

Bern, 13 December 2017

**Case: CFP 16156/2016 (IANIGLA, SECRETARIA MEDIO AMBIENTE DE LA NACION Y OTROS S/ INCUMPLIMIENTO DEB. FUN. PUB Y OTROS)**

To whom it may concern,

PAGES (Past Global Changes), a research project of Future Earth, initially established under the umbrella of the International Geosphere Biosphere Programme (IGBP), is concerned with the prosecution of prominent glaciologist Dr. Ricardo Villalba, of the respected scientific institution IANIGLA in Argentina.

Dr. Villalba, who served as a PAGES Scientific Steering Committee member from 2004-2009, has been charged with “abuse of authority” for allegedly favoring a mining company when designing Argentina’s National Glacier Inventory. We point out that the World Glacier Monitoring Service (WGMS), the authoritative international scientific body under the auspices of ICSU, IUGG, UNEP, UNESCO and WMO, which issues recommendations and standards for glacier monitoring, has confirmed in its letter of 17 August 2017 that Argentina’s National Glacier Inventory has been made according to a scientifically sound methodology and international recommendations. His case was brought to us through ‘Criminal and Federal Correctional Judgment 7 - Secretary N° 14 CFP 16156/2016 document, dated 27 November 2017’ and we are aware that the Swiss Academies of Arts and Sciences, through its delegate of human rights, amongst others, also formally expressed concerns.

If scientists engaged in risk assessments, and, thus, the protection of citizens, infrastructure and nature, are liable for prosecution, as in the case of Dr. Villalba, they would be reluctant to accept such duties, leaving judgments to non-experts who may benefit from any kind of political immunity. Such decisions can therefore be seen as an attempt to silence scientists who are involved with risk assessments. We are sure that this is not the intention of the Argentinian authorities. Instead we assume that the Argentinian authorities are seeking the best for their citizens and their environments, committing themselves to international practices of justice.

As Scientific Steering Committee members of an international organization representing more than 5000 researchers, we are observing this case very closely and with great concern, and ask for fair legal reconsideration for our paleoscience colleague Dr. Ricardo Villalba and the respected scientific organization IANIGLA.

With best wishes



Prof. Willy Tinner, University of  
Bern, Switzerland, Co-Chair PAGES



Prof. Sherilyn Fritz, University of  
Nebraska - Lincoln, USA, Co-Chair  
PAGES



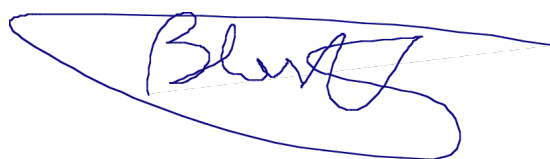
Prof. Darrell Kaufman, Northern  
Arizona University, Flagstaff, USA,  
PAGES Excom



Ass. Prof. Katrin Meissner,  
University of New South Wales,  
Sydney, Australia. PAGES SSC



Dr. Marie-France Loutre  
Executive Director, PAGES IPO



Dr. Blas L. Valero-Garcés, Spanish  
National Research Council, Zaragoza,  
Spain, PAGES SSC

Prof. Liping Zhou, Peking University,  
Beijing, China, PAGES Excom

Prof. Edward Brook, Oregon State University  
Corvallis, USA, PAGES SSC

Dr. Pascale Braconnot, IPSL/LSCE, unité mixte CEA-CNRS-UVSQ  
Gif-Sur-Yvette, France, PAGES Excom

Copy to:

- Ministro, Ministerio de Ciencia, Tecnología e Innovación Productiva de la Republica Argentina
- Presidente, Consejo Nacional de Investigaciones Científicas y Técnicas (CONICET)
- Head of International Relations Division, State Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation, Switzerland
- Science and Technology Counsellor, Embassy of Switzerland in Argentina