of victims and officials, simply adding results to the existing ones would be insufficient. The team also needed to review the previous forensic reports for each case, in order to explain why there had been different results and what errors had been made. Adding an audit of previous forensic work to each case can be time-consuming, but EAAF believes it is the only way to resolve the confusion and mistrust surrounding these cases. These forensic audits are also necessary for the team to be able to properly review the forensic system and make recommendations for future work.

To organize the findings from the audit of the past studies, and for its own findings, EAAF is building a database

Gloria Irene Tarango Ronquillo, (27), disappeared on July 12, 2004. Her remains were found a month later and positively identified by EAAF in February 2006.
containing ante-mortem, post-mortem, and genetic results.

EAAF originally coordinated the investigation from the Prosecutor’s Office for the Investigation of Homicides of Women in Ciudad Juárez (Fiscalía Especial para la Investigación de Homicidios de Mujeres en Ciudad Juárez), which is responsible to the State Prosecutor’s Office. As of the writing of this report, EAAF is also coordinating its work with the Missing Women’s Unit of Ciudad Juárez.

For the Juárez project, EAAF relied on a multidisciplinary team of advisors and consultants, ranging from forensic anthropology and pathology to law and sociology. During 2006, EAAF anthropologists Mercedes Doretti and Sofia Egaña spent eight months in Ciudad Juárez; EAAF consultant anthropologist Mercedes Salado Puerto came for four weeks to conduct lab analysis; and EAAF anthropologist Silvana Turner conducted exhumations in local cemeteries for four weeks, assisted by Mexican archaeologist Jose Angel Herrera Escobar.

In 2006, Mexican lawyer Ana Lorena Delgadillo and Alma Gomez Caballero, from the NGO Justicia para Nuestras Hijas, worked as consultants on the cases for the entire year. EAAF also had additional support from four consultants for the examinations of peri-mortem trauma and cause of death (see the Cause of Death section below for more information). EAAF is deeply grateful for their generosity and dedication.

EAAF worked closely with the local NGOs Justicia para Nuestras Hijas and Nuestras Hijas de Regreso a Casa (Our Daughters Back Home), comprised primarily of relatives and advocates of missing women and girls.

The U.S.-based Bode Technology Group, one of the most experienced laboratories in processing bone samples for genetic identification, conducted DNA analysis for EAAF.

Exhumations, Recovery of Remains, and Laboratory Analysis

The recovery and reassocation of many of the female remains has been a significant problem within this project.

In 2005, EAAF worked on a total of 62 cases. EAAF conducted anthropological analysis on 42 complete and incomplete remains, most of them stored at the SEMEFOs of the city of Chihuahua and Ciudad Juárez. In addition, EAAF's research into the whereabouts of 24 unidentified female remains led to the recovery of 15 remains from two municipal cemeteries in Ciudad Juárez. EAAF also exhumed the remains of five victims where families requested a review of identification and cause of death. Sixty of the 62 total cases were sent for DNA analysis. In five of these cases, the DNA analysis was able to reassociate five incomplete skeletal remains with five other sets of incomplete skeletal remains. This left the total number of cases under study at 57 individuals.

Originally, the Medical-Legal Institute had sent unidentified female remains to municipal cemeteries to be buried in mass graves. Initially, the official information provided to EAAF regarding this practice indicated that it had ended in 1997. However, an extensive review of morgue and cemetery records led the team to conclude that the practice continued to take place until at least 2005. Because of this, in 2006 the team exhumed 13 additional female remains from municipal cemeteries in Ciudad Juárez.

Through a deposition presented by EAAF on February 2006 before the Office of Internal Affairs of the Attorney General of Chihuahua, more female remains were found at the former facility of the Medical Examiner’s Office in Ciudad Juárez. EAAF analyzed the remains and took samples for genetic testing from 12 incomplete female sets of remains. EAAF’s deposition before Internal Affairs originated from discovering the loss of remains under custody, originally recovered at crime scenes. Thus, it is possible that these new remains found at the former facility may be reassociated to other incomplete remains already under examination by EAAF. Genetic analysis is in progress.

Accompanied by Internal Affairs, EAAF found additional remains at the Medical School of the Autonomous University of Ciudad Juárez.

Overall, since the start of the Juárez mission, EAAF has recovered over 30 female remains and performed laboratory analysis on a minimum of 80 complete and incomplete remains.
Whenever possible, EAAF and EAAF consultants provide information on the cause of death and issue a report.

**Interviews with Families and Collection of Samples**

During the interviews with families of victims, EAAF gathers ante-mortem (physical data of the victim when she was alive), and information on the circumstances surrounding her disappearance and/or death. EAAF also collects blood and saliva samples for genetic analysis from two to three relatives of each victim.

With the support of local NGOs, the state Attorney General’s Office and the Missing Persons Unit of the city of Chihuahua, EAAF interviewed families and collected samples for genetic analysis in the following cities: Ciudad Juárez, the city of Chihuahua, Parral, Ojinaga, Cuahutemoc, and Mneoqui, all from the state of Chihuahua; and also in Mexico City and the states of Zacatecas, Durango, and Coahuila.

In 2005, EAAF collected blood and saliva samples from 125 relatives of victims and conducted preliminary interviews with 54 families of victims in Ciudad Juárez and the city of Chihuahua. In
2006, EAAF collected samples from an additional 45 relatives, corresponding to 17 families. During 2007, EAAF took samples from twelve relatives corresponding to three families in Ciudad Juárez, Zacatecas and Acapulco.

From 2005 until this writing, EAAF has collected and analyzed samples from a total of 193 people from 75 families.

**Genetic Analysis**

In 2005, EAAF sent to Bode for genetic analysis samples corresponding to 60 complete and incomplete female remains. Genetic analysis revealed that these in fact belonged to 55 female individuals, since some of the samples officially labeled as different individuals or with no label at all actually corresponded and were reassigned to incomplete remains officially coded with a different number. From these 55 remains, 24 women and girls were positively identified, which was more than 40 percent.

In October 2006, EAAF sent samples from 50 additional complete and incomplete remains to Bode for genetic analysis. Final processing of these is expected by 2007.

**Identifications and Exclusions**

To date, EAAF has made 25 positive identifications—20 in Ciudad Juárez and five in the city of Chihuahua—based on anthropological, odontological, and genetic analyses. Two additional tentative identifications have resulted from anthropological and odontological analyses, though in

EAAF member Sofía Egaña packaging samples in the laboratory in Ciudad Juárez. Photo by EAAF.
each case EAAF has recommended genetic analysis for confirmation.

Three cases from Ciudad Juárez in which families had requested a reexamination of officially identified remains resulted in negative or exclusion results. In other words, EAAF concluded that the remains, which officially identified as corresponding to these three disappeared women, had been misidentified. One of these disappeared women was positively identified by EAAF as another skeleton in the team’s custody, while the other two victims returned to the category of disappeared. On the other hand, of the three remains that had been misidentified, two were positively identified by EAAF as other disappeared women.

The identifications and exclusions have been obtained based on a multidisciplinary approach coordinated by EAAF which ensures that the genetic, anthropological, and odontological results and the background information on each case do not contradict each other, as has happened in the past.

**Cause of Death**

During 2006, EAAF invited the following consultants to investigate the cause of death for remains: US forensic anthropologists Dr. Clyde Snow and Dr. Steve Symes; Argentine forensic doctor Dr. Luis Bosio; and Colombian forensic pathologist Dr. Maria Dolores Morcillo Mendez. EAAF is grateful for their crucial contribution. EAAF is reporting the findings of peri-mortem trauma (trauma occurring around the moment of death) and cause of death from each case to Mexican officials and families of victims.

**Additional Tasks**

Since February 2006, EAAF has provided official depositions documenting case irregularities to the Office of Internal Affairs of the Attorney General of Chihuahua. To date, the ongoing investigation has resulted in the suspension of the chief medical examiner of the Ciudad Juárez morgue.

One of the most challenging aspects of the investigation is that there are more remains than reported victims. With the assistance of local NGOs and some officials, EAAF worked to expand the list of disappeared women by visiting poor neighborhoods in Ciudad Juárez and other nearby towns to speak with families who might not have reported their loved one missing. In 2006, the attorney general of Chihuahua approved EAAF’s proposal to launch a media campaign in several Mexican states. However, as of the writing of this report, the campaign has not yet been launched.

EAAF investigations continued during 2007.

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**ENDNOTES**

2. Ibid.
8. Federal officials include Guadalupe Morfín, former head of the Special Commission to Prevent and Eradicate Violence against Women of Ciudad Juárez and former Special Prosecutor María López Urbina of the Federal Attorney General’s Office at the Fiscalía Mixta.
13. EAAF’s assessment of serious forensic problems in the investigation of these cases is more detailed than previous assessments and consistent with the findings of local and international, governmental, intergovernmental, and nongovernmental organizations.
14. In one of these cases, EAAF only sent samples to Bode and conducted an unofficial laboratory review of the remains.
EAAF conducted a mission to Morocco on contract with the International Center for Transitional Justice (ICTJ) to assess current and future forensic work resulting from the Equity and Reconciliation Commission, which investigated disappearances and killings in the country between 1956 and 1999.
BACKGROUND

From the late 1950s to the 1990s, over 9,000 Moroccans reportedly were illegally detained, tortured, exiled, or forcibly “disappeared” by state security forces. Morocco achieved independence in 1956 following 44 years of French and Spanish rule (1912-1956). While some abuses date to the reign of King Mohammed V, who came to power in 1956, the bulk occurred during the 38-year rule of King Hassan II (1961-1999). The period of his reign from the 1960s to the late 1980s was commonly known as the “years of lead” and was marked by alleged indiscriminate state violence. Political expression was discouraged, as it was seen to question the king’s sovereign legitimacy. Labor strikes and food riots responding to economic restructuring faced hostile military reactions, including alleged murder and forced detention. Also, two attempted army coups reportedly lead to internal military purges, including the detention of officers until the late 1990s. A large amount of the reported human rights abuses took place in Western Sahara.

Western Sahara, with its small Arab-Berber population, was claimed as a Spanish protectorate in 1884, at the Berlin Conference of that year. Morocco, which at that time claimed sovereignty over Western Sahara, was itself divided under Spanish and French rule. In 1975, Spain withdrew from Western Sahara, and Morocco and Mauritania annexed portions of the country. An independence group, Polisario, organized guerilla resistance from Algeria, eventually receiving political recognition from other nations and the African Union (of which Morocco is not a member). In 1979 Mauritania withdrew due to military losses in conflicts with Polisario, and Morocco claimed full control of the territory. From 1980 to 1987, Morocco constructed a series of fortifications linked by sand berm walls in order to contain Polisario. In 1991 a UN-brokered peace agreement was reached, with Morocco and Polisario territories separated by the sand berm. A stipulated referendum on Western Sahara’s status has been repeatedly postponed.

According to Amnesty International, since the 1960s, at least 600 Moroccans, most of Western Saharan origin (Sahrawis), were “disappeared” after being arrested by security forces for alleged opposition to the government. Some were illegally detained and held incommunicado for decades until finally being released after years of campaigning and pressure from family members and human rights groups. Many remain unaccounted for.

During the early 1990s, King Hassan II began a period of slight political relaxation, including the establishment of the Conseil Consultatif des Droits de l’Homme (Human Rights Advisory Council, CCDH), though little of this progress was built on later in the decade. Following the death of King Hassan II in 1999, his son, King Mohammed VI, assumed the throne. Mohammed VI initiated a series of civil and governmental reforms, but the
September 11th attacks in New York and the 2003 bombings in Casablanca led to a retrenchment on some of these developments. In April 2004, King Mohammed VI formally established the Moroccan Instance Équité et Réconciliation (Equity and Reconciliation Commission, IER), a 17-member commission charged with investigating this period and providing compensation to victims and their families. The commission’s mandate covered the investigation of “forced disappearances, arbitrary detention, torture, sexual abuse and deprivation from the right to live, as a result of unrestrained and inadequate use of state force and coerced exile.”

Driss Benzekri, a human rights activist and leader who spent 17 years in one of Morocco’s secret detention centers, was appointed commission president by the king. The IER is the first truth commission in the Middle East and North Africa.

The IER received over 22,000 applications for consideration and held victim-centered public hearings televised throughout the country, gathering thousands of testimonies. The commission was ordered to determine the responsibilities of state actors for the abuses without naming specific perpetrators and to outline an extensive reparations plan for victims and their families. The commission, which presented its final report to King Mohammed VI on November 30, 2005, clarified the fate of 742 people, concluding that 262 died under custody and 480 in armed clashes or in the course of riots. In addition, the IER reported 66 cases of forced disappearances and recommended compensation to over 9,000.

Two weeks later, the king ordered the public dissemination of the report, which produced concrete recommendations, including significant legislative reforms.Procurements were not considered by the IER.

EAAF Participation

ICTJ requested that EAAF carry out a technical evaluation of the implementation of IER’s recommendations on the investigation of disappearances and killings that occurred in Morocco from 1956 to 1999. EAAF team member Luis Fondebrinder and consultant Mercedes Salado traveled to Morocco from June 23 to July 4, 2006. The mission focused on understanding the characteristics of the forensic system in Morocco and its application to the IER recommendations, and on assessing the incorporation of independent experts, local NGOs and victims’ families in the exhumation and analysis process. In the process, several related issues came up and are described here, including possible strategies in applying forensic work to human rights investigations.

EAAF activities included:

- Conducting interviews with relatives of the victims, witnesses, and persons who survived detention centers in Morocco.
- Meeting with former members of IER and the governmental CCDH.
- Holding interviews with non-governmental organizations, including the Follow-Up Committee on Grave Human Rights Violations, the Moroccan Forum for Truth and Justice, the Center for the Study of Human Rights and Democracy, and the Medical Association for the Rehabilitation of Victims of Torture.
- Interviewing forensic physicians from the Ibn Rochd University Hospital of Casablanca, who have worked on IER cases and expressed a willingness to learn forensic anthropology techniques, and visiting the hospital morgue.
- Screening Following Antigone, an EAAF–Witness documentary describing EAAF’s work in human rights and forensic sciences, and giving presentations to forensic doctors and human rights activists from around the country.

EAAF intended to interview military personnel involved with the IER, as well as to visit the forensic laboratories of security forces, mainly the Gendarmerie, where DNA analysis on exhumed remains of human rights victims had been carried out, but was unable to.

Conclusions and Recommendations

EAAF found that the preliminary investigation carried out by the IER to determine the circumstances of death and place of burial of each person was thorough, and included documentary evidence and testimonies. Still, it is important to stress that the process to recover and identify the physical remains of the victims of human rights violations will enable the relatives of the victims to recover their loved ones, arrange for a proper burial and give
closure to a long period of anguish and uncertainty, thereby promoting a process of reconciliation. To this end, EAAF found the need for a number of technical and procedural reforms. EAAF had the following observations and recommendations:

- Disagreement remains between local human rights NGOs and the IER on the number of disappeared persons, ranging from the 700 to 2000. To rectify this, EAAF recommends conducting a national survey, overseen by both NGOs and the IER.

- EAAF advises the protection of sites that have been or are being investigated (graves, clandestine detention centers), where it is suspected that human rights violations were committed between 1956 and 1999.

- EAAF noted the lack of a national unified database with all the information available on each case, including historical, medical, anthropological (pre- and post-mortem), odontological, and genetic information. This data is currently being held at different institutions and needs to be centralized in one database, with a system enabling cross-checking between the different categories of information, in order to establish an initial hypothesis of possible identity.

- EAAF observed an absence of physical or ante-mortem data on the victims in the investigative commission’s database. Apparently this wasn’t considered necessary when the victims’ families were interviewed; nor did they ask for blood samples for possible genetic analysis. This information was partially gathered by the forensic physicians during excavation of some of the graves. The data was not shared later with the investigators of the case thereby making it impossible to complete the overall information in the database.

- EAAF noted that most remains considered by the IER are buried in individual graves, with the notable exception of the mass grave among the individual burials at Casablanca, which was excavated in 2005.

- Some exhumations undertaken lacked the specialist oversight needed to articulate osteological remains in complex burial deposits, especially in the case of the mass grave at Casablanca, and were undertaken within a shorter time frame than may have been neces-
sary for an accurate excavation. EAAF recommends that an archaeologist plan and lead the exhumation of bodies and associated objects, in coordination with local investigative teams. Morocco has a local base of archaeologists, but no professional pool of physical anthropologists, as this field is only partially taught in the school of medicine.

- EAAF found contradictory information as to whether families of victims received notification about excavations. According to personnel of the follow-up committee, families were informed before the excavation. Several families and NGO members said that this was not true, and that the families had not witnessed the excavation. The team stresses the importance of this aspect of the exhumation and identification process. It is important to point out that according to protocol of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) Best Operational Practices Regarding the Management of Human Remains and Information on the Dead, “a) any investigation or exhumation must be carried out in constant interaction with the community and with the families or their representatives.”

- The small number of exhumations carried out to date consisted of opening the grave, collecting DNA samples, sometimes conducting a brief examination of the remains in situ, and reburying them in the same site, while awaiting the results of genetic analysis from abroad. EAAF recommends performing a more thorough forensic analysis of remains in a laboratory setting. However, EAAF noted that the local forensic anthropology capacity is limited.

- Interviews with various NGOs and families of victims brought attention to deficiencies in communicating and informing the families of the victims of the process of continuing investigations. EAAF found that in most cases the commission encouraged families not to request exhumations since there was abundant documentary evidence indicating the burial location. According to United Nations protocol the purpose of an investigation is “…to discover the truth about the events leading to the suspicious death of a victim. To fulfill this purpose, those conducting the inquiry shall, at a minimum, seek: to identify the victim; to recover and preserve evidentiary material related to the death to aid in any potential prosecution of those responsible; to determine the cause, manner, location and time of death, as well as any pattern or practice that may have brought about the death…” None of this is possible if the archaeological excavation of the grave, the exhumation itself, or appropriate analysis of the bone remains are discouraged.
Nonetheless, some families decided to proceed with the exhumation.

Among those interviewed, EAAF found complete confidence in genetic analysis as the only recourse for identifying remains. The limitations of reliance on DNA for identifications had not been examined and anthropological and historical identification techniques were relatively unknown. If there is no adequate process of information and communication among the experts, the families and the legal system, these limitations can lead to unnecessary costs and false hopes for the families. In this regard, we again cite the protocol of the ICRC: “f) the families must be told that identification will rely on simple or traditional identification techniques first and that more sophisticated technology can only be used if it is needed and available in the context.”

It is crucial to note the lack of an agreed-upon organization between the state and the civil society to take charge of the follow up of the investigations after the expiration of the IER’s investigative committee’s mandate, because it increases the difficulty of a long-term follow up. The need for such a national organization, which should be independent, trustworthy and work with total transparency, was made evident in our interviews with the various involved parties.

To continue the investigation, EAAF recommends forming a team of local state and non-governmental multidisciplinary experts, in both official and independent capacity. Team members, such as forensic physicians who work in the School of Medicine of Casablanca, would receive physical and forensic anthropology training. This team should have a specific budget and laboratories to carry out the necessary operations under the UN protocols for forensic work, as recommended, in the Manual on the Effective Prevention and Investigation of the Extralegal, Arbitrary and Summary Executions, and would work in cooperation with the investigators committee as well as the judicial system. It should be pointed out once more that the consideration of the families and the victims is a necessary and central part of the process in regard to the state and the NGOs. Dialogue, information and the participation of the families in the reconstruction process are essential for this to be carried out.

ENDNOTES
2. ibid
6. For more information on this film, see the Documentation and Outreach section of this publication.
7. Ibid.
10. ibid
13. Kingdom of Morocco, the Moroccan Equity and Reconciliation Commission, Summary of Findings.
17. For more information on this film, see the Documentation and Outreach section of this publication.
In 2006, EAAF conducted three missions to Paraguay to collaborate with the Commission for Truth and Justice. EAAF visited possible burial sites and performed archaeological excavations in search of persons disappeared during the regime of General Alfredo Stroessner (1954-1989). The team also made recommendations to the commission on historical research methods and database management.

BACKGROUND

In May 1954, General Alfredo Stroessner, supported by members of the Colorado Party and the armed forces, orchestrated a military coup in Paraguay which ousted President Federico Chávez from office. Stroessner served eight consecutive terms over the next 35 years. The Constitution was amended in 1967 and 1977 to allow his reelection and legitimate his mandate.1

Stroessner’s rule was marked by gross human rights violations, including the persecution, torture, kidnapping, and assassination of dissidents.2 Stroessner’s government also participated in Operation Condor, a covert agreement reached by dictatorial regimes in South America to exchange political prisoners during the 1970s and 1980s.3

Department of Guairí, Paraguay, 2006. The grave from which the team exhumed the remains believed to belong to Ulpiano Fleitas. Photo by EAAF.
In 1989, General Andrés Rodríguez, supported by a sector of the armed forces, led a coup that ousted Stroessner. Later that year, Rodríguez ran as the Colorado Party candidate and was elected president. He was replaced by the civilian Juan Carlos Wasmosy in elections in 1993. The new government gradually reestablished civil and political rights. Stroessner fled to Brazil, where he obtained political asylum. However, in 2000, a Paraguayan judge issued an order calling for Stroessner’s arrest and extradition to Paraguay. His lawyer contested the order. In August 2006, Stroessner died while in exile in Brazil.

In 1996, the then Army Chief General Lino César Oviedo Silva refused a demotion from his position by President Wasmosy. After several months, he was charged with mutiny, and he was finally convicted while running for President in 1998. His replacement in the elections, Raúl Cubas Grau, won the election for President, and once in office commuted Oviedo’s sentence and freed him from prison. In 1999, Vice President Luis María Argaña, a rival of Oviedo’s, was assassinated. In the ensuing demonstrations, several protesters were killed by troops reportedly loyal to Oviedo. Cubas resigned his office, and Oviedo and Cubas fled to Brazil. Both returned to Paraguay voluntarily and were arrested, Cubas in 2002 and Oviedo in 2004.

The current President, Nicanor Duarte Frutos, was elected in 2003.

The Terror Archive
In December 1992, Dr. Martín Almada, a lawyer and ex-political prisoner, and Judge José Fernandez, found thousands of case files in a former building of the Intelligence Police of Asunción. The files, which became known as the “Terror Archive,” documented part of the repression in the Southern Cone during Operation Condor, including
several thousand cases of arrest, torture, extrajudicial killing, and disappearance. In 1993, with the support of UNESCO, the Supreme Court of Paraguay established the Center for Documentation and Archive for the Defense of Human Rights (CDyA) to develop a database of the archives, preserve the documents, and make the information accessible to the public.11

The Truth and Justice Commission
In June 2004, the government under President Nicanor Duarte Frutos established the Commission for Truth and Justice (CVJ) of Paraguay to investigate human rights violations that occurred from 1954 to 2003, with a special emphasis on the ones taking place during Stroessner’s regime. The commission documented over 400 cases of disappearance and extrajudicial execution by state agents between 1954 and 1989.12 The CVJ is authorized to work to clarify the fates of those subject to disappearance or extrajudicial executions. Further, the CVJ has formally submitted cases to the Office of the Prosecutor, as there are no amnesty laws in Paraguay for human rights abuses committed during the military dictatorship.13 Indictments from this office have been slow, however.14 The mandate of the CVJ was set to expire in August 2006, but was extended for another year in order to continue investigations.

EAAF Participation
EAAF has conducted six missions to Paraguay since 1993, providing technical assistance in the search for the disappeared, and examining the Terror Archive to gather information on the disappearance of Argentine citizens in Paraguay and of Paraguayan citizens in Argentina. In 2006, with support of the Argentine Fund for Bilateral Cooperation of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (FO-AR), EAAF traveled to Paraguay three times to collaborate with the CVJ. On two occasions, the delegation included representatives of the Argentine government’s Human Rights Office.

Fleitas and Servin Cases
First 2006 Mission
Between April 14 and 21, 2006, EAAF members Daniel Bustamante and Darío Olmo traveled to Asunción to continue cooperation with the CVJ. Also part of the delegation were Javier Mariezcurrena and Jorge Condomí, from the National Secretary of Human Rights.

The team visited two possible exhumation sites in the department of Guairá, about 180 kilometers from Asunción. One was in the town of San Gervasio, and the other in Pasoyoba cemetery.

The team investigated possible burial site for the remains of Ulpiano Fleitas at the cemetery of Pasoyoba. A member of the Agrarian Leagues, which involved the cooperation of priests and farmers in defense of land rights, Fleitas was allegedly executed in 1980 by agents of the Stroessner regime after being held in the clandestine detention center located in Guairá.

The second site, a grave located in a jungle area next to a farm in the rural sector of the town of San Gervasio, in the department of Guairá, was easily identifiable as it had been marked with a cross. The grave was the presumed burial for Eligio Servin, a combatant with the May 14th Movement, an anti-Stroessner armed organization associated with the Paraguayan Liberal Party,
which, according to some sources, was trained and equipped by the Argentine military during democratically-elected President Frondizi’s term in office. The group was apparently infiltrated immediately by the Paraguayan Army as they crossed the border and were quickly exterminated in 1960.15

The team expressed concerns about skeletal preservation for these cases considering the high levels of acidity present in the soil of the graves, which can severely affect bone conservation.

The team also assisted the CVJ in the areas of historical investigation, database creation, and collection of pre-mortem information.

Second 2006 Mission

Between August 20 and 25, 2006, EAAF members Darío Olmo and Miguel Nieva, and EAAF consultant Mariana Segura conducted archeological excavations on the sites investigated in April 2006. Representatives of the Argentine Secretary of Human Rights also took part in the trip. These were the first excavations done under the authority of the CVJ.

First, EAAF carried out an exhumation in search of the remains of Ulpiano Fleitas. EAAF recovered human remains in a poor state of preservation. Given the condition of the bones, compounded by the dearth of testimonies and pre-mortem information on Fleitas, EAAF could neither confirm nor exclude the identification hypothesis via anthropological analysis. In addition, EAAF collected samples for genetic analysis to be conducted at LIDMO, an Argentine genetic laboratory that has previously processed cases for EAAF. Unfortunately, the laboratory could not extract DNA from the samples.

EAAF conducted its second excavation at the site near the town of San Gervasio, where a cross indicated the presumed burial site of Eligio Servín. Servín was allegedly killed in an armed confrontation with the Paraguayan Army in 1960. Since the remains were 45 years old and had been buried in a highly acidic soil, the possibility of deterioration was high. In excavating the site the team found neither human remains nor indication of a grave in the pattern of soil deposition. After expanding the investigated area outwards, and still observing undisturbed natural soil, the team concluded the search for the burial.

During this mission, EAAF also continued its collaboration with the CVJ on developing guidelines for historical investigation and database design. The team also discussed, with forensic professionals at the Asunción Morgue, the creation of a course on Forensic Anthropology.

Third 2006 Mission

Between November 26 and December 1, EAAF members Darío Olmo and Daniel Bustamante traveled to Paraguay to continue advising the CVJ on historical investigation and database design. EAAF also visited two suspected burial sites in the town of San Juan Bautista, department of Misiones, in search of the remains of Agrarian League members allegedly killed by security forces in 1976. The sites included an old water well located in what is now the 8th Departmental Police Precinct, and land belonging to the Second Army Corps. In 2007, EAAF conducted archeological excavations in San Juan Bautista.

ENDNOTES

3. Based on information in the Terror Archive, about one hundred Paraguayans are believed to have disappeared in Argentina. For further information on Operation Condor see declassified records by the National Security Archive. Washington, D.C., www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/.
7. Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada. 2002. Paraguay: Reports of supporters of Lino Cesar Oviedo intimidating, harassing, physically assaulting or kidnapping opposition activists, particularly those who supported Luis Maria Argana; police response to these actions, if any (1996-2002). 16 July. PRY39234.E
9. Sección Política y Afines de la Policía de Investigaciones de Asunción (Political Section of the Intelligence Police of Asunción).
14. Ibid.
South Africa

In 2006, at the request of the National Prosecuting Authority (NPA), EAAF conducted a mission to South Africa to work on apartheid-era crimes. Together with the Missing Persons Task Team, an agency of the NPA, EAAF carried out exhumations in the cemeteries of Mafikeng, North-West Province, and Thohoyandou, Limpopo Province; performed anthropological analysis of the exhumed remains; and trained post-graduate students.
BACKGROUND

After South Africa’s governing National Party banned local African liberation movements in 1960, many African National Congress (ANC) and Pan Africanist Congress (PAC) members went into exile to fight apartheid. Following twenty years of low-intensity warfare, armed confrontations between government security forces and the armed wings of the ANC—Umkhonto we Sizwe (MK)—and of the PAC—Poqo/Apla—increased in the 1980s. Street battles during the conflict led to casualties among combatants and civilians. Other casualties included those civilians killed by security forces on the streets during “riot policing” or who died in inter-civilian clashes between members of the ANC and the Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP), and those who went into exile and are presumed to have perished in neighboring countries.

In the late 1980s, South Africa experienced growing criticism from outside the country for its system of apartheid. Cultural, academic, and sporting ties with the country were cut off. The organization of international sanctions and the boycott of South African goods adversely affected the country’s economy. At first the government reacted by increasing the repression of resistance parties. After suffering a stroke, State President Pieter Willem Botha was forced to resign in 1989, and State President Frederik Willem de Klerk was appointed as his replacement. Responding to the growing pressure, de Klerk legalized the ANC and PAC in 1990. Nelson Mandela was released from Victor Verster Prison that same year. Between 1990 and 1992, de Klerk legally abolished apartheid. The first democratic election in South Africa took place on April 27, 1994. Nelson Mandela won with 62.7 percent of the vote.

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission

In 1996, President Mandela’s government established the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) to investigate all cases of extrajudicial executions, disappearances, and torture between 1960 and 1994. The TRC relied on reports from victims’ relatives, the ANC, police archives, nongovernmental organizations, and human rights abuse perpetrators seeking protection (the TRC was given the power to grant amnesty). Several hundred families submitted statements reporting the disappearance of their loved ones to the TRC, and requested assistance in locating them, living or dead.

According to the TRC, with the increasing conflict in the 1980s, the South African government shifted its counterinsurgency methods, placing an emphasis on covert elimination, such as summary extrajudicial executions.

In 1990, after the government lifted the ban on the ANC and PAC, many families awaited the return of their loved ones, who had either gone into exile or underground. Most of these families were ignorant of the whereabouts of their relatives, knowing only that they had joined liberation movements abroad. While many returned, others were confirmed dead and/or their fate required further investigation. In some cases, it was known that a guerrilla had been killed, because of a list released by the ANC to the Commission, but the location of the remains was uncertain. Furthermore, due to the use of pseudonyms, the real identities of several guerrillas could not in some cases be
confirmed by the liberation movement

Hundreds of guerrillas and activists killed by security forces in the 1980s and 1990s were buried in anonymous graves in local cemeteries, farms owned by the security forces, and nearby forests. Some interments were performed clandestinely, with no official documentation. Others, including most of those examined by EAAF, were buried in cemeteries and officially documented with photos and autopsy reports though the bodies were frequently still buried as John/Jane Does or under a name taken from falsified identification documents. In either case, the families were rarely notified.

The TRC was able to establish in many of these incidents the locations of skirmishes and executions through research and investigation of police records, state archives, newspaper reports, and interviews with former guerrillas. In some of these cases, testimonies from former South African security forces have revealed burial information and have led investigators to burial sites. The TRC documented many of the incidents and conducted close to fifty exhumations related to those incidents. Many potential burial sites were not inspected, however. Overall, the Commission received more than 1,500 statements concerning cases of disappearances. From these statements, in its final report of October 1998, the TRC listed 477 disappearances as unresolved, considering them later to be the most significant piece of “unfinished business.”

In 2003, President Thabo Mbeki mandated the National Prosecuting Authority (NPA) to investigate apartheid-era cases of missing persons, including those left unresolved by the TRC, and, when possible, to locate and return the remains to the families. The Missing Persons Task Team (MPTT), established in 2004, is the agency responsible for conducting these investigations. In addition, the NPA’s Priority Crimes Litigation Unit (PCLU) has begun to pursue potential prosecutions stemming from the TRC’s work.

EAAF Participation


Between June 19 and July 16, 2006, EAAF members Anahí Ginarte and Silvana Turner and EAAF consultant Ivana Wolf traveled to South Africa to assist the MPTT in the investigation of 13 cases of disappearances, and to continue the training of local professionals.

At the request of the MPTT, EAAF carried out excavations in the cemeteries of the cities of Mafikeng and Thohoyandou and worked on the analysis of remains in the laboratory of the African Cultural History Museum in the city of Pretoria.

Throughout the mission, EAAF continued providing instruction to two PhD candidates from the University of Cape Town, anthropology student Thabang Manyaapelo and archaeology student Morongwa Mosothwane, on the application of forensic anthropology and archaeology to human rights cases by involving them in all aspects of the investigations. EAAF plans to continue training local professionals in South Africa and to invite them to Argentina to work alongside team members. Professor Alan Morris, from the Human Biology Department of the University of the University of Cape Town, worked with EAAF in the laboratory analysis of the remains.

Mafikeng, North-West Province:

At Mmabatho cemetery, in Mafikeng, the team focused on the search for 8 individuals related to 4 different episodes:

- MK operatives Peter Johnson and Karabo Madiba, who died shortly after returning to South Africa. Aware of their presence in Mafikeng, the police conducted a search operation for them. In the subsequent confrontation, police reports state that Karabo Madiba was shot to death, while Peter Johnson committed suicide;

- A male MK member who died in 1985 in unclear circumstances;

- Two MK combatants, whose identity hypotheses are uncertain, and who were reportedly shot dead by police on January 3, 1986; and

- Andile Mrumse, Thembekile Mkhalihi, and Motlalekhotso Sello, who were trying to enter South Africa from Botswana.
According to police reports, two were shot by the police in 1986—one while stopped at a road block, and another while fleeing. The third purportedly committed suicide after fleeing, in order to avoid capture.

The locations of the burials were known to be within the section of the cemetery set aside for the graves of unidentified or indigent individuals, but there was no information on the exact locations of the burials within this section. The MPTT provided EAAF with records of the date of death and the date the remains exited the morgue for each case; helping to narrow down the graves’ potential locations. Thus, based on the existing documentation, EAAF and MPTT selected close to 20 graves in Mmabatho cemetery that could contain remains corresponding to the eight individuals. Further, the MPTT supplied the team with autopsy records of all the individuals sought, indicating the presence of skull trauma in all the cases the team was looking for. The team carried out preliminary excavations on the 20 selected graves in order to locate individuals with the general biological features and skull traumas characteristic of the remains of these disappeared...
Mafikeng, South Africa. 2006. During the excavations, EAAF members, such as Anahi Ginarte, pictured here, would explain the findings to families of the victims. Photo by EAAF.
persons, before proceeding with complete exhumations. The team fully exhumed four graves, containing the remains of six individuals.

At their request, the families of the victims were present during the entire exhumation process. EAAF members kept these families informed of their activities throughout the excavation procedure. The exhumation of a fifth grave where the other two individuals may be buried has been postponed until a hypothesis of identity is formed and the relatives can be informed.

EAAF analyzed the remains, verifying the correspondence between the perimortem lesions described in the autopsies conducted at the time of death on the six bodies with the lesions noted on the skeletons. Based on the laboratory studies and the victims’ ante-mortem data, EAAF made tentative identifications of the six individuals, recommending that DNA analysis be carried out to confirm them.

Genetic analysis performed by Dr. Neil Leat at the Human Identification Laboratory at the Biochemistry Department of the University of the Western Cape (UWC) confirmed the identification of Peter Johnson, Karabo Madiba, Andile Mrumse, Thembekile Mkhaliphi, and Motlalekhotso Sello, whose remains were returned to their families for reburial. DNA results for the sixth individual are pending.

**Thohoyandou Cemetery, Limpopo Province:**

The investigation relating to the cemetery of Thohoyandou consisted of the search for the remains of five adult males, supposedly members of the ANC, who died during a confrontation with security forces in Venda in 1988.12

The process of locating the graves was complicated by the unavailability of cemetery records for these burials. The team had to verify the information from preliminary investigations in the field by opening each grave. In spite of these difficulties, EAAF and MPTT were able to locate and exhume the remains of 3 of the 5 individuals.

EAAF established the biological profiles of the remains through anthropological analysis. DNA samples obtained from the remains were sent to the UWC genetic laboratory. The investigation is ongoing.

**ENDNOTES**

1. Apartheid was a legal system of racial segregation in South Africa that lasted from 1948 to the 1990s, under which the South African government legally classified and separated Whites, Blacks, and Indians to restrict non-white people’s rights.


3. “The Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP) was an ethnically oriented Zulu organization that opposed the ANC and was reportedly secretly funded by the apartheid state.” From, The Remains of Apartheid: The Recovery of Bodies of People Killed and Disappeared in South Africa, May 2005; a project by EAAF, in cooperation with the NPA.


8. Ibid


11. His name must be kept confidential at this point in the investigation.

12. Their names must remain confidential at this point.
In the 1960s, an economic crisis and growing class inequalities prompted popular and political unrest in Uruguay. Internal conflicts in the government and among the political parties, coupled with the rise of armed opposition groups, predominantly the Tupamaros National Liberation Movement, led to a gradual breakdown of the parliamentary system. Beginning in 1966, the executive branch increasingly centralized political power, allegedly to stabilize the economy. In 1968, President Jorge Pacheco Areco declared a state of emergency.

In 2006, EAAF conducted a mission to Uruguay at the request of the Office of the President to analyze remains thought to correspond to two disappeared persons, resulting in the identifications of Ubagesner Chaves Sosa and Fernando Miranda. These are the first identifications of remains of disappeared persons found in Uruguay.
emergency, severely limiting civil rights and repressing labor unions. The Tupamaros opposition began to use greater force in their struggle, while the police and the military detained increasing numbers of people for indefinite periods of time. President Pacheco also greatly increased military funding during this period. In 1972, his successor, President Juan María Bordaberry, declared a “state of internal warfare” allowing the expanded armed forces to carry out an aggressive campaign against the Tupamaros and other political opponents, leading to the fragmentation of these groups. Attempts by the parliament to stem presidential authoritarian rule were ignored or overridden, and the presidents relied increasingly on military force to ensure their position in government.

In 1973, Bordaberry staged an auto-coup with the support of the military and dissolved the parliament. He remained in office until he was ousted by another coup in 1976.

Compared to neighboring countries, the Uruguayan regime killed fewer people, but imprisoned and tortured a very large proportion of the population. With the defeat of the MLN-Tupamaros in the early 1970s, Uruguay’s repressive state apparatus turned against trade unionists, journalists who were perceived to be critical of the regime, and members of mainstream political parties. Striking union members were reportedly frequently drafted into the military or subjected to mass arrests. Pacheco and Bordaberry both used state of emergency powers to close dissident periodicals and jail their writers.

In response to the growing repression, many people fled to neighboring Chile and Argentina. However, because of Operation Condor, a covert agreement among military governments in the Southern Cone for the exchange of information and political prisoners, even those living in exile continued to be persecuted. Of the approximately 150 disappearances of Uruguayans, 127 occurred in Argentina.

The Uruguayan regime imprisoned and tortured a very large proportion of the population... Of the approximately 150 disappearances of Uruguayans, 127 occurred in Argentina.

Uruguay returned to democratic rule in 1984. A combination of economic depression, popular mobilization in the form of protests and a general strike on the 1984 anniversary of Parliament’s dissolution eleven years prior forced the military to negotiate a return to civilian rule. The holding of elections was ordered in the 19th Institutional Act of August 1984. The framework agreed upon between the military and representatives of the opposition was a tempered transition to democracy, in which some ex-politicians were barred from running, police and soldiers had their voting powers restored, and military-era bureaucrats were protected from firings.

During the 1980s and 1990s, the Peace and Justice Service (SERPAJ) and other human rights organizations built public support to officially investigate and prosecute those responsible for the repression. Between 2000 and 2003, the Peace Commission established by President Jorge Batlle investigated and compiled cases of state terrorism during the country’s Dirty War period. Relatives of the disappeared contributed testimony and information.

The 1986 Expiry Law (Ley de Caducidad de la Pretensión Punitiva del Estado), ratified by a slim margin in a 1989 referendum, protects police and military officers from prosecution for human rights violations committed in Uruguay during the military rule.
In 2004, since Tabaré Vázquez was elected president, trials have begun in Uruguay for crimes perpetrated by civilians or in a foreign country; that is crimes outside the scope of the Expiry Law. In September 2006, eight retired military and police officers were indicted for the disappearance of persons in Argentina.\textsuperscript{15} In December 2006, Judge Graciela Gatti arraigned Bordaberry for another ten homicides, including those of Ubagesner Chaves Sosa and Fernando Miranda.\textsuperscript{16}

\textbf{EAAF Participation}

In 2001, EAAF collaborated with the Peace Commission on the search and identification of the remains of 13 Uruguayans disappeared, killed, and buried in Argentina during the country’s last military regime. In 2002, EAAF traveled to Uruguay and recovered the remains of eight individuals believed to have been victims of “death flights”—the dumping of people who disappeared in Argentina from Argentine armed forces’ planes into the Río de la Plata. Their bodies washed out on the Uruguayan coast in the 1970s and were buried in anonymous graves in local cemeteries.

In 2005, EAAF conducted two missions to Uruguay to assist local archaeologists with exhumations at a farm in Pando, a town 30 kilometers away from Montevideo, and at the 13th Army Infantry Battalion, in Toledo;
both carried out as part of official investigations resulting from the findings of the Peace Commission.

José Arpino Vega and Ubagesner Chaves Sosa, reportedly Communist Party members, were disappeared by security forces in 1974 and 1976, respectively. According to the Uruguayan Air Force, both men died under torture at the Captain Boisso Lanza air force base and were buried at a farm in the town of Pando.

In 2005, EAAF assisted a team led by archaeologist Jose López Mazz from the University of the Republic to exhume remains belonging to one male skeleton from the Pando farm and deliver them to the Forensic Technical Institute in Montevideo. Two separate DNA tests—one performed at LIDMO, the genetic laboratory contracted by EAAF in Argentina, and the other conducted at the Scientific Technical Police of Uruguay—confirmed that the remains belonged to Ubagesner Chaves Sosa. A metalurgist, Ubagesner was 38 years old and had one daughter at the time of his disappearance on May 28, 1976.

Also, in 2005, at the request of Soledad Cibils Braga, of the now dissolved Peace Commission, EAAF assisted with an excavation at the 13th Battalion, where López Mazz’s team recovered a complete male skeleton that was sent to the Forensic Technical Institute, in Montevideo. EAAF conducted an anthropological analysis of the remains and sent samples to LIDMO and the Scientific Technical Police for DNA testing. A genetic comparison with seven families of disappeared persons who were likely to have been detained at the barracks in the 1970s produced negative results.

At the request of the Secretary General of the Presidency in January 2006, EAAF member Luis Fondevrider and EAAF consultant Mercedes Salado examined the remains of the unidentified male remains found at the 13th Battalion and those of Chaves Sosa. Both remains had been stored at the Technical Forensic Institute in Montevideo and they had been previously examined by local professionals. The request to EAAF was to conduct a further examination and provide a second opinion.

In the case of the unidentified remains found at the 13th Battalion, by comparing the biological profile of the skeleton and distinctive ante-mortem features on one hand and both feet to ante-mortem and genetic information on file for each of the 26 Uruguayan individuals who disappeared in Uruguay, EAAF narrowed the identification possibilities to six potential matches. The team met with the presidential secretary, Dr. Gonzalo Fernández, and representatives of Relatives of the Detained-Disappeared of Uruguay, among others, to report on the progress made on this case. EAAF requested additional pre-mortem information on these six cases and blood samples from their

Montevideo, Uruguay. The reburial of Ubagesner Chaves Sosa in 2006 was accompanied by a large march through the city in commemoration of Chaves and other disappeared Uruguays. Photo courtesy of Jose Revueltas and Indymedia Uruguay.
relatives for DNA analysis. Bone and tooth samples from the skeleton and samples from the six selected families were sent to LIDMO and to the Scientific Technical Police laboratories.

In March 2006, DNA analyses conducted at both laboratories concluded that the remains found at the 13th Battalion belonged to Fernando Miranda, a notary, law professor, and member of the Communist Party, kidnapped by military officers from his residence on November 30, 1975, and reportedly killed as a result of torture.

During the same trip in January 2006, Fondebrider and Salado were also asked by the President’s Office to examine the remains of Ubagesner Chaves Sosa in search of peri-mortem lesions and other indications that might provide cause of death information, but reached inconclusive results. EAAF was asked to reexamine the skeleton of Fernando Miranda, and had similar inconclusive results in locating peri-mortem lesions. In both cases several important sections of the skeletons were not present at the time of this examination as they had been sent for further analysis to the histopathology section and the genetic laboratory of the Forensic Technical Institute and were not available for view.

In 2006, the team also identified the Uruguayan Dardo Rutilio Betancourt in the Argentine province of Catamarca, as reported in the Argentina section of this report.

ENDNOTES
2. Article 92 of Uruguay’s Penal Code, stipulates that the medidas de seguridad eliminativas (eliminative security measures) allow for the indefinite extension of a sentence, if the detained person is deemed a threat to society.
9. Recently declassified U.S. State Department documents on Operation Condor can be viewed at the National Security Archives website, www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/news/20010306.
Supporting the rights to truth and justice is fundamental to EAAF’s work. These rights are particularly crucial in cases of political disappearances, where substantial attempts are often made to erase or hide material traces of the crime. A key component of the team’s work is to recover, analyze and contribute evidence of what happened and how it happened to courts, families, and the local organizations that support them. This section provides an update on accountability processes in Argentina regarding human rights violations, and includes information on the use of EAAF’s work in ongoing prosecutions.

Over the last 24 years, EAAF team members have served as expert witnesses in numerous human rights cases, filing forensic reports in judicial investigations of human rights violations in Argentina. However, even though EAAF always works within a judicial framework, after impunity laws came into effect, these reports could not be used towards the prosecution of most dictatorship-era crimes. With the recent annulments of
these laws, more than 1,200 processes have been opened, and EAAF’s expert testimony can be once again considered in criminal proceedings involving human rights violations in Argentina.¹

According to Human Rights Watch, as of January 2008, there were over 250 persons detainted for human rights violations committed during the last military dictatorship, 70 of whom are under house arrest.²

BACKGROUND

1980s Trials against Junta Members and Impunity Laws

Argentina returned to democracy in 1983, after eight years of military rule. In 1984, the National Commission on the Disappeared (CONADEP) reported on close to 9,000 disappearances committed by the state between 1976 and 1983. The following year, nine top junta members and other high commanders were tried for human rights abuses during their rule. They received varying prison sentences, including life in prison for some. These and other prosecutions of military officers, particularly affecting those in active duty, provoked increased restlessness in the armed forces. After several military uprisings, the president and parliament passed two partial impunity laws: the so-called Full Stop Law of 1986 (Law 23.492) set a 60-day deadline for the initiation of new trials, and the Due Obedience Law of 1987 (Law 23.521), which ended up granting immunity to all but the top commanders of the military, maintaining that lower ranking officers were not responsible for their actions and solely followed orders. For more than twenty years, these laws impeded the prosecution of military officers for most human rights abuses committed during the last military repression.³

In addition, in 1989, then-President Carlos Menem issued a sweeping pardon to 38 high-ranking military officers being tried for gross human rights violations by the courts who had not benefited from the Due Obedience Law, 280 officers involved in the military uprisings against President Alfonsin in 1987 and 1988, Junta members and commanders convicted for their involvement in the Malvinas War,⁴ and former guerrilla members.⁵ In December 1990, Menem expanded the pardon to cover the military Junta members already serving sentences, as well as Generals Camps, Richieri, Suárez Mason, and the guerrilla leader Mario Firmenich.⁶ However, while military officers were protected from standing trial in Argentina for most human rights abuses, many were prosecuted for crimes that were not directly covered by the laws, such as the abduction of children and the misappropriation of detainees’ assets. The impunity laws also did not prevent overseas prosecution of high-ranking military officers for crimes committed against dual citizens, or by the application of the principles of universal jurisdiction.

Truth Trials

Truth Trials, an innovation particular to the Argentine judicial system, resulted as an alternative means of investigation of human rights violations in the face of the impunity laws. In a Truth Trial, the court conducts an investigation of impunity-covered crimes without the possibility of criminal convictions. These trials began in 1995 after years of advocacy and research by leading human rights organizations, and they continue to operate today. Their main objective is learning the truth about victims of the Dirty War, in order to fulfill the essential right to truth of the relatives and to assist the mourning process. While their lack of prosecutorial authority has been criticized by some (though defendants can be prosecuted if they give false testimony), the courts’ Truth Trials serve as an important judicial process to uncover the truth about the past.⁷ Furthermore, since the annulment of the impunity laws, testimony and evidence collected in these trials are now being presented in criminal proceedings.
Annulment of Impunity Laws

Since the creation of the impunity laws, there has been a sustained effort to annul them. In court decisions by judges Cavallo (2001), Bonadio (2001), and Skidelsky (2003), the impunity laws were ruled null, void and unconstitutional. In April 2003, judges Schiffrin and Reboredo of the Federal Chamber of the city of La Plata declared that those crimes committed in connection to gross human rights violations were also not subject to any statute of limitation.

Former President Kirchner (2003-2007) made overturning the impunity laws one of his top priorities. In August 2003, both houses of the Argentine Congress voted to annul the Full Stop and Due Obedience laws retroactively, clearing the way for the reopening of major criminal cases against military officers which had been shelved since the 1980s. However, this decision needed to be supported by the Supreme Court, which delayed ruling on these attempts to strike down the immunity laws for over two years.

In the meantime, on September 1, 2003 as a result of the nullification of the immunity laws by Congress, the Federal Chamber of Buenos Aires ordered two “mega-cases” concerning human rights violations to be reopened. These were the case for crimes committed in the Navy School of Mechanics (ESMA), and the case investigating the criminal activities of the First Army Corps, which had administered the Federal Capital and part of the province of Buenos Aires.

The major financial and presidential crisis of 2001 included severe public criticism of the Supreme Court, which had been enlarged from five to nine members by President Menem in 1990, an
action many considered unconstitutional, and which was widely seen as a mechanism to stop prosecution on corruption charges against his government. In 2003, Congress started investigating Supreme Court judges, resulting in the impeachment under corruption charges by Congress, or resignation under the same allegations before being impeached, of five of the judges appointed by President Menem. President Kirschner then appointed four new judges.

In August 2004, the Supreme Court did uphold the life sentence given to one of the murderers of General Carlos Prats, an ex-Chilean army chief killed in Buenos Aires in 1974. In the landmark decision, five of the current eight judges ruled that there is no statute of limitation when it comes to prosecuting crimes against humanity.

In November 2004, foreseeing the opening of these and new cases, the attorney general ordered the creation of the “Assistance Unit for Cases of Human Rights Violations Committed under State Terrorism,” headed by Federal Prosecutor Félix Crous. The unit is meant to investigate and prosecute, in collaboration with federal magistrates, crimes perpetrated during the last military dictatorship. The unit is acting as plaintiff in over 20 ongoing penal cases, including two major “mega-cases” (see below), and operates under the National Prosecutor’s Office for Political Crimes, Human Rights and Community Services. In addition, the executive branch, through the awaited ruling that the impunity laws were unconstitutional, the way was cleared for the reopening of major criminal cases against military officers. Even though this overturn did not nullify the presidential pardons granted to over 300 senior officials by former President Menem, since then, federal courts have reversed the pardons issued by Menem, finding that those originally condemned should serve their sentences. In May 2007, the attorney general found the remaining presidential pardons unconstitutional.

Finally, on March 22, 2006, Defense Minister Nilda Garré permitted the Secretary for Military Affairs to guarantee unrestricted access to armed forces documents associated with cases of human rights violations committed between 1976 and 1983.

In 2006, EAAF signed an agreement with the Office of the Attorney General to facilitate mutual cooperation on human rights cases. In 2007, the attorney general created a second unit, the Prosecutor’s Unit for Coordination and Follow-Up, to monitor human rights cases active throughout the country.

On June 14, 2005, when the Supreme Court made the long-awaited ruling that the impunity laws were unconstitutional, the way was cleared for the reopening of major criminal cases against military officers.
As a result of the annulment of the impunity laws, judicial cases against military personnel accused of human rights violations committed during the last dictatorship were reopened at the point they were left when the impunity laws were passed (1986 and 1987) and new cases were opened. According to official figures, there are currently over 1,200 cases for human rights violations committed during the last dictatorship open in Argentine courts, some dating back to the 1980s. Over the last four years, many of these have been grouped into mega-cases based on military zoning or clandestine detention center (CDC), including the Navy School of Mechanics (ESMA) and the First Army Corps cases. The Center of Legal and Social Studies (CELS), an Argentine NGO, had on file, as of July 2007, 841 individuals involved in human rights abuse trials.19

**Categories**

![Photo by Nancy Larios, Página/12 Archives.](image)

Federal Prosecutor Félix Crous, who leads the “Assistance Unit for Cases of Human Rights Violations Committed under State Terrorism,” which is investigating and prosecuting human rights violations during the last military dictatorship, and assisting other prosecutors in their trials. *Photo by Nancy Larios, Página/12 Archives.*

### Ongoing Human Rights Cases in Argentina

As a result of the annulment of the impunity laws, judicial cases against military personnel accused of human rights violations committed during the last dictatorship were reopened at the point they were left when the impunity laws were passed (1986 and 1987) and new cases were opened. According to official figures, there are currently over 1,200 cases for human rights violations committed during the last dictatorship open in Argentine courts, some dating back to the 1980s. Over the last four years, many of these have been grouped into mega-cases based on military zoning or clandestine detention center (CDC), including the Navy School of Mechanics (ESMA) and the First Army Corps cases. The Center of Legal and Social Studies (CELS), an Argentine NGO, had on file, as of July 2007, 841 individuals involved in human rights abuse trials.19

### Categories

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A list compiled by the CELS on the status of individuals involved in human rights abuse trials in Argentina.

### Major Judiciary Prosecutions20

As explained above, trials are sometimes organized around an illegal detention centre, a specific military zone, a military operation, or a combination of the above, and can be treated as “mega-cases”.

19 **Major Judiciary Prosecutions**
20 **Timeline cont.>>**
Camps I and Camps II Cases

The **Camps Case**, which began in the 1980s, is a mega-case investigating the crimes allegedly committed by the province of Buenos Aires Police during the last military dictatorship.

General Ramón Camps was the chief of the Province of Buenos Aires Police between April 1976 and December 1977, at the peak of the repression. A network of clandestine detention centers functioned under his jurisdiction during that time. Many of them operated in restricted areas of otherwise active, legal police precincts. During the dictatorship, the police reported directly to the Armed Force, whereas in democratic periods in Argentina, the police report to the civilian-controlled Ministry of the Interior.

In 1987, when the Due Obedience Law was passed, the Camps case was shelved. Before the law came into effect, however, General Camps was sentenced to 25 years in prison; Brigade General Pablo Ovidio Riccheri, another former police chief, was sentenced to 14 years in prison; the former Director General of Investigations, Miguel Etchecolatz, was sentenced to 23 years in prison; former police doctor Jorge Bergés was sentenced to six years in prison; and former Corporal Norberto Cozzani was sentenced to four years in prison. They were all released under the Due Obedience Law.

On March 16, 2004, after the Due Obedience Law was annulled, the Federal Chamber of the Federal Capital resolved to reopen the Camps case under Judge Arnaldo Corazza. The magistrate ordered all of the officials, except General Camps, who died in 1994, to serve their full sentence.21

The **Camps II Case** resulted from the sentences of the original Camps case. The defendants are former policemen Miguel Kearney, chief of the Arana Police Detachment, andJosé Antonio Raffo and Oscar Antonio Penna, of the San Justo Brigade, where clandestine detention centers operated. In September 2004, the Assistance Unit requested their detention based on a 1987 subpoena from the Federal Chamber of the Federal Capital. Judge Corazza ordered Penna’s arrest and charged the others with 18 accounts of kidnapping and torture. The Camps II case is ongoing.

Two individuals implicated in the Camps II case, Miguel Osvaldo Etchecolatz and Christian von Wernich, have also received convictions in individual cases. Their roles in the “mega-cases” continue to be investigated.

**Miguel Osvaldo Etchecolatz**, General Director of Investigations of looting in main cities result in the transfer of the presidency from Alfonsoin to Menem six months earlier than scheduled.

1989

**October**

First presidential pardon of some military officials accused of human rights violations, guerilla members, and others accused of belonging to or supporting guerilla groups, the main military leaders of the Malvinas war, and the leaders of three military uprisings by President Menem. The main leaders of the recent military uprising are ordered to take an early retirement.

1990

**December 3**

Fourth military uprising by some of the same leaders of previous ones, interpreted this time by the government and army as a military coup attempt. Fifteen soldiers and civilians...
of the Province of Buenos Aires Police during the last military dictatorship, was convicted on October 9, 2007 on charges of complicity in 32 instances of torture, 42 cases of abduction, and seven first and second degree aggravated homicide in cases involving at least five CDCs in the province of Buenos Aires. He was sentenced to life in prison by the Federal Tribunal No. 1 of La Plata. Von Wernich had been brought to trial as part of the 1980s Camps case, but the case was dismissed after the passing of the impunity laws. He continued to serve the Roman Catholic Church in Argentina for several years, but was the target of frequent protests, which resulted in von Wernich moving from parish to parish within the country. In 1996, he went underground, resurfacing seven years later when he was identified under the pseudonym Cristian González in the coastal town of El Quisco, Chile, where he was serving as parish priest. That same year he was extradited to Argentina to stand trial.

Christian von Wernich, chaplain of the police of the province of Buenos Aires during the last military dictatorship, was convicted on October 9, 2007 on charges of complicity in acts of abduction, torture, and homicide. Photo by Compay, Página/12 Archive.
1994
The government, under President Menem, establishes reparations laws for families of disappeared people, attempting to some extent to stop thousands of civil suits similar to the Tarnopolsky case.

1995
April
Army Chief General Balza, in a national broadcast message to the country, recognizes for the first time major violations and abuses committed by the Armed Forces during the last military government. However, he provides no information about the whereabouts of disappeared people.

ESMA Case
Judge Sergio Torres presides over the ESMA Case. This other mega-case is investigating the crimes committed at the Navy School of Mechanics, ESMA, where one of the largest CDCs functioned during the 1976-1983 dictatorship. This case was originally part of the 1985 trials against the Junta members. On September 1, 2003, the Federal Chamber of the Federal Capital ordered its reopening, upon declaring the Due Obedience and the Full Stop laws null.

In October 2005, Federal Prosecutor Eduardo Taiano petitioned Judge Torres to arrest 295 individuals involved in the disappearance of 614 persons that were illegally detained at ESMA. The goal of the investigation, according to the prosecutor, was to determine the responsibility of those charged with the “organization, planning or execution of the kidnappings, torture, submission to inhuman living conditions, death, stealing, extortion resulting in appropriation of goods, kidnapping of children, and involvement in ‘transfers’” (a euphemism for the extrajudicial executions of the disappeared).

EAAF Work: The ESMA case, filed in the Federal Chamber of the Federal Capital, contains EAAF expert reports on the identifications of three founding members of the

Extensive mapping of rooms and their purposes for the CDC ESMA was undertaken by CONADEP and ESMA survivors after the end of the last military dictatorship. Image courtesy of CONADEP from Nunca Más, pp.91 & 94.
Mothers of Plaza de Mayo: Esther Ballestrino, María Eugenia Ponce, and Azucena Villaflor, and the French nun, Léonie Duquet. The first three women were seen at ESMA and identified by EAAF between 2004 and 2006 based on a long historical investigation, and anthropological and genetic analyses. The remains of the four women are thought to have been thrown into the ocean from Air Force planes. The bodies washed out on the shore in 1977 and were buried as “N.N.” in General Lavalle municipal cemetery, province of Buenos Aires (see the Santa Cruz Church case in the Argentina section of this report). EAAF exhumed the four women from General Lavalle cemetery and identified them based on anthropological and genetic analyses. (see EAAF 2006 annual report)

The trial of Héctor Febres in front of the Federal Oral Tribunal No. 5 in Buenos Aires, begun in October 2007, was interrupted when the defendant was poisoned and died on December 10, 2007, four days prior to the verdict being given. The former Coast Guard officer had been charged with kidnapping and torture at the CDC Navy School of Mechanics (ESMA), during the last military dictatorship, and his individual trial constituted a partial elevation from the ESMA case. While in trial, Febres was being held aboard a Coast Guard brig, where he was found dead, initially it was thought from a heart attack. The autopsy revealed he had been poisoned with cyanide. After his death, his wife and two grown children, who had dined with him the night of his death, along with two Coast Guard officers were detained by the judge in charge of the case. A subsequent investigation uncovered lax enforcement of security measures by the Coast Guard during Febres’ detention, forcing the retirement of the Coast Guard chief. It is believed that Febres was murdered for fear that he planned to reveal information during his sentencing related to abductions and illegal adoptions carried out during the Dirty War.24

Federal Chamber of the Federal Capital

1. Operation Condor Case

Operation Condor was a covert policy implemented during the 1970s and 1980s by which South American governments, including
those of Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Uruguay, and Paraguay, exchanged counter-intelligence and political prisoners.25 In September 2006, oral arguments began—seven years after charges initially were brought against former General Jorge Rafael Videla, president of the Junta during the peak of the repression—on the kidnapping and disappearance of 110 persons during the Dirty War. As part of the current proceedings, General Videla, General Albano Harguindeguy, General Luciano Benjamín Menéndez, and General Antonio Domingo Bussi were indicted and placed in custody. International detention orders were issued against former Chilean President General Augusto Pinochet—who died in 2006, Colonel Manuel Contreras, former head of the intelligence services (DINA), and Colonel Espinoza (Chile); former President of Bolivia General Hugo Banzer; former President of Paraguay, General Alfredo Stroessner—who also died in 2006—and his military and police intelligence officers; and the then Commander in Chief of the Uruguayan Army, General Vadora.26

2. A case for the systematic theft of children of the disappeared.

3. The Counteroffensive Case

On December 19, 2007, former Army General Cristina Nicolaides and seven other ex-security force officials were convicted by an Oral Tribunal in Buenos Aires. At the beginning of the military dictatorship, Nicolaides had been in charge of the 7th Infantry Brigade, stationed in the province of Corrientes. He was eventually appointed by the military junta, near the end of the military dictatorship, to serve as commander in chief of the army.

Nicolaides and the other seven ex-security force officials were charged with taking part in the illegal detention, torture, and disappearance of six individuals, five of whom were killed in 1980 during the junta response to “Operation Counteroffensive”, an insurgency operation launched by the Montoneros, a political-military organization that had been most active in the first years of the military dictatorship. The counteroffensive consisted of two armed operations attempting to topple the de facto government in 1979 and 1980. The criminal proceedings, which began in 1980 and are currently under Federal Judge Ariel Lijo, investigate the kidnapping and death of 5 of the 18 Montoneros members involved, and the kidnapping and servitude of a survivor. The Center for Legal and Social Studies (CELS) filed the accusations.27 Of the eight total convicted, seven were former military officers from the 601st Intelligence Batallion.

Cristina Nicolaides received 25 years in prison, as did Luis Arias Duval and Santiago Hoya. Juan Carlos Gualco, Waldo Roldán and Julio Simón (who had already been convicted in a case described below) received 23 years. Carlos Fontana was sentenced to 21 years, and Pascual Guerrieri received 20 years in prison. Nicolaides’ conviction represents the first prison sentences received by a high-ranking former member of the military since the annulment of the impunity laws.28

4. A case that investigates the disappearance of the son and daughter-in-law of the poet Juan Gelman. As mentioned below, the remains of Marcelo Gelman were identified by EAAF in 1989.

First Army Zone Case

In the First Army Zone Case, Federal Judge Daniel Rafecas of the Criminal and Correctional Court No. 3, under acting Judge Julián Ercolini, is investigating the crimes committed under the jurisdiction of Army Zone 1, comprising the Federal Capital, and parts of the provinces of Buenos Aires and La Pampa. The file contains three connected cases:

- **CDC Automotores Orletti**: The case refers to crimes committed at this clandestine detention center located in the city of Buenos Aires.
Aires, also known as El Jardín. This CDC was involved with activities of Operation Condor, a covert agreement among military governments in the Southern Cone for the exchange of information and political prisoners.²⁹ For example, as a result many Uruguayans kidnapped in Buenos Aires were seen in Orletti.

The Fátima Massacre: The case investigates the deaths of 30 individuals who had been illegally detained at the Office of the Superintendent of Federal Security of the Federal Police in the Federal Capital. On August 20, 1976, the prisoners were allegedly taken on a truck to the outskirts of the town of Fátima, in Pilar district, province of Buenos Aires, shot to death, and partly blown up with dynamite. The remains were buried in anonymous graves at the nearby Derqui cemetery. Five of the 30 victims were identified by the judiciary in 1982: Inés Nocetti, Ramón Lorenzo Vélez, Ángel Osvaldo Leiva, Alberto Evaristo Comas, and Conrado Alzogaray.

A case investigating the killings of Carlos Guillermo Fassano and Lucila Adela Révora Lennar, who were assassinated in their home on October 11, 1978. Their 2-year-old son was abducted, but returned to relatives three months later.

EAAF Work: EAAF has contributed evidence to both the Automotores Orletti case and the Fátima case:

CDC Automotores Orletti: In 1989, EAAF exhumed and identified the remains of Marcelo Ariel Gelman, son of the well-known Argentine poet Juan Gelman, and those of Ana del Carmen Pérez from the San Fernando cemetery. Both were identified based on fingerprint matching (see methodology in the Argentina section of this report) and ante-mortem information. In 2001, EAAF also uncovered information about the whereabouts of two Uruguayan citizens, José Hugo Donadio and Francisco Edgardo Candía Correa. Both had been ‘transferred’ from Automotores Orletti and they were identified by EAAF through fingerprint matching. Their remains had been buried in “N.N.” graves at the Chacarita cemetery in the city of Buenos Aires. Unfortunately, the cemetery records indicated that the remains were moved to its general ossuary in 2001, making their retrieval no longer possible.

The Fátima Massacre: The case was reopened in 1987 and EAAF was asked to exhume and try to identify the remaining 25 individuals. Due to insufficient ante-mortem data and in the absence of DNA technology to extract genetic material from bones, EAAF could only identify the remains of Alicia Spagnoli de Vera at that time. In 1998, with the development of new genetic technologies, the Federal Chamber of the Federal Capital requested EAAF to try to identi-
fy the other remains. After a thorough historical investigation, anthropological examination, and DNA analysis, EAAF was able to identify 11 other victims: José Daniel Bronzel, Susana Elena Pedrini de Bronzel, Selma Julia Ocampo, Haydeé Rosa Cirullo de Carnaghi, Carmen María Carnaghi, Norma Susana Frontini, Jorge Daniel Argente, Horacio Oscar García Gastelú, Juan Carlos Vera, Carlos Raúl Pargas, and José Ricardo Raúl Herrera Carrizso.

Third Army Corps

The 31-M-87 Case investigates human rights violations committed in areas under Third Army Corps jurisdiction, headquartered in the city of Córdoba, covering several central and northern Argentine provinces. The region experienced one of the highest levels of military repression, following only the province and city of Buenos Aires. More than 100 indicted individuals, including former Third Army Corps Chief General Luciano Benjamín Menéndez, had been released in 1987 when the case was stopped by the impunity laws. Menéndez and eight other indicted officers were detained—again—in 2003 in connection to the Brandalisis case, involving the disappearance and kidnaping of Humberto Brandalisis, Carlos Enrique Lajas, Hilda Flora Palacios, and Raúl Osvaldo Cardozo brought by Prosecutors Graciela López de Fidoñuk and Dr. Alberto G. Lozada. This case is pending a decision from an appeals court (Cámara de Casación Penal). The same is happening with the case initiated in 2004 after the confession of Lieutenant Colonel Guillermo Enrique Bruno Laborda, who admitted to his participation in the above-mentioned murders in a statement presented before Army Commander General Roberto Bendini. In addition, the case on the disappearance of a student, Diego Raúl Hunziker, kidnapped on September 1976, is ongoing. Overall, among those implicated, there are currently 20 people detained, six dead, and one at large in Córdoba.

EAAF Work: EAAF has been working in Córdoba since 2002 as part of the “Investigation of Clandestine Burial” case, which is ongoing in Federal Court No. 3, presided by Judge Cristina Garzón de Lascano, and prosecuted by Dr. López de Fidoñuk. In 2003, EAAF presented key evidence in connection to the Brandalisis case, leading to the arrest of General Menéndez and eight other officers. Since 2002, serving as expert witness, EAAF has identified the remains of 12 individuals who disappeared in Córdoba, and who were exhumed from mass graves in San Vicente cemetery, located in the city of Córdoba. In 2006, EAAF identified the remains of Guillermo Enrique Bartoli.

Tucumán Province Cases

The province of Tucumán is among the most active provinces in terms of cases open for human rights violations during the last dictatorship. Federal Prosecutor Eduardo Ferrer Collado—in charge of all the cases investigating state terrorism in the province of Tucumán—grouped the over 500 judicial files into 9 mega-cases according to CDC or subject.

The largest cases are those involving three CDCs: Miguel de Azcuénaga Armory, Tucumán Police Headquarters; and Villa Urquiza Penitentiary. Two other cases investigate human rights violations perpetrated as early as January 1975, before the military coup of March 24, 1976, in the context of “Operation Independence”. A decree of the executive power, signed during Martínez de Perón’s government in January 1975, authorized the Army to launch “Operation Independence” to “neutralize or annihilate subversive elements” in the province of Tucumán by any means necessary. The Army’s main objective was the elimination of the guerilla organization Ejército Revolucionario del Pueblo (People’s Liberation Army, ERP), which had a stronghold in the province of Tucumán. However, the operation brought widespread repression in the province, especially against the rural population. The Army sought
to stop all political and unionizing activities. 449 people are believed to have disappeared as a result of state terrorism in the province of Tucumán between January 1975 and the military coup of March 24, 1976, and another 435 are alleged to have disappeared thereafter.\(^3\)

In another case, Federal Prosecutor Dr. Emilio Ferrer is investigating the clandestine burial of disappeared persons in North cemetery, located in the city of San Miguel de Tucumán.\(^3\)

**EAAF Work:** In 2005, Judge Jorge Raúl Parache named EAAF forensic expert on Case File No. 1831/04, “Romero, Enrique Fernando, About his Report”. EAAF reviewed all 227 “N.N.” registrations made in the city of Tucumán’s North cemetery records between June 24, 1975, and December 1983. These investigations produced the initial identification of two persons by comparing fingerprints taken at the time from the cadavers with fingerprints kept in the National Registry of Persons. Exhumations are currently underway. Also, EAAF is collaborating with the judiciary to investigate the modus operandi of the repression under the Second Army Corps jurisdiction, which included Tucumán.
OTHER CASES:
In addition, EAAF has in the recent past presented evidence in the following major cases:

- The case against Luis Abelardo Patti, who was the former police commissioner of Buenos Aires. Patti is currently the leader of the Federalist Union Party, and was elected to Congress in 2005, but could not take his seat because of legal actions against him. He was detained in 2007 for the abduction and homicide of Gastón Gonçalves and Ana María del Carmen Granada. Another witness, Luis Gerez, who had given testimony against Patti, disappeared in December 2006, but reappeared two days later, and his kidnapping has not been substantiated. **EAAF Work:** EAAF had recovered and identified Gastón Gonçalves’ remains in 1996 from Escobar cemetery.\(^{31}\)

- The **Parish of the Rosary Massacre Case**, in Catamarca province, which investigates the alleged extrajudicial executions of among 16 ERP members in 1974 by officers of the Third Army Corps and the Military Unit of Catamarca. **EAAF Work:** In 2005, EAAF exhumed...
remains of four ERP members from in the municipal cemetery of San Fernando del Valle de Catamarca. In 2006, the team identified Dardo Rutilio Betancourt. EAAF Work: As forensic expert, EAAF has exhumed remains of three of the individuals (seven others had already been returned to their families) from Francisco Solano cemetery in Resistencia, the capital of Chaco. EAAF is currently working on identifying them using fingerprinting, and is also searching for other remains from the case.

Twelve military officers have been arrested in connection to the case investigating Infantry Regiment No. 9, in the province of Corrientes, including General Cristino Nicolaides, then chief of the VII Infantry Brigade. A case investigating the CDC La Polaca, in Paso de los Libres, province of Corrientes, has resulted in the indictment of six former military officers, including Pedro Agustín Pasteris, national director of Gendarmería, who was fired from his post as a result of the proceedings. In February 2008, a trial began against former Army General Cristino Nicolaides, who is currently under house arrest for other cases (see above), and five other former military officers for crimes committed in the province of Corrientes in the first years of the military dictatorship.

EAAF Work: As expert witness in the Infantry Regiment No. 9 case, EAAF has so far recovered the remains of four individuals during exhumations at Empeñrado cemetery, in the city of Corrientes. EAAF is also collecting information on the activities of CDC La Polaca during the last military dictatorship.

The “The Night of the Blackout” Case, investigating an incident on July 27, 1976, in the province of Jujuy, during a blackout in the towns Libertador San Martín and Calilegua, security forces
detained several hundred individuals and took them to a CDC near the Ledesma Sugar Mill for interrogation. Many of the individuals from this incident, a significant portion of which were union members at the Ledesma Sugar Mill, were tortured, while 105 individuals remained disappeared.\textsuperscript{36} \textbf{EAAF Work:} EAAF conducted preliminary investigations in cemeteries in the cities of Jujuy and Yala into areas of “N.N” graves.

- In the province of \textit{Santiago del Estero}, retired generals Videla, Benjamín Menéndez, and Bussi, as well as Police Commissioner General Musa Azar, have been indicted in the Carrizo and Kamenetzky case. \textbf{EAAF Work:} EAAF exhumed the remains and issued cause of death reports on the cases of Consolación Carrizo Diaz and Cecilio Kamenzky, who had been summarily executed in 1976.

\textbf{Other Recent Convictions}

Julio Simón, ex-officer of the Superintendent’s Office of Federal Security of the Federal Police, has been implicated in several cases. Following an oral and public trial, Simón was sentenced to 25 years in prison on August 4, 2006 by the Federal Tribunal No. 5 of Buenos Aires. He was charged with the illegal detention and torture of José Poblete and Gertrudis Hlaczik, former president Isabel Peron is detained by Spanish authorities in relation to an investigation in Argentina about right-wing paramilitaries during the 1970s.
and the kidnapping of their daughter Claudia Victoria, who was eight months old at the time. Claudia Victoria and her mother were kidnapped by security forces on November 20, 1978, and taken to the CDC El Olimpo in the city of Buenos Aires. According to testimonies, after two days Claudia Victoria was taken away by security forces and her whereabouts thereafter were unknown. Twenty-two years later, on May 7, 2000, the Grandmothers of Plaza de Mayo discovered that Claudia Poblete was registered under the false name of Mercedes Beatriz Landa. Thus, Claudia Victoria was recovered by her biological family. José Poblete and Gertrudis Hlaczik have never been found.37

The Spanish court is currently hearing the case of former Argentine Navy Lieutenant Ricardo Cavallo. Cavallo had been extradited in 2003 from Mexico (where he had been living) to Spain at the request of Judge Garzón to stand trial on charges of genocide during the last military dictatorship. In July 2007, the Spanish Supreme Court annulled a decision by the Spanish High Court that it had no jurisdiction over Cavallo, which would have required his extradition to Argentina, and instead brought him to trial in Spain.

Cases have also been initiated in Germany, Italy, France, and Sweden for the disappearance of dual citizens in Argentina. In 2000, EAAF member Dario Olmo testified in Rome, Italy in the case of ex-General Carlos Guillermo Suárez Mason, who was convicted to life in prison. Also in Italy, an investigation of crimes committed as part of Operation Condor, the covert agreement among military governments in the Southern Cone for the exchange of information and political prisoners that included the disappearance of 25 Italians, has been underway for seven years. In December 2007, Judge Luisianna Figliolia, presiding over the case, issued arrest warrants for 140 officials from the security forces of Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Paraguay, Peru, and Uruguay.39

In 2005, EAAF identified the remains of French citizens Léonie Duquet, evidence that has been used in proceedings in France. Thus far, most of the defendants have been tried in absentia, partially because Argentina did not accept extradition orders for these cases until August 2003, when President Kirchner repealed the earlier decree by President de la Rúa prohibiting the extradition of officers to face charges related to the last military regime. No extraditions have been effected so far.

Conclusion

EAAF recognizes that, with the annulment of the impunity laws, many cases are now proceeding or being opened. As a result, the need for forensic reports in judicial investigations of human rights violations in Argentina will continue to grow, and this is a very important aspect EAAF’s future work. The EAAF segment of the Latin American Initiative for the Identification of the Disappeared (LIID),40 a new large-scale genetics program launched in 2007, may provide a dramatic increase in the number of identifications. These identifications, along with the teams historical research, can be used as evidence in the cases going forward.
ENDNOTES


3. “Argentina: Impunity Laws Struck Down.” Human Rights Watch. June 14, 2005. www.hrw.org/english/docs/2005/06/14/argent11119.htm. Crimes such as the kidnapping of babies of disappeared women born in captivity or kidnapped with their parent, as well as against property of the disappeared, were not included within the impunity laws.

4. Also known as the Falkland Islands War of 1982.


8. For a complete account see the site of the Permanent Human Rights Assembly of La Plata, Judicial section. http://www/apdhlaplata.org.ar/juridica.htm


10. Beginning in 2001, the court had been in turmoil due to national pressure to force judges to resign who had been rapidly appointed by President Menem in 1990, when, with support from segments of Congress, he increased the court from five to nine members, forming what became known as the “automatic majority.” The Court is widely believed to play a key role in covering up corruption scandals that took place during Menem’s presidency.

11. Congress dictated that these cases would be tried under the new National Penal Process Law in effect since September 2002, implying that they would be public rather than military courts trying them.

12. Since 2003, Supreme Court Justices Julio Nazareno, Guillermo López, and Adolfo Vázquez resigned in the midst of congressional investigations and/or impeachment proceedings; Supreme Court Justice Eduardo Moliné O’Connor and Antonia Boggiano were removed by a Senate commission of inquiry. They were all former President Menem appointees. President Kirchner appointed justices Carmen Argüabay, Hichón de Nelasco, Eugenio Zafaroni, and Ricardo Lorenzetti to fill the vacancies. Only Justices Petracchi and Fayt remain from previous years.

13. Crous had been the prosecutor in charge of the Truth Trials heard by the Federal Chamber of the city of La Plata, province of Buenos Aires.

14. This action is consistent with the Human Rights Secretary’s mandate “to spur and follow legal proceedings related to human rights violations, filling cases, introducing judicial or administrative petitions, and taking all measurements to effectively support these cases...” (EAAF translation).


18. Unidad Fiscal de Coordinación y Seguimiento was created by Resolution PGN 14/07 of the attorney general, dated May 7, 2007.


20. For more information on these and other cases see prior Right to Truth sections in the EAAF Annual Reports from 2003 to 2006.


29. Recently declassified U.S. State Department documents on Operation Condor can be viewed at the National Security Archives website, www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/news/20010306.


31. For more information please see the the EAAF Annual Report 1996-1997.

32. ERP Ejército Revolucionario del Pueblo.

33. For more information, please see in this EAAF Annual Report, the Province of Catamarca section in the Argentina country report.

34. For more information, please see in this EAAF Annual Report, the Province of Chaco section in the Argentina country report.


END NOTES
“The B’nai B’rith Argentina Human Rights Award”

In 2006, EAAF received The B’nai B’rith Human Rights Award in recognition of its work to promote human rights. The award was established in 1988 to honor distinguished individuals and organizations in the field. B’nai B’rith is an international Jewish institution founded in New York in 1843. Its Argentine chapter was established in 1930. EAAF is honored and grateful for this distinction.
Mercedes Doretti Receives 2007 MacArthur Fellowship

EAF member and cofounder Mercedes Doretti was awarded a MacArthur Fellowship for 2007, also nicknamed the “Genius Award”. Each year, the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation awards $500,000 to between 20 and 30 individuals in recognition of “exceptional creativity, promise for important future advances based on a track record of significant accomplishment, and potential for the fellowship to facilitate subsequent creative work.” The MacArthur Foundation invites individuals with extensive experience in a particular field to nominate a colleague qualified for this recognition. The MacArthur Fellowship is a “no strings attached” award, and the recipients are then free to spend the money as they see fit.

Mercedes believes the award gives more legitimacy to forensic scientists working in human rights investigations worldwide. In addition, the award reinforces the right of families of victims of human rights violations to independent forensic investigations in their search for truth and justice. Mercedes is excited by the possibilities this fellowship will provide for innovative applications of forensic anthropology and genetics to the team’s work on human rights cases worldwide.

Finally, Mercedes is grateful to both her nominators and the MacArthur Foundation for this honor.
Documentation and Outreach

Visual documentation and outreach activities are part of EAAF’s effort to share the results of forensic investigations, along with the personal stories accompanying them, to affected communities, associations of families of victims, human rights organizations, related institutions, and society at large. The team is proactive about distributing this material free of charge in Argentina and abroad, making editions in several languages, whenever possible.

**Sr. Presidente Documentary**

In 2007, EAAF co-sponsored a new documentary, *Sr. Presidente*, directed by Liliana Arraya and Eugenia Monti.

In an administrative petition dated June 30, 1980, three workers at the city hospital’s judicial morgue in the city of Córdoba requested the intervention of the de facto president of Argentina at the time, Sr. Presidente General Jose Rafael Videla, in order to improve their work environment. In explaining the circumstances under which they had been forced to work and justifying their protest, they complained about unhygienic labor conditions in their morgue—specifically, they describe the entry and characteristics of a large number of corpses in 1976, which exceeded the morgue’s refrigeration capacity. In the petition they described the cadavers as arriving, sometimes accompanied by security forces, and typically “with gunshot wounds, some with evidence of multiple…all of them came with their fingers painted [for fingerprinting] and with markings evidently from torture. They had marks on their hands as if they had been tied up with ropes.”

1976 was the first year of the military dictatorship, when the remains of approximately 200 disappeared persons passed through the facility in Córdoba.

This letter became one of the principal sources of evidence for an investigation by Federal Court No. 3 of the disappeared in San Vicente cemetery, and it serves as the connecting thread for the documentary *Sr. Presidente*. It also describes how morgue employees rode at night “in the back of the truck with the corpses…to the cemetery of San Vicente…where vehicles of the Police illuminated a mass grave in which the cadavers were deposited.”

Many of the bodies from the morgue were eventually buried individually or in mass graves at the San Vicente cemetery. In 2002 EAAF began exhumations on these graves, and in 2006 the team completed analysis on the more than 300 remains exhumed from the site, from which approximately a third most likely correspond to disappeared people. To date, the team has identified 10 disappeared people from the exhumations at San Vicente cemetery.

In the film, several individuals combine their perspectives to reconstruct the events at San Vicente as they happened thirty years ago, including: one of the morgue employees; a daughter of one of the disappeared whose remains were identified in San Vicente cemetery in 2004; one of the prosecutors of the case; a member of one of the organizations of families of the victims; one of the survivors of the clandestine detention center known as *La Perla*, operating in the outskirts of Córdoba; and a member of EAAF. Together, their testimonial captures the urgent search for truth in Argentina's history.

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2. Ibid.
Other EAAF materials and publications include:

Documentaries

*Following Antigone* provides an overview of the application of forensic sciences to human rights investigations by using footage of EAAF work from Argentina, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Haiti, and East Timor. The video was coproduced by EAAF and WITNESS in 2002. Available on DVD in Spanish, English, French, and Arabic.

*The Last Place* documents the exhumation of the largest dictatorship-era mass grave uncovered thus far in Argentina, located in San Vicente cemetery, Córdoba. The film traces the search and hopes of four families of the disappeared. Coproduced by EAAF and MAMBO Productions in 2004. In Spanish.

Photo Exhibition

Curated in 1999, the traveling exhibition illustrates how forensic anthropology contributes to the investigation of human rights violations by using EAAF cases in different countries. The catalogue is available online at http://eaaf.typepad.com/eaaf_traveling_photo/.

Books

*Tumbas Anónimas* (Anonymous Graves) describes the first forensic searches for the “disappeared” in Argentina under the leadership of Dr. Clyde Snow, as well as EAAF’s formation and work from its inception in 1984 through 1992. Written by EAAF consultant Mauricio Saldana and EAAF; published in 1992.

San Vicente Cemetery, published in 2005, explains EAAF’s forensic investigations in San Vicente cemetery, Córdoba, which led to the uncovering of the largest dictatorship-era mass grave in Argentina. Edited by EAAF.

Both of these books are available for download on the team’s website.

*EAAF’s Forensic Anthropology Work in Argentina: 1992-2006.* (In progress)

Presentations

Every year EAAF participates in conferences and panel discussions, gives presentations and classes, and leads forensic anthropology workshops and trainings in most countries in which it is involved. These outreach activities are geared to a broad range of people, from a specialized audience in universities and medical legal institutes, to the general public, including school children, families, and affected communities.

Articles

In recent years, EAAF has made an effort to write about the most significant cases under investigation or about our reflections on working as forensic anthropologists in the human rights field. Following are the scientific papers and articles that the team has published in peer-reviewed journals and books since 2000.

Annual Reports

EAAF has published annual reports on its activities since 1991, and launched a Mini Annual Report last year.

Website

Those interested can keep abreast of EAAF news and recent missions, and read more about each publication on http://www.eaaf.org.
Recent articles by EAAF members


Sections of this text have been adapted from a report written by Susana Navarro García, coordinator of the exhumations project of the Guatemala-based Community Psycho-social Action and Studies Team (ECAP).

From February 24 to 27, 2007, EAAF participated in the First International Conference on Psycho-social Work during the Exhumation Process, the Search for the Disappeared and the Struggle for Truth and Justice, held in Guatemala and hosted by: ECAP, the Community Action Group (GAC), and the Austrian North-South Institute. The conference aimed to strengthen the practical and theoretical development of psycho-social assistance through the exchange of ideas and experiences among those active in accompaniment during the search for the disappeared. The conference also developed the first draft of the International Consensus on Minimum Norms for Psycho-social Accompaniment in Exhumation Processes and the Search for the Disappeared.

A guiding EAAF principle is to maintain the utmost respect for the wishes of victims’ relatives and communities during its investigations, and to work closely with them in all stages of the exhumation and identification processes. Our work is grounded in the understanding that, for surviving loved ones of the disappeared, the entire process can be unbearable. This process includes searching for remains, identifying remains, learning of negative outcomes for an identification effort or that a previous identification had been incorrect, finding out the cause of death, having remains returned to the family, reburying the remains, and possibly presenting evidence in court or in other formal and informal transitional justice processes. This strain, combined with the profound loss of coping with, in many cases, years of not knowing the fate of a loved one, can lead to some of the darkest moments in a family’s life. Ultimately, however, EAAF believes, and has observed over the past 24 years working with different cultures in nearly 40 countries, that the search for the truth can be a great source of solace to families suffering from the “disappearance” of a loved one.

In addition to the severe loss and suffering of the family and victims’ loved ones, the process of searching for the disappeared brings difficult and painful moments involving complicated and unusual processes of mourning. This mourning occurs at the individual, community, and national levels and includes those involved directly and indirectly in the investigation. Since the earliest days of its work, EAAF has recognized the need to link individuals and communities with local...
resources to help cope with this grief. EAAF also recognizes the groundbreaking work done by local NGOs in countries such as Guatemala and Zimbabwe to offer community and/or individual counseling and other forms of psycho-social assistance whenever possible. Following these strategies, EAAF looks for the assistance of local or regional NGOs or psychologists that are familiar with the culture, political climate, language, religion, and individual situation of the victims to provide psycho-social assistance alongside EAAF’s investigations.

These interventions can take a variety of forms, depending on the needs and culture of the individuals and communities involved, the resources available, and multiple other factors that affect both the forensic investigation and the type of support offered, such as the length of time since the events occurred and the level of ongoing fear or violence, among others. However, some examples of types of psycho-social accompaniment include: offering emotional support to communities and individuals; helping individuals and groups understand the search, excavation, exhumation, identification, return/reburial, and judicial processes that may be involved; creating spaces in which individuals and communities can share their concerns, ask questions, and share their expectations; coordinating the presence of individuals and communities at exhumation sites; assisting with the organization of community ceremonies, rituals or memorials at any stage in the process; helping communities and individuals who choose to express their feelings and experiences through visual arts, music, building a memorial, or other forms of expression; and offering or coordinating individualized assistance for those who request psychological support.

Furthermore, EAAF has incorporated recommendations related to psycho-social assistance for relatives of victims and communities, as well as self-care for those involved in investigations, into its general recommendations for forensic investigation of human rights violations.4 The conference in Guatemala was grounded in the importance of exhumations from the psycho-social perspective, as a significant step toward revealing the truth of the history of the people who were killed, and as a basis for the search for peace and return to democracy for those countries that have experienced grave human rights violations. The four main discussion themes of the conference as outlined by ECAP were:5

I. “Exchange of experiences of psycho-social work on exhumations and the search for the disappeared with the needs of the affected individuals and communities.” Teams from different countries presented their practical experiences.

II. “Analysis of the historical memory and the official history, and their relation with the exhumation processes and search for the disappeared.” The historical memory and the official memory often demonstrate strong contradictions: How can the search for the disappeared and exhumation processes support the construction of collective memory? And how can exhumations and the search for the disappeared affect the official history when it aims to deny what happened? Are reconciliation and democratization...
possible in post-conflict countries without addressing the memory of what took place?

III. “The role of exhumation processes and the search for the disappeared in the application of justice from the psycho-social perspective.” The clarification of the facts and the application of justice are fundamental elements for psycho-social recovery. What models of justice or ways of perpetuating impunity are seen around the process of exhumations and the search for the disappeared?

IV. “Integrated perspectives in the exhumation of clandestine burial sites (juridical, anthropological, psycho-social, political, and social aspects).” A discussion of the perspectives of each discipline and organization involved in the exhumation process and how to fit these perspectives into an interdisciplinary, integrated practice.

The conference was attended by nearly 150 people from 30 countries in the Americas, Asia, Europe, and Africa, with a broad representation from countries where exhumation processes are currently underway or being developed. Participants included experts in psycho-social accompaniment during exhumations, representatives of forensic teams, legal organizations, international organizations, and associations of relatives of victims, as well as government officials from Guatemala, Colombia, and Peru.

Prior to the official launch of the conference, participants had the opportunity to attend two workshops: “Work of Mental Health Promoters in Exhumation Processes” offered by ECAP; and a workshop on “Forensic Anthropological Investigations and its Interrelation with Relatives, Community Based Organizations, and Psycho-social Teams”, offered by the Guatemalan Forensic Anthropology Foundation (FAFG).

The official launch of the congress included brief remarks from staff of the Spanish Center of Formation and Cooperation, ECAP, The UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OACNUDH), The Human Rights Prosecutor of Guatemala, and the National Commission of Compensation, as well as Jesus Tecú,
who spoke as a representative of victims of the armed conflict in Guatemala. Representatives from the Association of Relatives of Detained-Disappeared People of Guatemala (FAMDEGUA), Breaking the Wall of Silence from Namibia, and the Association of Relatives of Detained-Disappeared Persons of Colombia (ASFADES) shared their perspectives and experiences on the search for disappeared people.

The second day included ten roundtable sessions in which three participant-experts presented their experiences on work in exhumation processes in various countries. Topics included: psycho-social work in exhumations; socio-culturally informed approaches to exhumations; integral perspectives in exhumation processes; application of forensic work in the search for the disappeared; psycho-social work in the context of political violence; social impact of the search for the disappeared and exhumation processes; search for justice in relation to exhumations and forced disappearances; forensic work and its link to psycho-social work with relatives; and contextualization in the search for the disappeared and exhumations.

The third and fourth day of the congress focused on the development of norms and recommendations for the International Consensus on Minimum Norms for Psycho-social Accompaniment in Exhumation Processes and the Search for the Disappeared. These guidelines followed extensive preparatory work by ECAP that included requesting participants to send a list of five things that should never happen in an exhumation process, and another list of five things that should always be done in an exhumation process, from a psycho-social perspective. ECAP received 103 responses from 32 countries around the world, and coded the answers to develop several main areas around which standards would be drafted.

At the conference, roundtables made up of people with different specialties and from different geographical regions addressed the question of minimum standards in the following key areas:

- Psycho-social accompaniment to relatives of victims and communities, always with their consent
- Coordination among investigating institutions, government entities, communities and relatives in exhumation processes
- Integrating forensic and psycho-social work with the relatives of victims organizations
- Addressing the exhumation process from a human rights perspective, taking into account the possibility of reparations and compensation
- Exploration of the exhumation processes and the search for the disappeared as they relate to the quest for justice
- Preliminary investigations and post-exhumation evaluation, including compiling ante-mortem information, efforts to locate relatives, the reliability of information, and other issues
- Self-care for those involved in exhumations
- Consideration of children, including whether children should be present at exhumation sites, educational activities in the schools, and drafting age-appropriate materials
- Role of the state and nongovernmental organizations in exhumation processes

Antigua, Guatemala. 2007. Conference participants worked together on a mural, coordinated by the artist Claudia Bernardi. Group murals are a communal means of addressing issues related to human rights violations. Photo courtesy of ECAP.
- Management of information
- Security of those working on exhumations, relatives and witnesses
- Taking into account judicial and historical background of each case, as well as cultural and religious context before exhumations occur for more effective psycho-social work
- Considering traditional justice mechanisms when dealing with reparations
- Multidisciplinary work of anthropologist, psychologist, and lawyers
- Creating mechanisms to monitor forensic work

Following the compilation of ideas for minimum standards during these two days of work, a Working Group was formed to finalize the draft of the official standards and best practices, develop a process for reviewing the standards that concern relatives of the disappeared and survivors of massacres around the world, and consider their applicability in different cultural contexts. The goal of this process is to produce a final set of standards that can be adopted by national, regional, and international entities such as the International Criminal Court, the International Committee of the Red Cross, and the United Nations.

Following these sessions, participants met in plenary to share and discuss their results, and offer the opportunity to propose additional minimum norms and recommendations. To obtain more information or a draft of the International Consensus on Minimum Norms for Psycho-social Accompaniment in Exhumation Processes and the Search for the Disappeared, please contact ECAP, either Susana Navarro Garcia at susananava@gmail.com or Franc Kernjak at franc_kernjak@yahoo.com.

**Antigua, Guatemala. 2007.** A photo exhibit, such as this one at the conference, represents one of the strategies for raising awareness of the realities of the search and exhumation process. *Photo courtesy of ECAP.*

**ENDNOTES**

1. A team organized to provide psycho-social accompaniment in Guatemala for victims of political violence, mostly to Mayans
2. An organization from Spain focusing on mental health and human rights
3. A global organization which promotes social justice through international cooperation
4. See the Recommendations section of this report
The Latin American Initiative for the Identification of the “Disappeared” (LIID) focuses on drastically improving the identification of the remains of people disappeared in Latin America for political reasons. LIID aims to fulfill its mission mostly by applying new genetic technology developed to identify the thousands of victims from the recent war in the Balkans region and from the September 11th attack on the World Trade Center.
provides introductory information on the work of all three teams involved in LIID, and includes some additional information on the LIID-EAAF segment in Argentina. A more detailed report on LIID-EAAF activities in Argentina will be published by the team in the first half of 2008.

First year funding for LIID-EAAF came largely from a $1.4 million grant from the U.S. Congress, obtained in 2007. EAAF is profoundly grateful for the support and guidance received from the Washington Office for Latin America (WOLA) in securing this grant. WOLA’s advice to the three forensic teams, beginning in 2005, was crucial in garnering support for the earmarked funds from the U.S. Congress, which made the first year of LIID possible. WOLA’s advice continues to be of great benefit for the overall success of the Initiative.

BACKGROUND

Decades of military dictatorships, internal conflicts, and actions by paramilitary, guerrilla and terrorists groups in Latin America have resulted in tragically high numbers of forced disappearances and extrajudicial executions. Over 9,000 individuals are estimated to have been disappeared in Argentina during the last military dictatorship. During Guatemala’s internal conflict, from 1960-1996, an estimated 200,000 persons are believed to have been disappeared or extrajudicially executed. In Peru, approximately 11,000 individuals are believed to have been disappeared from 1980-2000. In each nation, the repression operated in a different manner, creating different challenges for forensic work. However, in the majority of these cases, the remains of the victims have still not been identified. Beginning in the 1980s and 1990s, the NGO forensic teams involved in LIID have been working in the region alongside human rights organizations and associations of families of victims on the search, recovery, identification, and return of the remains of disappeared people to their families. These forensic teams have also presented before court and/or to Truth Commissions important physical evidence from these investigations into the recent past.

Nevertheless, hundreds of thousands of Latin American families have never recovered the remains of their loved ones and continue to search for these remains. Because most of the victims’ remains are currently skeletonized, they can no longer be identified visually. Also the absence or insufficiency of ante-mortem or physical information of the victims often prevents the positive identification of the remains through traditional techniques, making DNA essential in identifying these victims. Yet, the few existing Latin American genetic laboratories tend to have basic equipment, little experience in extracting DNA from skeletal remains, and few resources for this costly processing. Thus, most of the recovered bodies remain only tentatively identified or continue to be unidentified.

The significant advances in genetic technology resulting from the war in the Balkans and from the events of
September 11th in New York have changed the possibilities for genetic testing. These new developments include: 1) accelerated processing time for each sample; 2) significantly lower processing costs; 3) improved possibility of extracting DNA from samples that are highly decomposed and contaminated; and 4) quickly comparing, using new software, thousands of genetic profiles obtained from bone samples with thousands of genetic profiles from relatives of victims, whereas before the numbers for cross-comparisons were limited.

With these technological advancements, it became possible for the first time to extend genetic analysis to the large numbers of disappeared in Argentina and across Latin America. For the teams involved in LIID, the Initiative represents the first significant opportunity to apply genetics on a wide scale and to have a chance to appreciably increase the number of identifications. LIID aims to bring hope to thousands of families through the organized effort to recover and identify remains of victims of human rights abuses using these recent advances in DNA technology.

In Argentina, LIID-EAAF first year activities involve: 1) conducting genetic analysis of 600 skeletons thought to correspond to disappeared people, stored in the EAAF Buenos Aires office; 2) the collection and processing of 3,600 samples from potential family members of victims; 3) a campaign to disseminate information about the project; 4) providing equipment and training to the opening of the EAAF local DNA laboratory, an independent, state-of-the-art genetic laboratory for the processing of human rights cases in the region; 5) and exhuming and analyzing 200 additional individuals using anthropological techniques.

Argentina Background

The perpetrators of the over 9,000 disappearances during Argentina’s “Dirty War” which lasted from 1976-1983, were for a long period after the return of democracy protected by impunity laws. With the recent annulment of these impunity laws, public interest about human rights violations has increased, not just for prosecutions, but also for the identification and return of the remains of these disappeared. Most of the bodies of “disappeared” persons...
were disposed of in one of two ways: they were thrown from military aircrafts into rivers and the Argentine Sea, in operations that became known as “vuelos de la muerte” (death flights); or they were buried by municipal bureaucracies in public cemeteries throughout the country as “N.N.” (John/Jane Doe), after first “appearing” on the streets or barren lots in urban areas.

In 1991, with the generous pro bono work of genetic laboratories in the U.S. and U.K., EAAF began applying DNA analysis to the identification of disappeared people in Argentina, as well as Ethiopia and Haiti. But the team could only submit very few cases for testing, as these laboratories could not accommodate more than a small number of tests per year.

Due to these technological and financial constraints, genetic testing had limited effect on the identification of the disappeared. Since 2002, EAAF began processing samples with a private genetic laboratory in Argentina, LIDMO S.R.L., resulting in 80 identifications to date of people who were disappeared in Argentina. But, based on over twenty years of investigations, EAAF estimates that there are still several thousands remains which could possibly be recovered and submitted for DNA analysis.

Implementation of LIID in Argentina

The first year of LIID in Argentina started in August 2007. In preparation for the beginning of LIID, EAAF signed an agreement with both the Argentine Secretary of Human Rights and with the Argentine Ministry of Health. The agreement focuses on the collection of blood samples from families of victims. Together these agencies are assisting EAAF in collecting 3,600 blood samples from the relatives of the disappeared nationwide.

Blood sample donors first visit one of the 60 offices of the Secretary of Human Rights throughout the country, where the status of their depositions are checked and a new file opened if necessary, and also a blood sample appointment is scheduled. The donor makes an appointment with one of the 63 blood sample collection sites across the country, which belong to the National Blood Bank (Red de Bancos de Sangre), and which is participating in the Initiative as part of EAAF’s agreement with the Ministry of Health. The confidentiality of the blood samples is maintained by a barcode system, and only the Secretary of Human Rights and EAAF know the association between donator and blood sample. Further, these samples will only be used for identifying the remains of the disappeared.

Three samples are sent back to the office of the Secretary of Human Rights, which forwards one blood samples to EAAF for the team’s archives. The Secretary of Human Rights archives another of the samples itself. In this way both the government and EAAF will have a genetic bank for investigations of the disappeared. After already more than 30 years having passed since some of the human rights violations during the last military dictatorship, it is important to create a database of blood samples from close relatives of the disappeared, so that the resource exists for future testing. The final donor sample will be sent to the U.S. laboratory for genetic analysis.

Since the formal public launch of LIID on November 1, 2007, a television, radio and public advertisement campaign has been under way in Argentina to urge families of the disappeared to give testimony if they have not before and to donate blood samples. This campaign, as well as press coverage about LIID and EAAF, has generated a large public response. EAAF established a 1-800 number to receive phone calls, and set up a call center in the team’s Buenos Aires office to handle the reception of inquiries. By January 31, 2008, the EAAF call center has received close to 2,000 phone calls, most of them from families of disappeared persons asking about giving a blood sample. Close to 1,750 samples have already been collected from the relatives of the disappeared.

The genetic profiles from these blood samples will be compared to profiles taken from samples from 600 skeletal
remains believed to belong to disappeared people, presently in EAAF custody. The arrangements are currently being finalized with a U.S. laboratory to conduct the comparison between genetic profiles from the bone samples and from blood samples of victims’ families. When arrangements are finalized, the Secretary of Human Rights will forward the final blood sample to the laboratory for testing.

The LIID-EAAF Advisory Board for this DNA analysis includes experts from the N.Y.C. Office of the Chief Medical Examiner’s Department of Biological Forensic, in charge of September 11th identifications, and renowned Spanish forensics expert, Dr. Carracedo Álvarez, Director of the Medical Legal Institute of Santiago, Spain, and former president of the International Society for Forensic Genetics.

Also, EAAF is constructing, in the city of Córdoba, Argentina, a state-of-the-art genetics laboratory. The laboratory is to be exclusively dedicated to DNA analysis related to human rights cases. The team hired UIDMO geneticists with experience in processing skeletal remains to staff and direct the laboratory. As part of LIID, geneticists involved in this laboratory will receive additional training in the U.S. and Argentina. In the future, EAAF’s laboratory may develop into a processing and training center for human rights work from other countries.

**Future LIID Activities in Argentina**

EAAF will continue the public campaign to bring forth more relatives of victims. The aim for the second year of LIID is to collect a further 2,000 blood samples from relatives of victims, for analysis mainly at EAAF’s new genetic laboratory. Outside of Argentina, the team will be coordinating with Argentine Embassies and Consulates to contact expatriate communities, which may include family members of the disappeared. Together, the diplomatic service and the team are scheduling sessions to collect blood samples from these individuals as part of LIID. In the United States, this effort focuses on the communities of New York, Los Angeles, and Miami. In Europe, the team is concentrating on Italy and Spain, and in Latin America, the expatriate populations of Mexico and Venezuela will be included in the collection of blood samples from relatives of the disappeared. EAAF is also coordinating with governments and human rights organizations for blood sample collection in countries that participated in Operation Condor, a covert agreement among military
governments in the Southern Cone for the exchange of information and political prisoners. Many foreign nationals were disappeared in Argentina, and EAAF would like to include these cases in LIID by requesting blood samples from the relatives of these disappeared for DNA analysis.

During the second year of LIID in Argentina, EAAF plans to process approximately half of the bone samples at the new EAAF genetic laboratory and the rest at a yet to be designated international laboratory. In total, EAAF hopes to test a further 500 bone samples next year. In the third year of LIID, EAAF estimates it will process 200 bone samples at the lab in Argentina. EAAF plans to continue with its exhumation program throughout the country, in order to recover more remains to submit for genetic testing, after they have been analyzed anthropologically. The exhumations in cemeteries in Buenos Aires and across the country will continue, and investigations for clandestine burial grounds containing the remains of the disappeared are also underway. Anthropological laboratory analysis, collection of ante-mortem data, as well as historical background investigation on the disappeared cases, will continue under LIID.

After the first year, EAAF will spend significant time evaluating genetic reports from the 600 bone samples sent for testing in the U.S. The team will need to confirm identifications by comparing identified remains with the team's anthropological, odontological and ante-mortem data for each case. After an association is confirmed, EAAF will need to produce multidisciplinary expert witness reports for the courts, including the genetic results, in order to modify the victim's status from “disappeared” to “deceased” in the judicial records. Expert witness reports can also be used in the prosecutions taking place in Argentina for human rights violations committed during the last military dictatorship. The final step of the identification process for LIID is returning the remains of a disappeared individual, so that the family can hold a reburial ceremony.

For further information on LIID-EAAF, please see the team’s upcoming publication on first year activities, due in the first half of 2008.

**ENDNOTES**

1. See Right to Truth Section of this Annual Report.
Argentine Forensic Anthropology Team
EQUIPO ARGENTINO DE ANTROPOLOGÍA FORENSE

2007 ANNUAL REPORT
Covering the period January to December 2006

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FRONT COVER: Members of the NGO Madres en Busca de Justicia from Ciudad Juárez during a ceremony in November 2005. Photo by Mercedes Doretti.

ATCG, the four bases that make up DNA strands, are utilized in this cover to symbolize the growing role of genetic testing towards identifications of disappeared persons.