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the legal profession®

Mr. President

Juan Carlos Peredo

Ilustre Colegio de Abogados de Santa Cruz

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Santa Cruz, Estado Plurinacional de Bolivia

5 April 2019

Dear President,

I am writing to you as Chair of the Bar Issues Commission (“BIC”) of the International Bar Association (“IBA”) to express our concern regarding certain matters related with the independence of the legal profession in Bolivia.

The IBA, established in 1947, is the world’s leading organisation of international legal practitioners, bar associations and law societies. It has a membership of more than 80,000 individual lawyers and more than 190 bar associations and law societies spanning over 160 countries. The BIC supports the interests of the IBA’s member organisations, which includes Tanganyika Law Society. This involves arranging events to discuss issues that affect the legal profession globally, working groups that develop resources and guidelines for bar associations and a Policy Committee advising IBA Council on key IBA resolutions and statements.

The BIC is committed to promoting, protecting and enforcing the role of an independent legal profession in the interest of its bar association members worldwide. The BIC has been informed about certain unprecedented actions executed by the prosecutors of the Public Ministry endangering the legal profession, and in particular, raids of firms, seizing of notebooks and files with attorney work product and client attorney work product considered as privileged information. The BIC is gravely concerned with the

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International Bar Association is incorporated as a Not-for-Profit Corporation under the laws of the State of New York in the United States of America and is registered with the Department of State of the State of New York with registration number 071114000655 - and the liability of its members is limited. Its registered address in New York is c/o Capitol Services Inc, 1218 Central Avenue, Suite 100, Albany, New York 12205.

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situation, which is not common and is connected with activities as a lawyer. In this respect, we would like to respectfully remind you of international legal obligations that recognise the fundamental role that lawyers play in upholding the rule of law and human rights and that provide safeguards for the exercise of the legal profession. In particular, Principles 16, 17 of the Basic Principles on the Role of Lawyers, which state:

- 16. Governments shall ensure that lawyers (a) are able to perform all of their professional functions without intimidation, hindrance, harassment or improper interference; (b) are able to travel and to consult with their clients freely both within their own country and abroad; and (c) shall not suffer, or be threatened with, prosecution or administrative, economic or other sanctions for any action taken in accordance with recognized professional duties, standards and ethics.
- 17. Where the security of lawyers is threatened as a result of discharging their functions, they shall be adequately safeguarded by the authorities.

On behalf of the BIC we extend our support to your organisation's efforts to uphold the respect for the legal profession, the promotion and respect for independence of the legal profession. I respectfully ask that steps are taken to ensure that protection of the legal profession in accordance with local and international law. Please feel free to distribute this letter among your members and other parties whom you may find fit.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "P. Köves", written in a cursive style.

Dr. Péter Köves
Chair
Bar Issues Commission

London

São Paulo

Seoul

The Hague

Washington DC

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