

# *An old debt with Peruvian society*

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**Photo: The Conversation**

By María Josefina Arce

Last March, the process began to determine whether former Peruvian dictator Alberto Fujimori should be tried for forced sterilizations carried out during his term in office, which lasted from 1990 to 2000,

It is now under the new government that the ruling has arrived, which once again puts the case on hold but due to technical issues that prevent it from moving forward for the time being.

Judge Rafael Martínez determined that Fujimori cannot be tried for now for the cases of tens of thousands of women who underwent these surgeries, since despite the fact that this crime is public knowledge, this case was not included in the extradition request to Chile, which materialized in 2007.

The magistrate clarified that he could only be tried if authorized by the Chilean Supreme Court, by virtue of the extradition agreement signed by both countries.

Justice Minister Aníbal Torres has expressed that work is being carried out intensely in several aspects, which has allowed for the identification of new cases involving Fujimori. In fact, an extension of the extradition was recently requested in order to try him for six other crimes, including kidnapping and homicide.

The case of the sterilizations has gone through numerous obstacles, given the attempts of judicial authorities of previous governments to avoid bringing Fujimori to trial.

The first accusations before the Public Prosecutor's Office were filed in 2008, four years later the case was reopened, however, in 2014 the definitive closure of the case was notified, after exonerating, as expected, the former dictator of responsibility.

It has been years of struggle for the victims of this sinister plan, carried out through deceit, coercion and bribery.

Six other collaborators of the former ruler, among them three former health ministers, have also been accused of participating in that government plan, supposedly voluntary and which was also applied to some 22,000 men.

It is estimated that some 270,000 Peruvian women, many of them peasants and indigenous women who did not speak Spanish, were subjected to this practice during Fujimori's last four years in power.

The former president is currently serving a 25-year prison sentence for human rights abuses in the Barrios Altos massacres in 1991 and La Cantuta in 1992. He is also being tried for the Pativilca massacre, also in 1992.

Forced sterilizations in Peru are still a pending issue. The prosecution of Fujimori for his responsibility in this violation of women's reproductive rights is a debt owed to the victims, many of whom were deprived of the right and joy of having children.

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