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Chile: Justice gets closer

By upholding the ruling made by Judge Guzman and the decision of the Santiago Courts of Appeal on the Pinochet case, the Chilean Supreme Court has today made a decisive step towards justice, said Amnesty International.

In a voting 3-2, the judges of the Chilean higher court ruled that Augusto Pinochet should stand trial on charges of human rights abuses -- nine charges of kidnapping and one of murder -- committed in the context of the "Operation Condor."

"During the 1970s and 80s, many governments in Latin-American joined efforts to commit the most terrible human rights violations. The latest decisions taken by the Chilean judicial system in the fight against impunity must be an example for others to follow. Until other countries take concrete action against human rights violations, impunity in Latin-America will continue to prevail."

Background information

Augusto Pinochet will be the first former head of state to be brought to justice on charges of human rights violations committed in the context of the "Condor Operation" -- a well elaborated strategy agreed between the military governments ruling in Chile, Argentina, Paraguay, Uruguay, Brazil and Bolivia, during the 1970's and 80's, with the aim of combining forces to persecute, arrest and torture political opponents, many of whom continue to be "disappeared".

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