

Argentine Gov't 'Pressuring' Labor Judges Who Protect Workers

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Argentine authorities are seeking the dismissal of two justices who ruled against layoffs, which are an integral part of IMF-backed austerity policies.

Authorities of Argentina's news agency, Telam, are demanding the dismissal of two labor judges who ruled against massive layoffs that would have affected 357 workers. The legal complaint was filed at the National Council of Magistrates, the body in charge of appointing, suspending, and deposing judges.

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Back in August, Enrique Arias and Miguel Rodriguez ratified a first-instance ruling that ordered Telam to reinstate five [workers](#), the first to legally contest their layoffs. Telam authorities successfully requested the recusation of the two judges earlier this year. However, their ruling was ratified by another court.

Now, government authorities are requesting their removal.

Mariano Suarez, Telam workers' lawyer and the lawyer for the Buenos Aires Press Union (Sipreba), warned that the legal action against Arias and Rodriguez

seeks to pressure them to avoid a favorable ruling for 150 workers whose cases are pending.

“There are five rulings that have been confirmed in all levels of the judiciary ... but there are still another 150 suits that only have a first-instance ruling. That means that these same judges will have to rule on them ... This is pressure on these future rulings,” Suarez told Pagina 12.

This is not the first time judge Arias faces threats by the government of Mauricio Macri. In February, the then ministry of labor requested impeachment proceedings against Arias after the judge ruled against the government for “interfering” in labor negotiations in the banking sector.

According to labor lawyers, there is a government offensive against all fronts that uphold labor rights. Lawyers of the most relevant Argentine unions, including the General Confederation of Labor (CGT), have created a forum to warn against this offensive and respond to it.

Government persecution has “the only goal of smearing and disciplining the actors who have the mission of guaranteeing union autonomy, neutralize their actions, and dismantle the nation’s labor justice,” the forum contended Friday.

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