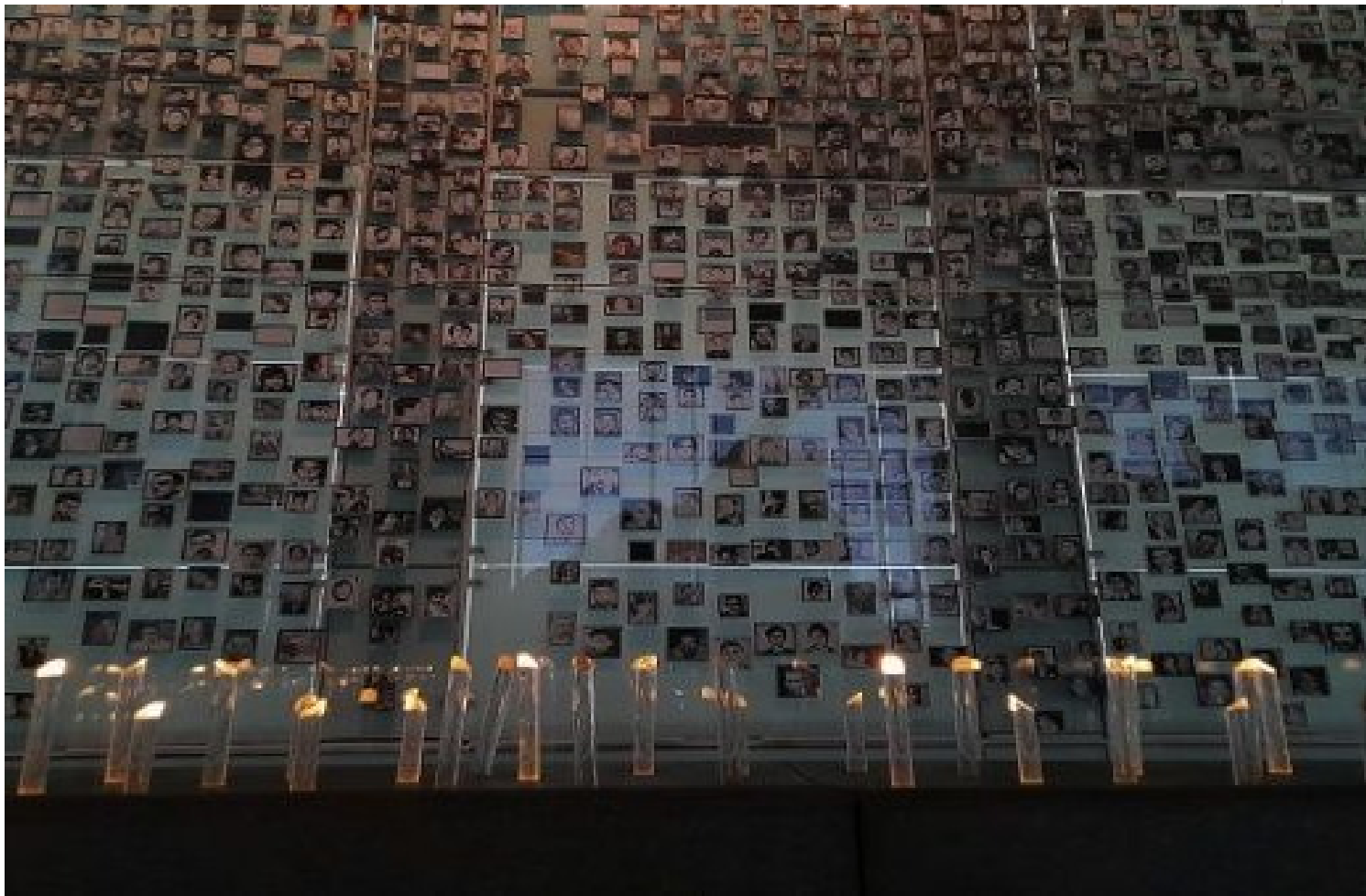


Ex-military and Carabineros sentenced for 38 homicides in 1973



Members of the Army (r) Jorge Romero Campos and Arturo Fernández Rodríguez were sentenced to 20 years for their responsibility in the 38 homicides. | Photo: Radio Uchile

Santiago de Chile, June 16 (RHC)-- The Chilean Supreme Court has sentenced former military and carabineros involved in the murder of 38 peasants in Torres del Paine 49 years ago.

The lawyer for the families of the 38 victims, Nelson Caucoto expressed after the verdict that "one of the unforgivable crimes of the dictatorship has been resolved by the Chilean justice system in a civilized manner."

The sentences imposed by the Second Chamber of Chile's highest court ranged from seven to ten years' imprisonment, bringing to an end the well-known Paine Case.

The members of the Army (r) Jorge Romero Campos and Arturo Fernández Rodríguez were sentenced to 20 years for their responsibility in the 38 aggravated homicides.

Army retirees José Vásquez Silva, Carlos Lazo Santibáñez, Juan Opazo Vera, Roberto Pinto Labordarie, Jorge Saavedra Meza, Víctor Sandoval Muñoz and Carlos Durán Rodríguez were sentenced to 10 years in prison.

They are blamed for the 24 homicides perpetrated from October 8 to 16, 1973 in the "Capo Lindo" and "24 de Abril" settlements.

When those responsible for the massacre were brought to trial, the Court of Appeals of San Miguel applied the half-prescription to them on the grounds that they should not be considered in cases of crimes against humanity.

However, the current verdict is in line with the qualification of crimes against humanity, which requires consideration of International Human Rights Law, which does not contemplate the total and average statute of limitations.

Raúl Francisco Areyte Valdenegro was sentenced to seven years and six months in prison for the first 14 acts that occurred from September 24 to October 3 of the same year in the "El Escorial" sector.

Carabinero (r) officer Nelson Iván Bravo Espinoza must serve 10 years and one day in prison for kidnapping Ramón Capetillo Mora and Mario Muñoz Peñaloza in October of that year.

Defense attorney Nelson Caucoto stated that "impunity, indolence and barbarity have been overcome. What the Supreme Court has done is an act of healing for these relatives and for Chilean society in general."

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