

Chile Arrests Ex-Pinochet Minister over Killings of Political Prisoners



Santiago de Chile, October 21 (teleSUR-RHC) -- On Monday, Chilean authorities arrested Col. Cristian Labbe, a former cabinet minister under General Augusto Pinochet, for his involvement in the killings of 13 political prisoners and disappearance of dissidents in the 1970s, during the military dictatorship.

Labbe was detained in Santiago on charges of criminal association as well as suspicion of being involved with the Chilean secret police operating the Tejas Verde detention center. The prison was responsible for some of the worst human rights violations in the first years of Pinochet's rule.

Labbe was detained, along with nine other military officers, by a judge who has been examining the killings in 1973-1974. Labbe has denied any wrongdoing.

Labbe was a minister under Pinochet and once served as cabinet speaker, but after the general was ousted in 1990, Labbe became mayor of a district of Santiago de Chile for 16 years until he lost local elections two years ago.

An estimated 3,095 people were killed, 38,000 tortured and 1,200 disappeared during Pinochet's dictatorship.

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