

Italian Court sentences former Peruvian dictator to life imprisonment for Operation Condor



Former Peruvian dictator Francisco Morales Bermudez

Rome, February 15 (RHC)-- The Italian Supreme Court (SC) has confirmed the life sentence of former Peruvian dictator Francisco Morales Bermudez, accused of the disappearance of Italians in the Operation Condor plan, the repressive system devised by several Latin American dictatorships in the 70s and 80s of the 20th century.

As requested by the Prosecutor's Office, the Supreme Court rejected the appeal filed after the first and second degree sentences to Morales Bermudez, who in October turned 100 years old and who, like almost all the accused, was tried without appearing before the Roman Court.

On the other hand, the sentence against the former chief of the Peruvian Army, General Germán Ruiz Figueroa, was annulled because his death was confirmed in 2019, informed sources close to the trial. This is the latest episode in the Italian trial of what is known as Operation Condor.

Italy began investigating two decades ago the murder and disappearance of Italian-Latin Americans in the Condor Plan and in 2007 requested the arrest of a total of 146 military members of the de facto government systems that were once in force in Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Peru, Paraguay and Uruguay.

Among them was Francisco Morales Bermudez, who presided over Peru's military dictatorship between 1975 and 1980, in the so-called "second phase" of the Revolutionary Government of the Armed Forces, established with the coup d'état of 1968.

The passage of time and the death of many of the accused, as well as the lack of permission to leave Argentina, significantly reduced the list of defendants, although in July the Supreme Court confirmed life sentences for fourteen of them, eleven Uruguayans and three Chileans.

All those convicted were sentenced without having appeared in Italy, except for the Uruguayan repressor Jorge Néstor Troccoli, the only one who lived in Italy after escaping justice in his country and who is serving a life sentence in the prison of Salerno.

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