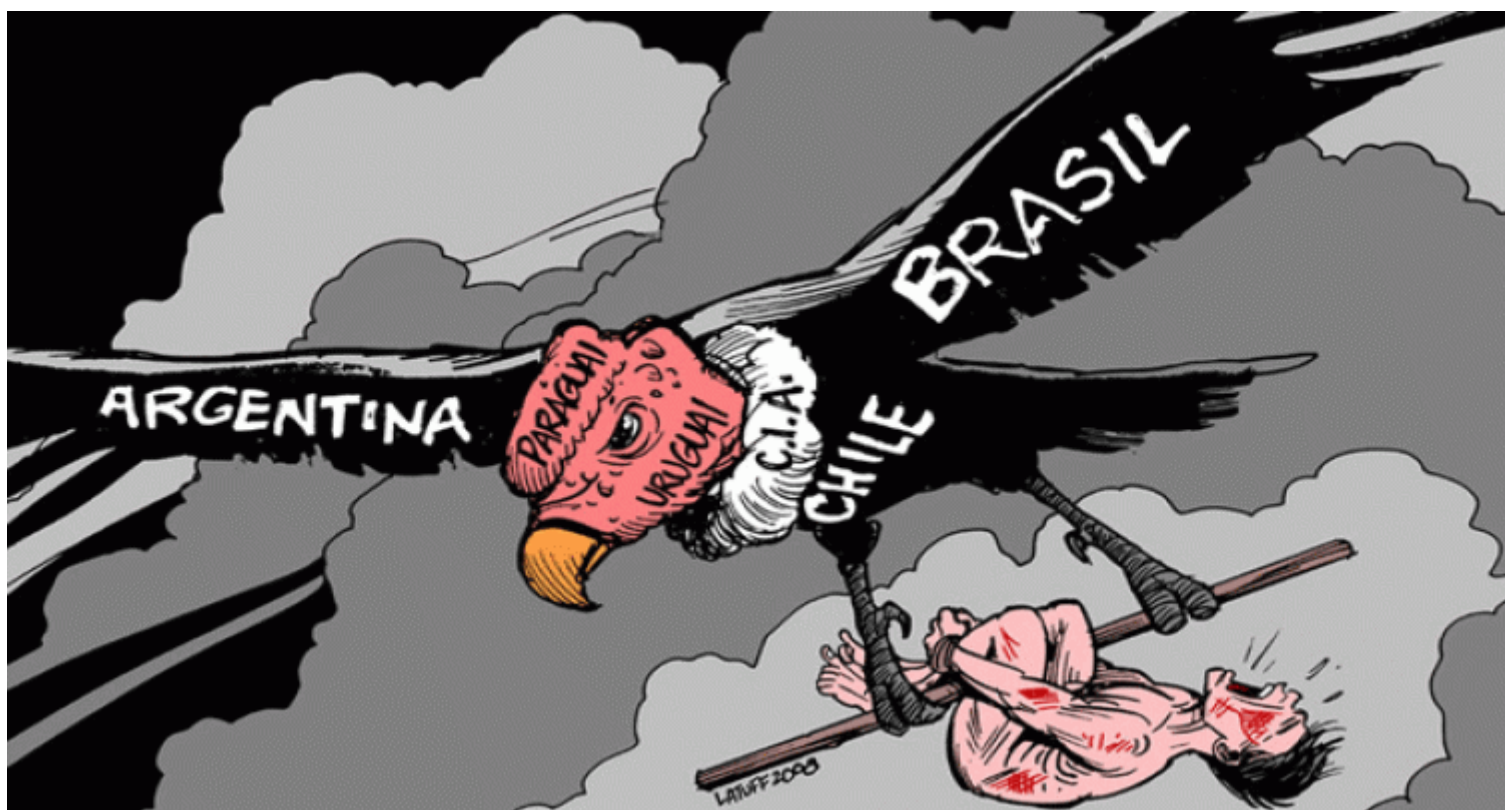


Italy sentences Latin American soldiers to prison terms for disappearing Italians during Operation Condor



Rome, July 9 (RHC)-- An Italian court in Rome has sentenced 24 military personnel from Bolivia, Chile, Uruguay, and Peru to life imprisonment Monday for disappearing Italians during Operation Condor, during which left-wing activists were hunted down by military dictatorships in South America.

The present ruling changed the January 2017 judgment which sentenced only eight people to life in prison and 19 others were acquitted. Among those sentenced is former Uruguayan military officer Jorge Nestor Troccol, the only person present during the whole process as he lives in Italy after fleeing from justice in his country in 2007. He was acquitted in the previous judgment.

Among the sentenced are former Bolivian dictator Luis Garcia Meza, who died in April 2018; his interior minister, Luis Arce Gomez; the former Peruvian president Francisco Morales Bermudez; his prime minister Pedro Richter Prada, who died in July 2017; former Peruvian military officer German Ruiz; and

former Uruguayan Foreign Minister Juan Carlos Blanco.

All of them have been convicted of voluntary homicide and ordered to pay the costs of the trial. The process began 20 years ago in Italy when relatives of the disappeared filed a complaint in 1999, a year after the Chilean dictator Augusto Pinochet was arrested.

Operation Condor was set up in 1975 in Santiago de Chile by the fascist military dictatorships in South America's southern cone. Key member countries of Operation Condor were Argentina, Chile, Uruguay, Paraguay, Brazil, and Bolivia, with Peru and Ecuador occasionally participating. The joint operations aimed to track down left-wing activist across South America -- in many cases imprisoning them, torturing and killing them.

An estimated 60,000 people were murdered by the Latin American states in the clandestine operation, 30,000 in Argentina alone. Another 30,000 were disappeared and 400,000 imprisoned during Operation Condor.

<https://www.radiohc.cu/en/noticias/internacionales/195574-italy-sentences-latin-american-soldiers-to-prison-terms-for-disappearing-italians-during-operation-condor>



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