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Dr Alejandro Ceccatto (President) presidencia@conicet.gov.ar/aceccatto@conicet.gov.ar
Consejo Nacional de Investigaciones Científicas y Técnicas (CONICET)
Godoy Cruz 2290 (C1425FQB)
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Dear Dr Alejandro Ceccatto,

I am writing to you in my capacity as the President of the Tree-Ring Society. I strongly support Dr Ricardo Villalba who has had unjust allegations made against his scientific integrity. Dr Villalba is a World class scientist that has published over 220 scientific papers in top international journals.

The Tree-ring Society is a non-profit international scientific organisation established in 1937 to promote tree-ring research and education. We were so impressed with his outstanding contribution to palaeoclimatic research that he was awarded the prestigious Harold C Fritts Award for Lifetime Achievement in Dendrochronology at the Third International AmeriDendro meeting in Mendoza in 2016.

He is a pioneering scientist at the forefront of his field that has published on a wide range of topics from dendrochronology, dendroclimatology, dendromorphology, dendrohydrology, dendroglaciology and water resource management. His classic paper on dendroglaciology at Glaciar Frias from 1990 is still widely cited today. He was instrumental in establishing the **National Glacier Inventory** which catalogues glaciers based upon **widely-accepted international standards**. The recent accusations for the crime of "abuse of authority" concerning the contamination by the Veladero mining company appear to focus upon the definition of what constitutes a glacier and conveniently deflect attention away from the actual cause of the toxic spills. Dr Villalba appropriately used the definitions for a glacier in the National Glacier Inventory; these definitions are state-of-the-art and are accepted and applied worldwide. There is therefore no blame to be attached to him.

I strongly support Dr Villalba as an internationally-respected scientist that has made an outstanding contribution to the development of tree-ring science in the Southern Hemisphere. He is an upstanding scientist with integrity that is far beyond reproach.

Yours sincerely,

Dr Iain Robertson CChem FRSC