

dec 2024



Milei. 1 year

#ArgentineFar-Right





Milei. Year One.

The first year of Argentina's ultra-libertarian government has come to an end. Despite official propaganda claims, the primary goal was not to 'shrink' the state but to align it with a national model where accumulating wealth is easier and exercising rights is more difficult.



1

REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

A state stronger than ever

Javier Milei assumed the presidency of Argentina with an ambitious program aimed at transforming legal relations between individuals and the state, as well as among citizens themselves. These changes are presented as 'deregulation' or 'adjustment,' justified by a perceived prior collapse. However, the new regulatory framework effectively [restricts the rights](#) of certain social sectors while expanding the power of others. The reforms have impacted a large part of the legal infrastructure and coincided with a contraction of state institutional capacity.

During this first year, the Executive Branch (Poder Ejecutivo Nacional - PEN) made a frenetic push to implement regulatory reforms, relying heavily on three tools that largely bypassed the National Congress: Decree 70/23, the Bases Law, and ministerial resolutions.

With [Decree 70/23](#), the Executive Branch granted itself extraordinary powers unprecedented in history. It declared a public emergency in economic, financial, fiscal, administrative, pension, tariff, health, and social matters until December 31, 2025. Unilaterally, it repealed or structurally modified more than eighty laws to implement a regime change, transforming the role of the state across dozens of areas that shape the daily lives of millions: labor relations, housing rentals, land ownership, private healthcare, and more.

The [Bases Law 27.742](#) reaffirmed the declaration of administrative, economic, financial, and energy emergencies, granting the Executive Branch delegated powers for one year. In doing so, the government secured congressional approval for significant economic reforms, such as the [Large Investment Incentive Regime \(RIGI\)](#), and, above all, legitimized its authority to use decrees as a fundamental tool of governance.

Since then, President Milei has reformed the [national intelligence system](#), the pension system, and the telecommunications and internet systems through decrees of necessity and urgency. He changed the rules in numerous areas of national life: in some cases, he removed the state from its functions, arguing that it hindered the smooth operation of economic relations; in others, he strengthened it by increasing its control and surveillance capacities.



President Milei faced few political or judicial limits to his transformation project. With the delegated powers, he gained extraordinary authority that, under normal conditions, the Executive Branch is prohibited from holding, and with this display of power, he re-legitimized his authority and political capacity. Using this mechanism, he intervened in institutions, dissolved agencies, defunded or eliminated trust funds for distributive policies such as the [fund for low-income neighborhoods](#), shut down public media, and changed public administration rules.

The debate over the use of these tools moved to Congress, which has the authority to oversee decrees of necessity and urgency (DNU) and delegated decrees. So far, it has only rejected the decree that sought to allocate a large sum of reserved funds to [the National Intelligence Secretariat \(SIDE\)](#), while Decree 70/23 was challenged by the Senate, but not by the Chamber of Deputies. In many other cases, even when it is clear that the decrees do not meet constitutional requirements or exceed the granted powers, the government has managed to enforce its decisions.

Another strategy used to bypass Congress was to modify regulatory decrees instead of changing the laws. This occurred with the decree that changed the rules for accessing [public interest information](#): without modifying the Access to Information Law, it significantly restricted its application. In the case of the intelligence law, the decree modified the information classification system to make it more restrictive for national security reasons. These types of decrees are within the Executive Branch's authority, which does not require parliamentary oversight, but the National Constitution stipulates that they cannot "alter the meaning of laws."

Finally, the government turned to ministerial resolutions, particularly in economic, health, and security matters. For example, it modified mechanisms for controlling the fees charged by [private health insurance companies](#), conditions for exercising [the right to protest](#) (the "anti-picketing protocol"), the powers of police officials to use force (the firearm use protocol), and the conditions for [patrolling social media](#) in search of "crimes." The content of these lower-level administrative norms falls under the jurisdiction of Congress, but they are labeled as mere protocols to advance, assuming powers that the ministries do not actually have.

The Judiciary did not impose significant limits on this use of legislative powers that do not in fact belong to the Executive Branch.

In the case of decrees of necessity and urgency, the most controversial was the massive Decree 70/23, which did face some rulings against it. Labor courts blocked the reform of the labor contract law in cases brought by labor unions and some trade unions. Civil courts limited some of the exorbitant increases caused by the deregulation of private healthcare in individual cases. The Federal Court of La Plata (capital of Buenos Aires Province) annulled the repeal of the land law in a lawsuit filed by veterans of the Malvinas War. Other reforms



that were judicially challenged, such as the dismantling of policies against gender-based violence, cuts to funds for socio-urban integration, food assistance for community kitchens, and the anti-picketing protocol, sparked discussions that could be encouraging.

Beyond these cases, the vast majority of lawsuits initiated to challenge the constitutionality of Decree 70/23 were dismissed on formal grounds, based on the argument that a general norm cannot be contested without a specific harm to a particular case. In other words, each person or group claiming to be harmed must litigate their case as they experience concrete violations of their rights due to the application of the decree. So far, the message from the Supreme Court is that it cannot discuss in the abstract whether the Executive Branch has changed the rules of the game outside of what the Constitution allows.

The economic crisis and the notion that the Argentine state was ineffective are the arguments used to restrict the rights of sectors with less accumulated wealth and to weaken social control and participation in public affairs. When rules are meant to balance unequal relationships, they are eliminated. When access to rights is to be obstructed, new rules are imposed. So far, Javier Milei has faced few obstacles to this political and legal strategy, which has allowed him to bypass Congress and the Judiciary: decreeing a structural reform has thus been validated as a form of governance.

summary of most relevant changes

Through decrees of necessity and urgency (DNU), regulatory and delegated decrees, and ministerial resolutions, the Executive Branch advanced in:

Modifying and repealing dozens of laws

Among them: the Labor Contract Law, the Rent Law, the Supply Law, the Industrial and Commercial Promotion Laws, the Land Law, the regulatory framework for private health insurance companies, and the Civil, Commercial, and Customs Codes of the Nation.

State reform and reorganization of public administration

- Modifications to the Ministry Law by DNU to shrink the government.
- Interventions in various institutions: National Institute of Family Agriculture, Federal Intelligence Agency, National Civil Aviation Administration, social security organizations, Fiscal Coal Mining Yards, Regulatory Agency for the Hemp and Medicinal Cannabis Industry, educ.ar, Télam, Radio Nacional, Public Content, Public Defender's Office, among others.



- Dissolution of agencies and funds: INADI (Decree 696/2024), trust funds, [Special Investigation Unit of CoNaDI](#), National Waterworks Sanitation Agency (Decree 1020/2024).
- Reform of the public employment system. National Public Administration. Personnel hiring. Decree 866/2024.
- Declaration and execution of energy, rail, and other emergencies. Public emergency in the railway sector. Provisions. Decree DNU 525/2024.
- Procedures to initiate privatizations: for example, Aerolíneas Argentinas. Executive Branch. Aerolíneas Argentinas S.A. Declared subject to privatization. Decree 873/2024
- Authorization to sell state properties ([including memorial sites](#)). State Property Administration Agency. Sale of national state assets. Decree 950/2024.
- Executive Branch. Amendments to Laws 18.398 and 19.349. Decree 724/2024.

Economic deregulation reforms

- Public Debt. Provisions. Decree DNU 56/2023.
- Reforms in foreign trade and promotion of modifications to the Customs Code.

Reforms to the system of protection for social and labor rights

- Family allowances. Mobility. Amendment of Law 27.160. Decree DNU 194/2024.
- Pension mobility. Law 24.241. Amendment. Decree DNU 274/2024.
- Social Solidarity and Productive Reactivation Law. Law 27.541 Extension. Decree 134/2024.
- Solidarity Redistribution Fund. Amendment of Laws 23.660, 26.682, and Decree 576/1993. Unification of contribution amounts. Decree DNU 600/2024.
- Social Security. Extraordinary pension bonus. Decree 783/2024.
- Veto. Bill registered as 27.757. Veto Decree 879/2024.
- Veto. Bill registered as 27.756. Decree 782/2024.
- Executive Branch. Provisions. Amendment of Law 24.241 and Decrees 331/2022 and 280/2024. Decree DNU 846/2024.
- Pensions. Amendment of Decree 432/1997. Decree 843/2024.
- Public Service. National jurisdiction navigable waterways. Provisions. Decree DNU 699/2024.



Reforms in telecommunications deregulation and ICT services

- Télam State Corporation. Transformation mandated. State Advertising Agency, Sole Proprietorship. Decree 548/2024. Interventions. State-owned companies. Provisions. Decree 117/2024.
- Argentina Digital. Provisions. Amendment of Law 27.078. Decree DNU 302/2024.

Reforms in security, intelligence, and defense

- Military zone. Declaration. Decree DNU 350/2024.
- National intelligence system. Provisions. Decree DNU 614/2024. National intelligence system, adjustment of organizational and functional structure. Decree 615/2024. National intelligence system. Allocation of funds. Decree DNU 656/2024.
- Financial Information Unit, Law 25.246. Amendment. Decree 891/2024.
- Executive Branch. [Recognition and protection of refugees](#). Amendment of Law 26.165. DNU 942/2024. Executive Branch. Law 26.165. Amendment. Decree 819/2024.
- Ministry of Security. Federal police and security forces. Adjustment of crimes in cyber environments. Resolution 428/2024.
- Right of Access to Public Information. Regulation of Law 27.275. Amendment of Decree 206/2017. Regulatory Decree 780/2024.

Reforms to the healthcare system

- Social security organizations. Amendments to Decrees 576/1993 and 1993/2011. Decree 171/2024.
- Repeal of Law 27.113, which declared the activity of public production laboratories to be of national and strategic interest and created the National Agency for Public Laboratories (ANLAP). Article 264 of DNU 70/2023.
- Executive Branch. Amendment of the regulation for Law 17.565. Decree 1024/2024.



2

CIVIC SPACE

Exercising democratic rights is more dangerous now

Organizing, participating, demanding, protesting in the streets, expressing opinions—these are all fundamental practices of democracy, just as important as voting, and they are protected in Argentina by our National Constitution and various laws. We refer to the civic space as the environment for exercising these rights, which can be more or less favorable. In our country, since December 2023, it has become [more difficult to exercise](#) these rights [without facing various risks](#). This creates [fear](#) and seeks to discourage society's participation in public affairs discussions.

Restrictions on public demonstrations

Immediately after taking office, the Milei government, through the Ministry of Security led by Patricia Bullrich, reclassified nearly all common forms of protest in Argentina as criminal acts. This was done without amending the Penal Code, relying instead on an administrative directive: Resolution 943/23. This resolution introduced a "Protocol for maintaining public order during roadblock protests," which imposed restrictions on the rights to assembly and free expression.

Under this directive, the government deems any public demonstration that obstructs vehicular traffic a flagrant crime, empowering security forces to suppress, disperse, and detain protesters without the need for court orders. The resolution also permits police to collect information on individuals and organizations involved in protests for the purpose of initiating legal action. Throughout 2024, this protocol was used to justify frequent violent and arbitrary actions by the police. Under these new guidelines, law enforcement's behavior during operations has been characterized by persistent harassment.



Repression and criminalization of protesters

Since December 2023, the policy of the Argentine national government has been to [repress and disperse public demonstrations](#). These episodes have been marked by the abusive use of force, arbitrary detentions, mistreatment and abuse of detained individuals, and their subsequent judicialization. The most violent repressions took place in front of the National Congress, especially when the so-called "[Bases Law](#)" was passed on June 12. In September, there were incidents of police violence and the indiscriminate use of tear gas against pensioners, children, and retirees. Even lawmakers and union representatives were subjected to tear gas.

As of September 2024, at least 723 people had been injured to varying degrees due to police repression, including 50 journalists.



The repression was accompanied by the arrest of protesters, almost always conducted arbitrarily by police forces during the dispersal of demonstrations. From December 2023 onward, at least 104 individuals were detained in police operations targeting public protests in Buenos Aires, Córdoba, and Rosario. Some arrests were made against individuals resisting police efforts to clear them from public spaces. However, most were detained at random, with reports of people uninvolved in the protests—simply passing through nearby areas—being taken into custody..

The criminalization of protesters on [June 12 was particularly severe](#). On that day, 33 people were arrested. Prosecutors accused them of serious crimes, including sedition and attempting a coup d'état, and they were transferred to federal prisons as if they were high-risk criminals. The charges relied solely on a series of public statements made by the national government during the crackdown. Through social media, the President, several officials, and their digital militias branded the protesters as "[terrorists](#)" and advanced the narrative that the protest aimed to stage a coup. The prosecutor pursued charges aligned with this narrative. It took the judiciary days—sometimes weeks—to verify that there was no evidence to substantiate the claims. The detainees were gradually released, with the final individual gaining freedom on September 8, after spending 85 days in custody for the sole act of protesting.



Persecution of social organizations

The Argentine government initiated a campaign against social movements that, in recent years, have played various roles in mediating between the State and the poorest sectors of the population, such as distributing food, managing social programs, and supporting cooperatives. These organizations also became important political stakeholders by organizing and voicing the demands of these sectors on the streets.

The persecution operates on two fronts. On one hand, administrative measures are used to restrict protests and impose fines on organizations that organize, promote, or participate in demonstrations. The Ministry of Security has introduced an unusual tactic: attempting to bill organizations for the costs of excessive police operations. In doing so, the State abdicates one of its core responsibilities—protecting protesters and ensuring their rights—while framing protests as irregular events or disruptions for which organizers should shoulder the financial burden.

On the other hand, legal cases have been initiated against social movements under the pretext of alleged coercion of individuals to participate in protests or the misappropriation of state resources. These cases, often based on anonymous complaints encouraged by the government, have led prosecutors to request—and judges to frequently approve—highly intrusive actions. These include raids on the offices of organizations and neighborhood soup kitchens, as well as the confiscation of cell phones and computers. Information extracted from these devices is promptly leaked to the press, which then engages in smear campaigns by publishing personal details of organizations, leaders, and activists, further stigmatizing them.

The Argentine government has also targeted and harassed trade unions. In the case of education workers and employees at the state airline, the government proposed designating their activities as "essential services" to restrict or eliminate their right to strike. Additionally, it declared Aerolíneas Argentinas "subject to privatization" as retaliation for a labor dispute involving workers' salary demands. Another form of protest, such as workplace blockades, was specifically addressed through a new protocol issued by the Ministry of Security (Resolution 901/2024). This protocol, implemented without any changes to the Penal Code, criminalizes the practice and authorizes security forces to intervene without a court order to dismantle the blockade, identify the participants, and file charges with the judiciary.



What we did in response to the attack on social protest

- In December 2023, we filed a collective amparo (legal remedy) against the “Protocol for Maintaining Public Order during Traffic Blockades.” For six months, the courts avoided responding, shifting responsibility from one court to another. In June, Federal Administrative Court 11 accepted the case, and in August, it requested the government to present the report required by the Amparo Law. In September, we responded to the arguments put forth by the government in defense of the protocol. In November, the judge invited all social, union, and other organizations to join the collective action.
- Together with other organizations, we raised awareness about the situation before the [United Nations and the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights \(IACHR\)](#). In January, three UN rapporteurs sent a letter to the government highlighting the serious issues with the Protocol. The IACHR made several reminders about the inter-American standards that establish that "the State must respect, protect, facilitate, and guarantee the right to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly." In July, the government was forced to explain its policy against protests in [a hearing before the IACHR](#), where it reiterated its view that protestors were "coup plotters."
- We filed two criminal complaints in federal courts to investigate the actions of security forces. During the crackdowns on January 31, and February 1 and 2, we supported the Buenos Aires Journalists' Union (SiPreBA) and the Argentine Association of Graphic Reporters in their legal action against the police violence directed at journalists and photojournalists. On June 12, we filed another complaint representing Gabriel Famulari and Juan Ignacio Spinetto (arbitrarily detained), Stella Maris Chevallier (a retiree gassed by the Coast Guard), and Mariano Dalaison (a photographer shot by the Gendarmerie).

Mass online surveillance

The Argentine government has made several decisions to increase surveillance capabilities while reducing oversight. It granted unconstitutional powers to security forces and intelligence services to monitor and intervene in the digital environment. The declared goal is to prevent or prosecute criminals, but given that social protest is regarded as a crime by the government, it is clear that these enhanced surveillance capabilities are also aimed at disciplining political dissent.

The Ministry of Security published a "cyber-patrol" protocol (Resolution 428/24) that grants broad powers to police forces to monitor open sources (websites, platforms, social networks). Under the pretext of preventing crimes, it allows the police to observe any type of activity in open sources, which in itself creates a chilling effect that limits freedom of



expression in the digital environment. Furthermore, this practice is authorized to prevent "any crime that can be identified in cyberspace," which presents a real risk that these monitoring activities of networks and platforms could be directed at gathering information and potentially criminalizing expressions of political dissent.

The "cyber-patrol" and the use of automated tools for crime prediction and profiling individuals are other concerning aspects that arise from Resolution 710/24 of the Ministry of Security, which created a "Unit for Applied Artificial Intelligence in Security." The vague nature of the tasks and powers of this unit only increases the concern and risk that it may be used for purposes that infringe on privacy and freedom of expression. In the same vein, a new Cybersecurity Agency was created within the Argentine Intelligence Service (SIDE), which has been authorized to intercept private communications—such as phone calls, emails, and chats—and to collect, acquire, and process "any relevant information for the National Intelligence System" stored in private databases or digital archives. At no point does it specify the criteria for determining what is considered relevant.

What we did to counter the mass online surveillance

- We filed a request for information to the National Minister of Security regarding the operation of the cyber-patrol and artificial intelligence units, alongside organizations such as Amnesty Argentina, the Argentine Observatory of Information Technology Law (ODIA), Democracy in Red, Access Now, Fundación Vía Libre, and the Latin American Institute for Security and Democracy (ILSED). The insufficient response we received made it clear that there are no clear definitions about which tools will be used, how, and with what controls.
- In the legal action against DNU 614/2024, which modified the intelligence system, we emphasized that the Federal Cybersecurity Agency created by this decree holds unconstitutional powers that could lead to illegal surveillance and intelligence practices. We therefore requested that the Judiciary declare the decree null and void.

Silencing the conversation through harassment

Since December 2023, the exercise of freedom of opinion and expression has become more difficult in Argentina.

Journalists have been targeted by constant verbal attacks from the President, with an intensity and frequency unseen in recent decades. Throughout the year, all professional media associations condemned these kinds of insults, which have only continued.



The hostility towards free speech is not limited to journalists: anyone with a social media account who comments on issues relevant to the government is potentially subjected to coordinated attacks on social platforms. In many cases, the violence extends beyond the digital realm, including threats, harassment at people's homes, and other forms of intimidation.

This practice was not new this year or in Argentina; rather, it is part of the global far-right activism playbook and is closely linked to the algorithmic workings of some social media platforms. However, its coordination with executive power agencies has allowed it to take root as the predominant mode of communication for the government. As a result, both presidential communication and its activists have turned social media into a space that is difficult to navigate.

Self-censorship due to fear of digital attacks has become common. This repressive environment for free expression impacts public debate and, consequently, participation and the ability to organize in order to challenge government measures.

In September, the government issued a decree that restricted the right to public information by imposing [limitations and obstacles](#) for those seeking details of government actions, such as precise data on how public communication is organized and financed.

Simultaneously, as part of its program to shrink certain areas of the state, the government shut down the news service of Télam, a key source for federal public interest information, and downgraded the administration of public media. At a time of heightened economic and geographical concentration of media ownership, this decision to weaken the public communication sector further erodes the public's ability to access diverse and pluralistic information.

What we did to counter the attacks on freedom of expression and the right to information

- We developed a [training program for activists](#) that includes a component related to communication, aimed at supporting mobilization and social organization in this restrictive environment.
- Together with a broad group of organizations, we [informed the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights \(IACHR\)](#) about the setbacks regarding the right to communication and freedom of expression.
- In a [hearing before the IACHR](#) on the right to protest, we included the police repression specifically targeting journalists.
- We called on the Executive Branch and the National Congress to nullify the regulatory decree of the access to information law.

This section by **Manuel Tufro**

Subsection on freedom of expression by **Vanina Escales and Ximena Tordini**.



3

RIGHTS

For every need, there is a market

The "withdrawal" of the State is a metaphor that does not apply to all actions taken by the government of Javier Milei during this past year. It has been proactive and present in making proposals for [deregulation](#), offering tax benefits to the wealthiest sectors—such as reducing the number of people who pay personal property taxes—providing economic advantages to companies in various fields like healthcare and [mining](#), and prioritizing a productivist approach focused on primary sector industries. Meanwhile, the spending cuts made during the first quarter of the year were, in the government's own terms, "the largest in the history of humanity," and they primarily impacted retirees, formal and informal workers, teachers, and public sector employees. The State has been present in repealing laws related to rentals, supply, and grocery shelves, as well as in easing import restrictions and reintroducing income tax for the middle class.

The first liberal libertarian government implemented a plan governed by DNU 70/23, the "Bases Law," and specific regulations to remove obstacles that hindered market logic. The justification was that the country was entangled in a web of regulations that impeded the private sector and fueled state bureaucracy. However, this idea of simplifying life by removing regulatory barriers had another concrete political goal: deregulation to strip away legal protections. The consequence of such deregulation is the lack of protection for large sectors of the population, who, when trying to claim their rights, no longer have a legal framework to do so.

The adjustment has many faces, but one of its most striking aspects is the proposed dismantling of a vision for an equal society. The spending cuts were not solely intended to achieve the stated goal of "fixing the macroeconomy." They were also accompanied by laws and deregulations that resulted in: 1) Improved conditions for wealth accumulation in certain sectors of the economy, and 2) a smaller state focused on safeguarding business interests.



This program of commodification and legal deregulation has significantly increased inequality, triggering a massive transfer of wealth from middle and impoverished sectors to the wealthiest, most concentrated sectors of the economy.

Currently, 52.9% of the population lives in poverty, according to INDEC, meaning 5.3 million people have fallen into poverty and 2.9 million into extreme poverty. The effects of this adjustment are visible and felt daily: reduced pension payouts, lower salaries for teachers, cuts to social programs, diminished access to medication, the cancellation of 14 million book purchases for primary and secondary students nationwide, reduced university funding, declining purchasing power for informal workers, and a worsening quality of life for those reliant on their labor.

The state's territorial withdrawal is evident in the closure of key service hubs, such as the Territorial Development Centers, Access to Justice Centers, and offices of the *Acercar Derechos* program. It's also reflected in the diminished quality of remaining services due to staff shortages, such as reduced support on the 144 domestic violence hotline or the ENIA program for adolescent pregnancy prevention. [Public works projects](#) for socio-urban integration in slums and settlements across the country have also come to a standstill.

Another consequence of the adjustment is the strain on public systems when families can no longer afford private alternatives like healthcare or education due to falling incomes and rising costs. This increased reliance on already overstretched public services further erodes their quality and accessibility.

The effects of deregulation and lack of protections are perhaps most starkly reflected in the worsening food crisis. According to UNICEF, one million children go to bed hungry, and 65% of families have reduced their food consumption. The government's income transfer policies, while still in place, are insufficient to address the recession's impact on the labor market or compensate for the lack of state support for social organizations engaged in community work. The [stigmatization of these organizations](#), resistance to providing food aid to community kitchens, and an apparent intention to dismantle social networks have all contributed to growing hunger. In many cases, community spaces are the only guarantee of a complete meal for those in need.

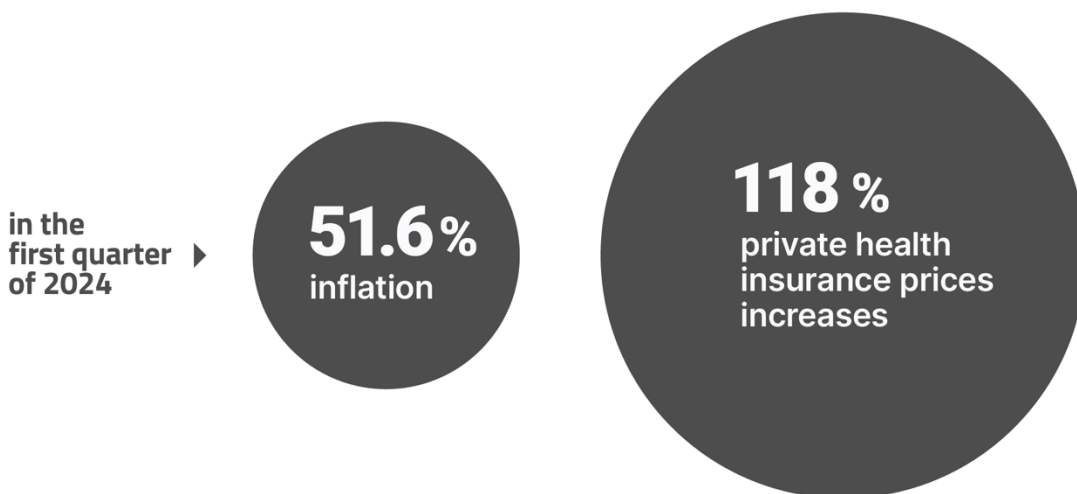
When presenting the 2025 national budget, President Javier Milei made an institutional statement: "The fundamental task of a national state is to ensure macroeconomic stability, foreign relations, and the rule of law." In other words, the government's priorities are the economy and security to protect private property. Everything else—healthcare, housing, environmental protection, education, equality—is either ignored or framed as a financial burden.



Health

The first year of La Libertad Avanza's government was marked by deregulation, service cuts, and a decline in healthcare coverage. In short, the state's regulatory capacity and protections in health, access, and quality of healthcare services were reduced. The consequences are increased inequality and precariousness.

Deregulation and rising costs in the private healthcare system. The deregulation of private health insurance prices led to premium increases of around 118% in the first quarter of 2024, far outpacing inflation. This triggered a shift toward the public healthcare system, further overwhelming it, and caused coverage suspensions for many people, particularly those with disabilities and chronic or severe illnesses.



Cuts to Medication Access. Coverage for medications through PAMI (the state healthcare program for retirees and pensioners) was restricted, leaving thousands of retirees unprotected. The elimination of the National Agency of Public Laboratories (ANLAP) marked the end of a national healthcare policy and financial support for the production of essential medicines. Medication prices rose sharply, impacting treatment continuity. Sales of prescription medications dropped by 16% compared to the previous year.

Impact on the Most Vulnerable. The suspension of the Directorate for Direct Assistance in Special Situations (DADSE) left patients with severe illnesses, including cancer, without treatment through the public healthcare system. This led to interrupted treatments, sometimes with fatal consequences. Adding to this crisis, access to treatments became increasingly judicialized, consuming both human and financial resources.

Sexual and Reproductive Health. The national government halted the distribution of essential supplies to provinces, compromising access to voluntary and legal termination of pregnancy. Procurement processes for critical medications like misoprostol and mifepristone



have been stalled since the beginning of this administration. Provinces, which received 150,000 treatments the previous year, have received none in 2024. The lack of contraceptive supplies further undermines the right to family planning. This leaves provincial governments solely responsible for acquiring and distributing supplies, without additional resources or a transition plan. As a result, the health and lives of girls, adolescents, and individuals capable of pregnancy have been put at risk.

Food

The Argentine government's approach to [food access](#) can be summarized in three main actions. First, regarding production, it withdrew support for Family, Peasant, and Indigenous Agriculture (AFCI), which produces food for the domestic market. For example, [this sector](#) supplies most of the yerba mate and vegetables consumed daily in the country. Second, it eliminated several regulations designed to protect consumers. Finally, it largely abandoned food assistance programs for community spaces, which play a crucial role in ensuring that the most vulnerable can eat every day.

Family, Peasant, and Indigenous Agriculture. The government dismantled at least twenty policies supporting Family, Peasant, and Indigenous Agriculture. These included longstanding programs like Pro Huerta, which, since 1990, provided supplies and training for family and community gardens. Additionally, 900 workers were dismissed from the National Institute of Family, Peasant, and Indigenous Agriculture (INAFCI).

Consumer Protection. The government eliminated mechanisms designed to ensure basic consumer protections and diversify supply, such as the Supply Law, Gondola Law, and the Price Observatory. Although inflation began to slow in recent months, food prices continued to rise faster than the income benchmarks set by the government. According to a [report](#) by CELS, the Rosa Luxemburg Foundation, and IGEO-UBA's Regional and Territorial Studies Program, by July 2024, a minimum wage could purchase 118 fewer portions of stew than it could seven months earlier. The cancellation of programs promoting local markets and fairs further undermined local production networks and access to affordable food.

Support for Popular Consumption. While some direct transfers, such as the Universal Child Allowance (AUH) and *Tarjeta Alimentar*, were reinforced, the support has proven insufficient to offset the loss of real income for many families caused by the economic recession. Cuts to community kitchens and food centers have further strained access to food for the most vulnerable sectors of society.



Care Policies

Policies supporting the sustainability of life were drastically reduced. Of the 49 care-related policies identified by CELS through *La Cocina de los Cuidados*, only seven remain in place, while 24 have been dismantled and 18 are at risk. The government significantly cut investments in care infrastructure—such as the construction of facilities for early childhood care and elder care—and in assistance programs. As a result, many families and communities that relied on these services have been left without support.

the chainsaw of care



Gender impact. With the dismantling of services provided by the Ministry of Women, Genders, and Diversity, and the [disregard for gender-based](#) violence as a social issue, coverage for programs like *Acompañar* fell by 98%, and its budget was slashed by 82% compared to the first half of the previous year. The capacity of the 144 national helpline for gender violence was also reduced, weakening its ability to respond. In the proposed 2025 national budget, no allocations have been made for these programs.

Women and LGBTIQ+ individuals have taken on an increased burden of unpaid care work within their families, further limiting their access to formal employment and support networks. As a result, 59% report having [even less personal time](#) to care for children, elderly relatives, or people with disabilities who require support.

Neglect of childhood and early development. Programs such as the *National Early Childhood Plan* and *Plan Mil Días* have been defunded or frozen, disrupting the delivery of essential food and resources. Families report increased difficulties accessing childcare and early education centers, which has a direct negative impact on children’s nutrition and development.

Older adults and people with disabilities. State support for access to medications and care for older adults has been significantly reduced. The *National Agency for Disability* (ANDIS) closed several regional offices, weakening its ability to provide effective support to people with disabilities. Budget cuts have further increased the costs of accessing therapies and care professionals, exacerbating the burden on families and individuals.



Housing Rentals

Decree 70/23 repealed the Rental Law, dismantling the limited regulations established in the Civil and Commercial Code without offering an alternative policy to address the housing shortage. The government has not built a single home or transferred funds to provinces to do so. As a result, the rental market has been left almost entirely deregulated, resembling what could be described as an anarcho-capitalist experiment: rental contracts can now be signed for any duration, in any currency, and with updates determined by any criteria.

This change has worsened conditions for renting families: contracts are shorter in duration, and rent increases occur more frequently. In the Greater Buenos Aires Metropolitan Area (AMBA), 62% of renting households report incomes below the poverty line, and nearly 40% spend over half of their income on rent, further deepening their economic precariousness.

What we did to counteract the decline in quality of life

- We filed an injunction on behalf of residents in [underprivileged neighborhoods](#), demanding the resumption of halted infrastructure projects, community facility developments, and housing improvements that were interrupted in December. Federal court in Pehuajó ordered the national government to restart works funded by the FISU and ensure budget allocations.
- We initiated legal actions in response to measures that undermine quality of life. We [filed for the unconstitutionality of DNU 70/23](#), which is currently awaiting resolution in the Supreme Court. In February, we filed an [injunction](#) over the lack of food in community kitchens. A May investigative report revealed tons of stored food not being delivered. The judiciary proceeded with the collective action, and in July, a precautionary measure ordered the government to distribute food. The government appealed. By late November, the judiciary ruled that food must be provided to the community kitchens requesting it.
- We filed seven injunctions over skyrocketing [private health insurance](#) fees and initiated three cases regarding the suspension or interruption of treatments and medication. All but one received favorable judicial rulings. We also launched a collective injunction in Buenos Aires City to prevent dengue spread. This led to the establishment of a dialogue table with authorities, followed by a government plan for vaccination and mosquito net installations in hospitals and health centers.
- Additionally, we filed actions regarding the situation of the *Laura Bonaparte National Network Hospital* and to halt the auction of *Mental Health Center No. 1*, located on federal land.

This section by Vanina Escales, Luna Miguens, Macarena Sabin Paz and Lucía de la Vega.



4

EXTRACTIVISM

In indigenous territories, the unjust energy transition is already underway

The climate crisis and international discussions about shifting energy paradigms are driving an unjust transition. Framed almost entirely as a business opportunity for certain corporations, this transition deepens inequalities and intensifies socio-environmental conflicts in countries relegated to the role of raw material exporters.

Argentina positions itself in this global debate as a coveted source of resources while simultaneously grappling with a severe economic crisis. The prevailing consensus is to exploit natural wealth as quickly as possible. Navigating this with a libertarian government creates a perfect storm: every state decision is aimed at favoring corporate interests, disregarding the environmental and human rights safeguards that should be applied. These safeguards are viewed merely as obstacles to be dismantled, even as the climate crisis increasingly impacts the lives of millions of people worldwide.

This is what happened during Javier Milei's first year: the Argentine national government set the stage for extractive industries to create significant impacts in the territories where they operate, ensuring that they can do so without accountability and without adhering to existing regulations. It also sent a clear message to those most affected by these measures—primarily Indigenous communities living in these areas: in cases of conflict, the full force of the State's security apparatus will work in favor of the companies.

Since the 2023 electoral campaign, government officials have been advancing a racist narrative against Indigenous peoples, steeped in a contrived nationalism that is both outdated and selectively aggressive—strong against the weak, yet weak against the strong. This rhetoric denies Argentina's multicultural and plurinational identity, promoting a return to an assimilationist model: Indigenous peoples are expected to forfeit their unique identities and rights to "blend" into an alleged Argentine identity. On November 11, 2024, Argentina stood alone in the United Nations General Assembly, voting against a resolution aimed at strengthening the international legal framework for recognizing Indigenous peoples' human rights.



The Argentine government perpetuates a narrative that inverts reality: the historical victims of genocide and its lingering effects are portrayed as impostors, lazy, or foreigners whose rights are mischaracterized as "privileges" that must be dismantled. Meanwhile, the wealthiest segments of society—business owners, landowners, and politically connected individuals with economic interests—are framed as victims in need of State protection against so-called "usurping" Indigenous communities.

At the intersection of this racism and market extremism, the energy transition and extractivism emerge as mechanisms that not only sustain historical territorial dispossessions but also create new ones.

Mechanisms of exception to guarantee investments

During the first months of 2024, Argentina's national Congress was the stage for the debate on the *Ley Bases*. The initial drafts—shaped with significant input from corporate legal teams—proposed radical modifications to environmental protection laws, particularly regarding glaciers and forests, protected areas coveted by extractive industries. Thanks to mobilization by political actors and civil society, the most extreme changes were blocked. However, the approved law still granted extraordinary powers to the Executive Branch, allowing it to eliminate and/or defund programs and policies aimed at protecting native forests.

The most significant aspect of the *Ley Bases* is the creation of the **Régimen de Incentivo a las Grandes Inversiones (RIGI)**. This regime offers exceptional tax, customs, and currency exchange benefits to companies investing over \$200 million, for a period of thirty years. It establishes a specific legal framework that prioritizes these corporate benefits above any current or future national, provincial, or municipal legislation and policies. For example, in cases of water scarcity, companies will have priority access to water resources over domestic supply needs. Furthermore, they are shielded from policies aimed at protecting human rights or the environment. The rights of communities and environmental safeguards can be ignored without fear of legal or political consequences. The RIGI thus creates a virtually untouchable regime, insulated from any climatic, political, or social contingencies.

Discussions in the National Senate did not address these issues; in fact, there were no consultations or invitations extended to environmental, territorial, campesino, or Indigenous organizations. Some legislators raised concerns about the impact on provincial powers over natural resources, but the debate had no significant outcomes, and most provinces have already committed to the RIGI.

The sectors poised to benefit include forestry, infrastructure, mining, energy, technology, tourism, steel, oil, and gas industries. Many of these industries are at the heart of the most intense territorial conflicts in various provinces. The terms of the RIGI completely overlook these conflicts and fail to establish any protections for those directly affected.



A “**security arm**” has also been established to enforce the regime of exception and suppress rights if conflicts escalate. This is the “*Productive Security Unit*”, created by the Ministry of National Security (Resolution 499/2024). Initially involving federal security forces, a subsequent resolution (893/2024) invites provinces to join a “*Unified Productive Security Command*.” These resolutions reveal the government’s stance on potential conflicts involving businesses in key economic sectors that it claims “*require special care during production or transport of goods*.” The concept of “*productive security*” is a euphemism to conceal the government’s decision to block any protests or conflicts that might obstruct extractive mining, hydrocarbon exploitation, tourism, or agribusiness activities. Thus, security forces—a public resource—are no longer aimed at ensuring safety for all. Instead, in line with other measures against social protest, their role is anticipated to *prevent, suppress, or dissolve conflicts* to avoid disruptions to these economic activities.

Reformulation of indigenous policy to ensure business interests

Argentina's indigenous policy, in addition to being influenced by the racist and assimilationist ideology that permeates it, has been reformulated and no longer seeks to be an instrument for repairing and expanding the rights of indigenous peoples. It has aligned with the goal of disregarding any indigenous territorial claims and facilitating the expansion of extractive industries.

Until December 2023, the National Institute of Indigenous Affairs (INAI) was an actor that, within the contradictory structure of the national state, made half-hearted attempts to promote indigenous rights—essentially, to enforce the laws and the National Constitution. Today, it has become the spearhead for rolling back the few advances made in recent years regarding territorial recognition, and for protecting private interests over ancestral lands claimed by indigenous communities.

This shift initially manifested in symbolic gestures, such as meeting with members of the racist landowner group “Consenso Patagonia” before engaging with any indigenous community. However, the INAI later began to act in ways that weakened the position of indigenous communities in various territorial conflicts, particularly in Patagonia. It did so by reversing administrative decisions that supported communities in their claims (such as the case of the Buenuleo community in Río Negro) and ordering the reopening of land survey files that had already been concluded in Mendoza and Neuquén, to accommodate private claims. Furthermore, it adopted a policy of not sending representatives to hearings for cases that had been judicialized. The INAI was transformed into an office that receives and processes demands from businesspeople and landowners seeking the lands claimed by indigenous peoples.

Another agency that experienced significant setbacks was the National Parks Administration (APN). In addition to dismantling the dialogue table with the Winkul community in Mascardi (Río Negro) and reviving criminal actions against its members, there have been setbacks in



longstanding public policies, such as the participation of Indigenous communities in the co-management of certain parks. In Neuquén, APN authorities informed Indigenous communities of their intention to terminate co-management arrangements, arguing that these represent a "privilege" for Indigenous people that undermines "equality before the law." The National Parks Administration also played a central role in one of the most absurd episodes of the government's escalating racism: its communications director issued an internal order forbidding staff from extending greetings to Indigenous communities during their annual renewal festivals (Wiñoy Xipantv, celebrated by the Mapuche, and Inti Raymi, celebrated by Andean peoples).

The National Secretariat for Human Rights (SDH) also fell short of its commitments. The agency had assumed an international obligation before the Inter-American Court of Human Rights to implement the 2020 ruling prompted by the Association of Indigenous Communities of Salta, Lhaka Honhat. To this end, the government had created an innovative Enforcement Unit tasked with carrying out the Court's ruling. The Argentine State had established the groundwork for national and provincial authorities in Salta to delineate and demarcate Indigenous communal territory and ensure access to water as initial objectives. However, the SDH dismantled the Enforcement Unit, leaving the Foreign Ministry to assume a purely formal role of defending the State before the Inter-American Court. There is no information on who will fulfill the ruling, nor how or when it will be accomplished.

Green light to provincial power

In recent years, provincial governments and judiciaries have played a central role in resisting any progress in the recognition of the constitutional rights of indigenous peoples, especially when these rights conflict with economic interests. The national government, through the INAI, had previously played a compensatory role, acting as a body that communities could turn to when their rights were ignored at the provincial level. The shift in the role of the INAI and the sanctioning of the RIGI have given a green light to provincial actors (both executive and judicial) to encroach on indigenous territories and accelerate the establishment of extractive companies.

Through a resolution (53/2024), the INAI suspended the registration of any new indigenous communities and invited provinces to establish common criteria to standardize the registration, adjustment, and transfer of legal status for communities already registered at the national and/or provincial level. This indicates that the national government intends to completely delegate what had previously been a shared responsibility—the registration of communities—to provincial governments. This is a power of great importance, as it is a requirement for communities to file any claims through institutional channels. The right to legal status for indigenous communities is recognized in the National Constitution (Art. 75, clause 17) and is also a condition for accessing certain public policies. This decision was



made without any prior consultation with indigenous communities and without provisions for provincial agencies to ensure this right.

In the provinces with the highest levels of conflict surrounding access to territory, several strategies were observed in 2023 and 2024 aimed at undermining the processes of prior consultation and consent of indigenous peoples for the installation of extractive projects on their lands. This progress occurred through the approval of provincial consultation procedures, developed without the participation of indigenous peoples and failing to meet the minimum international standards for their rights, particularly regarding respect for their timeframes, the dissemination of information, and the representativeness of their leaders or assembly bodies.

The province of Jujuy was a pioneer in this maneuver, with the approval of Decree 7751/2023, which regulates the environmental impact assessment procedures for mining activities in the province. This decree allows companies to obtain mining permits after meeting with one or more communities unilaterally identified as affected based solely on the area of influence defined by the company, in direct violation of the mandates of ILO Convention 169. This enabled lithium mining companies to divide some communities in the Salinas Grandes basin, which have been resisting the extractive push for over a decade. Through assemblies of questionable legality, and by disregarding the protocol approved by the communities themselves in 2015 (the Kachi Yupi), at least three mining companies gained consent from communities in this area of Jujuy over the past year.

The province of Río Negro followed this example in 2024 with the creation and fast-track approval of a prior consultation protocol that also lacked indigenous participation in its development. Following Jujuy's lead, the protocol limits consultation participation to communities with legal status (contradicting international standards) and establishes that the criteria for determining which affected communities should be consulted will be decided on a project-by-project basis. The authority responsible for implementing the protocol is the province's Energy Secretariat. The province of Chubut did the same with a bill to regulate the prior, free, and informed consultation of indigenous peoples, which was sent to the legislature on November 25, 2024. Developed without indigenous participation, the bill invokes international standards on the matter but contradicts them in its provisions.

In addition to restricting and distorting the right to consultation, the governments of Jujuy and Río Negro used these procedures as part of a broader strategy to undermine political organizations that represent indigenous communities (such as the Salinas Grandes Table in Jujuy or the Coordinadora of the Mapuche Parliament of Río Negro). They promoted direct contact between companies or officials and communities, bypassing the mediation of political organizations. This ensures far more asymmetric negotiation processes, where tactics are employed to divide communities and secure consent for extractive activities, often in exchange for very minimal handouts. The widespread poverty and lack of alternative



development opportunities in these communities make these negotiations even more unequal.

The other dimension of territorial conflict is judicial. In 2024, cases that had been stalled for years were reactivated, judicial decisions that had favored various communities in their territorial claims were overturned, eviction orders were issued and executed in several provinces against indigenous and peasant communities, and members of two Mapuche communities, Winkul Mapu and Quemquemtrew, both in Río Negro, were convicted of usurpation. With the political signals emanating from the national government, pre-existing trends in the judiciary and public ministries (both provincial and federal) were consolidated. These trends have led them to carry out their functions within a framework of structural racism and disregard for the National Constitution and multiple international treaties and conventions that Argentina has ratified.

What we did in response to the RIGI and its impacts on indigenous communities

- Along with other organizations, we informed the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) about the erosion of the rights of indigenous peoples and nations. The IACHR [urged](#) "the State to fulfill its international obligations regarding the rights of indigenous peoples by adopting administrative decisions and any internal provisions on the recognition of legal status and land titling of indigenous peoples."
- On two occasions, over one hundred organizations called on senators to reject the RIGI. We also presented critiques of the Base Law in the Senate, where we requested the participation of other environmental, territorial, social, indigenous, and peasant organizations.

This section by **Manuel Tufro, Luna Miguens, María José Venancio and Diego Morales.**



5

TERRORISM AND INTELLIGENCE

Counterterrorism shapes the state

Counterterrorism is the foundation of Argentina's security policies and, at the same time, one of the main lenses through which the geopolitical landscape is viewed.

President Milei, Security Minister Patricia Bullrich, and other officials enthusiastically promote the expansion of the "terrorism" category to encompass phenomena as diverse as illegal networks, [indigenous community](#) demands, and [public demonstrations](#). By stretching the limits of this category, they allow it to be applied to a variety of situations, thereby trivializing its meaning.

"Terrorist threats" are constantly present in government communication and in allied media, creating a sense of permanent urgency that has serious consequences for government decisions and the over-criminalization of certain groups. The goal is to legitimize the use of the term "terrorist" to discipline and limit social conflict, as well as to justify the need for legal and institutional reforms that expand the state's capacity to exercise violence and surveillance without oversight.

At the same time, this overreaction prevents discussions on whether there are actual terrorist threats to Argentina and what should be done to avoid scenarios like the attacks on the Israeli Embassy and AMIA, investigations of which were [muddied](#) by Argentine and foreign intelligence services.

International alignment

The government has chosen to make terrorism a central axis of its foreign policy. In multilateral forums such as the United Nations General Assembly and the Human Rights Council, Argentina has abandoned its historical stance of supporting Palestinian claims. Instead, it has aligned uncritically with the United States and Israel in multiple votes, viewing them as symbols of the "Western civilization" it claims to represent.

Through the dichotomy of civilization versus terrorism, the government positions Argentina in a moral crusade that it argues directly impacts national interests and sovereignty. As



President Milei stated during a ceremony commemorating the AMIA bombing: "*We must be firm and uncompromising with terrorism. There is only good and evil. Terrorism hates freedom and worships death; we love life and freedom.*"

The rhetoric of terrorism also serves as a pretext to challenge the international system itself. The government argues that the structures created after World War II ensure "impunity for terrorists and dictators." Between May and November, it publicly rejected several decisions by the International Criminal Court and its prosecutor regarding the Gaza Strip conflict, claiming these rulings undermine Israel's right to self-defense—marking a departure from Argentina's traditional adherence to the court's decisions.

This framework also now shapes Argentina's diplomatic relations. While President Milei labeled Colombian President Gustavo Petro as a "terrorist murderer," then-Foreign Minister Diana Mondino supported Ecuadorian President Daniel Noboa's declaration of a state of emergency in response to what she described as an "attempted coup by socialist narco-terrorist groups."

Given the prominence of security in the Argentine government's international agenda, the global threat of terrorism serves as a pretext for advancing regional strategies that promote harsher criminal penalties and the militarization of internal security. These initiatives are being pushed in various inter-American forums, including Mercosur and the Conference of Defense Ministers of the Americas.

The counterterrorism narrative

The multiple applications of counterterrorism have become increasingly evident in recent years through the anti-Mapuche narrative, inspired by the Chilean Carabineros model. This rhetoric was adopted by candidates from La Libertad Avanza and PRO during the electoral campaign. Once in office, they framed [Mapuche communities](#) as a latent threat, justifying political decisions that benefit corporate interests at the expense of the [long-standing, unresolved demands](#) of indigenous communities for access to their ancestral lands.

Since December 2023, new narrative lines have emerged. One focuses on the alleged presence of cells, networks, or financiers of Islamic terrorist organizations in Argentina. The media has frequently highlighted large-scale police operations and announced the arrest of suspects purportedly involved in such cells. However, all these cases have ultimately fallen apart due to a lack of evidence, although the media spectacle had already been staged. Another way this topic is kept on the agenda is through announcements of supposed progress in investigations of the 1990s terrorist attacks. These claims often rely on dubious intelligence information—typically already known and rarely leading to new judicial evidence or advances in the investigation.

On June 12, amid violent repression and dozens of arbitrary detentions, the President's Office tweeted that those protesting against the *Ley Bases* were "terrorist groups attacking



Congress." Even more troubling was that this narrative was adopted by the Public Prosecutor's Office to justify charges of extremely [serious crimes](#). The 33 detained individuals were later released, revealing a complete lack of evidence to support the accusations. In October, UN Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Peaceful Assembly and Association, Gina Romero, presented the report "[Protecting the Rights to Freedom of Peaceful Assembly and Association from Stigmatization](#)" before the United Nations General Assembly, expressing concern over Argentina's situation. According to Romero, using terms like "terrorism" to criminalize protesters "has severe repercussions on their lives, well-being, family life, and economic situations."

The violence in Rosario has been labeled as "narcoterrorism." Early in the year, measures taken against members of criminal gangs—both kingpins and low-level operatives—led to incidents of torture and harsher detention conditions. These actions provoked an unprecedented and indiscriminate violent backlash from the gangs. Following these events, the government and much of the media normalized the term "narcoterrorism," a concept originating in Colombia in the 1980s. The Ministry of Security used this narrative to advocate for the militarization of internal security. Although the homicide rate in Rosario later decreased, causing the city to fade from media focus, the harsh measures enacted and proposed during that time continue to unfold.

The government also employs the anti-terrorism framework to draw tenuous parallels between the present situation and the actions of armed groups from the 1970s. Justifying the [illegal repression](#) of that era serves to legitimize the notion that a similarly hardline, unchecked State is needed today.

Counterterrorism narratives reshaping the state

Stigmatizing narratives have tangible, harmful effects on those targeted, but the counterterrorism lens extends further. It underpins decisions and proposals for institutional reforms and legal changes. While the threats invoked—whether vague, remote, or fabricated—may lack substance, the State shaped by the counterterrorism framework is very real and deeply concerning.

The Argentine government chose to [reform its intelligence system](#) via emergency decrees (Nos. 614 and 615), bypassing parliamentary debate. These reforms increased funding for intelligence services and expanded their capabilities, particularly in digital surveillance. Secrecy has been reinstated as the default rather than an exception requiring justification, posing severe risks to individual privacy and potentially chilling freedom of expression.

The preamble to Decree 614/24 states: "Our country was the target of terrorist attacks in 1992 and 1994 at the Embassy of the State of Israel and the Argentine Israelite Mutual Association (AMIA), respectively, events that have yet to be fully resolved." These two attacks, alongside their disastrously mishandled investigations, are cited to justify a reform that effectively reinstates the unchecked operational conditions of intelligence services from



that era. Simultaneously, the government acknowledges that its decision to align Argentina with the U.S. and Israel may increase the risk of international terrorist attacks. This perceived threat is used as an additional justification for the urgency and necessity of the reform.

The antiterrorist perspective is driving proposed reforms in the security system aimed at expanding police powers, weakening protections for citizens against state violence, and promoting the involvement of the Armed Forces in domestic security tasks for which they are neither trained nor necessary, given the ample police resources available. The situation in Rosario was used as a pretext to introduce a bill grandiosely titled [“Anti-Mafia,”](#) which in reality focuses solely on one dimension of illegal networks: their territorialization in impoverished neighborhoods. The bill proposes the creation of “special investigation zones” where judicial and police officials would have extraordinary (and unconstitutional) powers to raid homes, detain individuals, and conduct searches. The lack of clarity regarding the definition of “criminal organization” creates a significant degree of discretion. Instead of being the result of thorough investigation—something whose existence must be demonstrated—“criminal organization” becomes an a priori argument to establish exceptional zones where constitutional protections do not apply.

Despite the fact that the military played no role in reducing homicides in Rosario, the government insisted on presenting a bill to reform the **Internal Security Law**, aiming to authorize the intervention of the Armed Forces in situations labeled as “terrorism.” Ending the historic separation between internal security and national defense—which, among other things, helped ensure that the military ceased to be politically dominant actors as they were throughout the 20th century and continue to be in other Latin American countries—has long been a goal of the political faction led by Patricia Bullrich. During her previous tenure, Bullrich attempted to implement this shift but faced resistance from the Ministry of Defense. To prevent such opposition this time, she ensured that a subordinate loyal to her vision was appointed to lead the Defense Ministry. The proposed reform has little to do with creating more effective counterterrorism policies. Instead, it seeks to blur the lines between security and defense, a move explicitly acknowledged by the government’s argument that the separation “is not in the Constitution.” Moreover, the reform lacks logic as an antiterrorism strategy. The plan would involve deploying the Armed Forces for patrolling and population control tasks in response to incidents that might trigger a criminal investigation with the “terrorism” aggravating factor (Article 41 quinquies of the **Penal Code**). Under this framework, the role of the military in the event of a terrorist attack would be to perform basic police duties, for which thousands of trained police officers and intermediate forces like the Gendarmerie or Coast Guard are already prepared and equipped.

As this report concludes, the **anti-mafia law** was pending Senate deliberation after being approved by the Chamber of Deputies in early October. The **reform to the Internal**



Security Law was also awaiting treatment, having faced criticism from retired military leaders during prior hearings.

The government also used the narrative of "terrorism"—both present and historical—to justify a broader agenda of tightening policies toward refugees. This shift replaces Argentina's previously rights-based approach, which had garnered international recognition, with one that prioritizes "**national security**", portraying the protection of asylum seekers as a potential source of threats." Two cases, highly publicized by the government as connected to "terrorism," served as pretexts for advancing these securitized reforms. During a visit to Paraguay, Patricia Bullrich announced the revocation of refugee status for four relatives of Carmen Villalba, one of the founders of Paraguay's armed group **Ejército del Pueblo Paraguayo (EPP)**. While EPP leaders are imprisoned in Paraguay, Villalba's relatives had sought and been granted asylum in Argentina after Paraguayan armed forces launched a campaign against them—one that involved the **killing of two 11-year-old girls of Argentine nationality and the forced disappearance of a 15-year-old girl**. Shortly afterward, police arrested Leonardo Bertulazzi, a former member of the **Italian Red Brigades**, an armed organization active in the 1970s. Bertulazzi had been granted refugee status in 2004, but the **National Refugee Commission (Conare)** revoked it, enabling his detention and deportation to Italy.

While presenting these cases in the media, the government moved forward with reforms. In September, it modified the composition of the National Refugee Commission (Conare) by decree, adding a representative from the Ministry of Security. Neither the Geneva Convention nor Argentine law permits the Ministry of Security to have a representative on this body or to suggest or define actions related to asylum requests. In October, another decree (DNU 942/2024) amended the Law 26.165 on Recognition and Protection of Refugees. This reform creates a more exclusionary and restrictive mechanism for obtaining refugee status, based on reasons of persecution linked to organized crime and terrorist threats, which poses a risk to people in need of international protection.

The considerations of DNU 942/2024 state that "the number of asylum requests in Argentina from people coming from Middle Eastern countries has shown a significant increase in recent years," and that terrorism is a global threat. Once again, the attacks on the Israeli Embassy and AMIA are cited as justification. What is not mentioned is that there is no record of individuals identified as part of international terrorist organizations who have been granted refugee status in Argentina.



What we did to resist the impact of counterterrorism narratives on the reconfiguration of the state

- Together with other civil society organizations, we worked to ensure that Congress [rejected and repealed](#) Decree 656/2024, which allocated 100 billion pesos in reserved funds to the SIDE.
- We filed a legal action before the federal administrative court, requesting the declaration of [unconstitutionality](#) of Decree 614/2024, which reforms the SIDE. This decree authorizes mass surveillance by the state, jeopardizes the right to privacy, and infringes on freedom of expression. It also violates the separation of powers.
- We brought attention to the risks posed by the package of criminal and security reforms promoted by the Ministry of Security, especially the anti-mafia law and the [reform of the Internal Security Law](#), by providing information to lawmakers and raising public awareness during the debate.

This section by **Manuel Tufro** and **Juliana Miranda**.



6

MEMORY

The year the past became present

For many years, the 1970s, the last military dictatorship, and the revision of its crimes did not occupy the central place in Argentine politics that they did in 2024. The notion of leaving the past behind and turning the page had been largely absent. On the contrary, the right-wing coalition that came to power with La Libertad Avanza includes sectors with deep ties to the armed forces. Moreover, factions within the government reject the policies of memory, truth, and justice: they oppose human rights in general, viewing them as political capital from the Kirchnerist era that must be countered, and seek to erode the agreements upheld over the past decades.

The mere presence of Victoria Villarruel – an activist linked to the military world associated with the dictatorship – on the 2023 presidential ticket foreshadowed a revisionist agenda aimed at rehabilitating the armed forces. Once in power, the attacks came not only from her sector, but were also supported and executed by the president, the minister of security, the minister of defense, the minister of justice, and the secretary of human rights. Other members of the political space directly announced the creation of an armed wing, a spectacle reminiscent of fascist overtones.

All of them combined their [disdain for the process of memory, truth, and justice](#) and its advocates with an attack on these policies. First came discursive actions, symbols, and endorsements aimed at rebuilding the official memory of the dictatorship and challenging the social consensus rejecting state terrorism. Then came the defunding, the closure of key initiatives, layoffs, institutional dismantling, and even the privatization of memory sites. It is impossible to separate the symbolic-discursive level of these attacks from their material consequences. Each level paves the way for and facilitates the other, making this a program of [memory cancellation](#) that the government deepens and perceives as politically productive.



The revisionist agenda is not monolithic, but it has become more consistent and intense over time. There are [differences](#) between the position of Victoria Villarruel, that of Minister of Security Patricia Bullrich, and what President Javier Milei expresses, to name just three of the key figures. For some, the commitment to this agenda is both an identity issue and a strategic one, while for others, it is a tactical line, contingent on political competition and power accumulation both externally and within their own political structure.

Another novelty of this administration is civil militarism, with politicians pushing the military to participate in the government in areas such as defense, security, and intelligence. In this framework, each authority's stance on ultra-sensitive issues for the military establishment—such as the [sovereignty](#) of the Malvinas Islands, the assessment of the military's actions during the last dictatorship, references to victims of armed struggle, and the situation of those convicted of crimes against humanity—reflects the level of affinity with the military world and provides clues as to how they understand the mission of the armed forces moving forward.

The agenda

In its speeches, acts, advertisements, social media posts, and policies, the government seeks to build a new dominant narrative about the dictatorship. Despite internal differences, we can identify common ideas within the libertarian and nationalist-conservative coalition that governs:

- The justification of the illegal repression of the 1970s as necessary in the face of the supposed threat of local terrorism, seen as a manifestation of international Marxism.
- The identification of internal enemies as "terrorists," establishing a continuity between those groups and those who resist the government [today](#).
- The claim that there is symbolic, legal, and political impunity for the victims of the armed struggle.
- The stigmatization of human rights leaders as partisan and corrupt.
- The labeling of memory policies as partial, doctrinaire, or corrupt.
- The dismissal of the justice process as a vengeful, biased campaign that violates the rights of the accused or convicted military personnel and tarnishes the reputation of the armed forces.
- The defense of the economic program of the dictatorship.

These ideas provide the general framework for an agenda aimed at erasing memory policies. Although the government invokes market logic and "zero deficit" as the supreme rationalities for the remodeling of the state, there are areas in which another [political-ideological](#) face is superimposed. This occurs in the increase of the budget for security, defense, and intelligence, or in the fight for reserved funds for the SIDE. When the ideological chainsaw is applied to memory policies, the official communication emphasizes



that this is not simply a generic self-mutilation of the state but a political decision aimed at rectifying anomalies.

Memory as a judicial matter

Another overarching idea within the government is that investigative powers belong exclusively to the judiciary, meaning the executive branch must relinquish these functions. This approach denies the state's obligation to involve all three branches of government in effective measures that contribute to the truth, the search for the disappeared, and the achievement of justice.

This framework serves to shut down programs focused on military and police archives, as well as a specialized unit dedicated to locating children whose identities were changed during the dictatorship. It also justifies blocking public access to archives from that era and disregarding the government's responsibility for advancing trials related to crimes against humanity.

This approach assumes a notion of investigation that is purely criminal, ignoring other principles such as the public interest and the right to truth, as well as alternative forms of memory production like documentary work, historical research, and journalism. It also seeks to overlook the fact that even criminal processes rely on public policies that provide support and have made the justice process possible. These include ensuring that lawsuits are filed in jurisdictions where they may be lacking, securing evidence produced outside judicial settings, offering psychological and legal support to victims, archiving work, and the audiovisual recording of trials, among others. All of these policies are at risk.

To provide an example from another era: without the contribution of testimonies, documentation, and the general conceptualization carried out by a non-judicial body like the National Commission on the Disappearance of Persons (CONADEP), the foundation of the accusation in the 1985 Trial of the Juntas would have been significantly weakened. The restriction of investigative powers that the government seeks to propose is neither historically nor institutionally accurate.

Civil access to archives containing documents produced by the armed forces and security services has been considered an undue intrusion. As a result, the Ministry of Defense [ended](#) the Document Survey and Analysis Team of the Armed Forces archives, created in 2010 (Resolution 308). This team had reconstructed key information through archival work and contributed to human rights trials with documentation that helped uncover the structures and chains of command of the repressive system, as well as identify military personnel involved. The Minister of Defense labeled the team as "a group of persecution and McCarthyism" and questioned its legality, calling it "para-judicial." Another Defense official referred to them as "a group of avengers." The archivists were dismissed, and some officials threatened to initiate criminal proceedings against them. All of this occurred despite the explicit support the team received from those involved in the justice process.



In line with the justification of the separation of powers, the Ministries of Defense and Security refused to respond to requests for information from the National Commission for the Right to Identity (CoNaDI), an agency under the National Secretariat for Human Rights (SDH) dedicated to locating children of the disappeared who were stolen during the dictatorship. They labeled the requests as "political whims from a militant organization" that threatened the privacy of public officials such as police officers and military personnel, while ignoring the principle of maximum disclosure of files on human rights violations.

Shortly thereafter, the government issued a decree closing CoNaDI's Special Investigation Unit, which specialized in the collection and analysis of documentation related to potential cases of identity theft. The government reinforced the arguments it had already used, claiming that the Unit's work overlapped with that of the Judiciary, when, in fact, as the judges themselves stated, it made the process more effective and efficient. Meanwhile, the government confirmed investigative powers for other non-judicial agencies, such as the Office of the Anticorruption Prosecutor.

At the SIDE (Federal Intelligence Agency), the Joint Committee on Intelligence Documentation Related to Human Rights Violations, established by Resolution 467/2021, was shut down. The general declassification and public access to intelligence documents from that era has been a longstanding demand from human rights organizations since the return to democracy, but it has never been achieved. Even the declassification of documents from the CIA and FBI in the United States was secured, but not from SIDE or the Argentine Federal Police's intelligence structures. The Committee represented a significant step forward in organizing and potentially beginning the declassification process, which has now been indefinitely suspended.

The government argues that the files should only be accessible through specific judicial requests, answered by the forces or agents themselves. This approach attempts to give the appearance of maintaining accessibility but limits it to an exchange between the Judiciary and the forces' archives, now without civilian experts involved. This position closes off access to society as a whole, to historical research, and to the discovery of the truth. It reverses the principle of public access to state documentation, placing everything under secrecy unless requested by the judiciary.

From memory to the market

In 2024, several events were held to honor the dictatorship, the [most notable](#) of which took place at the former concentration camp, now the Espacio Memoria y Derechos Humanos Ex Esma. Minister of Defense Luis Petri quickly endorsed the event, stating, "These are Argentinians who sang the Argentine Navy march on Navy Day, surrounding a flagpole with the Argentine flag." The minister was referring to the group that not only sang in the Plaza de Armas but also described the memorial site as "an occupation" and posed for photos next to one of the planes used in the death flights. This was not the first time the minister had failed



to distance himself from such acts; in February, the 30th Mountain Regiment of the Army in Apóstoles, Misiones, held a tribute to former military officer Horacio Losito, who had been convicted three times for crimes against humanity.

During the dictatorship, at least 814 locations served as places of detention, torture, and forced disappearance. After the return to democracy, many of these sites were transformed into memory spaces and museums. The conversion of concentration camps into memorial sites is a global trend, and Argentina stands out as a reference due to the richness and diversity of its memory projects and the legal framework that supports them.

As part of the attacks on these policies, the government cut funding for memory sites and dismissed a large proportion of the workers at the eight sites managed by the Ministry of Human Rights (SDH). Planned infrastructure projects were suspended, including archaeological excavations and conservation efforts at locations that also serve as judicial evidence. As the dismantling of work at these sites and the Law on Memory Sites progresses, the government put up for sale land marked by the SDH as clandestine detention centers. These include La Perla Chica in Córdoba, La Huerta in Tandil, Puerta 8 in Campo de Mayo (Buenos Aires Province), and the 9th Regiment in Corrientes, a memory site directly managed by the Ministry.

Memory as a limit

As with any intense debate about the past, what's really at stake are the critical issues of the present. Defending memory means continuously questioning the past and demanding public access to the spaces and documents that might provide answers. It's about rejecting any idea that memory is something to be closed off, as if it were a checklist that, once completed, can be left behind.

This defense of memory goes beyond protecting symbols, public policies, and jobs. It is a way of safeguarding the very possibility of dissent, organization, and difference. It's how we set boundaries and send a clear message to those who seek to impose a regime through force and terror—that they will be remembered and held accountable. What's at stake is not just how we will recount and remember the events of the last dictatorship, but what we, as a society, will deem acceptable or unacceptable in the future.



What we did in response to attacks on memory, truth and justice

- We continued our litigation in crimes against humanity trials. [Sentences](#) are progressing, and the oral trials in the [ESMA case](#) are advancing, where the crucial role of the naval intelligence service has been proven. In the [Acindar](#) and [Molinos Río de la Plata](#) cases, we are investigating the involvement of senior executives from these companies. We are preparing for four new oral trials set to begin in 2025.
- In collaboration with other organizations, we organized a [hearing](#) before the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) regarding the state of memory, truth, and justice policies. The government presented its agenda and accused us of seeking vengeance, confirming the very issue we went to report. This was one of several actions aimed at drawing regional and international attention, alongside hearings before the [United Nations](#).
- We participated in the marches for La Noche de los Lápices in La Plata and Buenos Aires, engaging with young people to ask "Never Again" and "[More than Never](#)" mean to them. We shared a [summary](#) of the CONADEP report designed for teenagers and proposed a participatory [intervention](#).
- We combined traditional [archival research](#) with open-source investigations to identify the links between old and new right-wing groups, [map](#) the national and [international sectors](#) supporting the political coalition now in power, and uncover their [agendas](#).

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