

# DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

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Authority: EO 13526

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Date: Oct 19, 2018

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(b)(3):10 USC 424

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THIS IS IR NO.

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1. ARGENTINA
2. TOP GUERRILLA LEADERS SLAIN (U)
3. N/A
4. 76 JUL 20
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15. 1. (U) ON 20 JULY THE ARGENTINE ARMY CONFIRMED THAT MARIO ROBERTO SANTUCHO, THE TOP LEADER OF THE PEOPLE'S REVOLUTIONARY ARMY (ERP) WAS ONE OF SEVERAL GUERRILLAS KILLED BY GOVERNMENT SECURITY FORCES ON 19 JULY. (SEE AMERICAN EMBASSY 4728). TWO CLASHES TOOK PLACE THAT DAY, ONE IN VILLA MARTELLI, A NORTH-WESTERN SUBURB OF BUENOS AIRES, IN WHICH SANTUCHO AND ANOTHER ERP LEADER JORGE BENITO URTEAGA WERE KILLED, AND THE OTHER IN A SOUTHERN SUBURB OF BUENOS AIRES IN WHICH TWO OTHER IMPORTANT ERP LEADERS WERE REPORTED GUNNED DOWN BY SECURITY FORCES. HECTOR GORRIARAN MERLO, THE NUMBER TWO ERP LEADER, AND DOMINGO MENA WERE REPORTEDLY SHOT DEAD BY SECURITY FORCES IN THE SECOND RAID. THEIR HIDEOUT WAS DISCOVERED BASED ON INFORMATION FOUND IN THE VILLA MARTELLI CLASH. BUENOS AIRES NEWSPAPERS ARE FULL OF REPORTS ON THE TWO INCIDENTS. ACCORDING TO THE PRESS, GOVERNMENT FORCES OBTAINED INFORMATION REGARDING THE WHEREABOUTS OF SANTUCHO'S HEADQUARTERS, ON 10 JULY WHEN THEY UNCOVERED A TERRORIST PRINTING PLANT IN SAN ANDRES (SEE IR 6 804 0203 76).  
2. ~~(C//NNINTEL/NOFORN)~~

HE PERSONALLY SAW THE BODIES OF SANTUCHO AND ANOTHER ERP LEADER ALONG WITH THE BODY OF THE ARMY CAPTAIN KILLED IN THE VILLA MARTELLI OPERATION WHEN HE VISITED THE MORTUARYMGF THE ARMY HOSPITAL IN CAWO DE MAYO ON 20 JUN. &=3.8COMMENT: (C//WN

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~~CTEL/NOFORN~~WG THE LOSS OF SANTUCHO IS A SEVERE BLOW TO THE ERP. THE ERP HAS SUFFERED SERIOUS LOSSES OVER THE PAST THREE MONTHS AND THIS MAY TURN OUT TO BE THE DECISIVE BLOW FOR THAT ORGANIZATION. MEANWHILE, THE MONTONEROS HAVE BEEN RELATIVELY UNTOUCHED AND CAN BE EXPECTED TO EXECUTE SOME TYPE OF TERRORIST OPERATION TO DEMONSTRATE THEIR CAPABILITY. THIS MSG HAS BEEN COORDINATED WITH EMBASSY.

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