

More Pinochet Soldiers Charged with Burning Chilean Teenagers



Santiago de Chile, August 1 (teleSUR-RHC)-- Five more former Chilean army officers have been charged for involvement in the burning of two teenage activists protesting against the dictatorship of Augusto Pinochet in 1986, bringing the total to 12 people.

Last week, seven former soldiers were charged for complicity in the incident in which photographer Rodrigo Rojas was killed and Carmen Quintana was severely disfigured after the two were doused in gasoline and set on fire.

After setting them ablaze, soldiers abandoned the two activists outside of the capital city Santiago, where they managed to get help to take them to a hospital in critical condition, where Rojas later died of injuries.

The case, closed in the 1990's after a single conviction of negligence and reopened in 2013 when relatives filed a new lawsuit, is considered among the highest profile among tens of thousands of dictatorship-era human rights abuses carried out during the 1980's.

The arrests follow the recent conviction of 10 former army officers in the 1973 assassination of Chile's well-known leftist political folk singer Victor Jara in 1973. Soldiers had cut off Jara's fingers, broke his hands and wrists, and shot him more than 40 times.

The charges also come as part of a larger investigation into war crimes carried out during the 17-year dictatorship of General Augusto Pinochet.

Over 36,000 people were tortured and at least 3,200 killed or disappeared under the rule of the Chilean dictator.

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