



**For Immediate Release**

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**Contact: Moira Feeney, Esq., Media Coordinator; 415-544-0444 x302; mfeeney@cja.org**

(Version en Espanol a continuación.)

**JUDGE ORDERS FORMER PERUVIAN MILITARY OFFICER TO PAY \$37 MILLION IN DAMAGES TO SURVIVORS OF ACCOMARCA MASSACRE**

*Tuesday, March 4, 2008, Miami, FL:* Federal District Court Judge Adalberto Jordan ordered former Peruvian Major Telmo Hurtado Hurtado to pay \$37 million in damages to plaintiffs Teófila Ochoa Lizarbe and Cirila Pulido Baldeón and the estates of their deceased family members who were killed during the infamous Accomarca Massacre of 1985 in Peru.

The Center for Justice & Accountability (CJA) brought the suit against Major Hurtado on behalf of Ms. Ochoa Lizarbe and Ms. Pulido Baldeón, who were 12 years old at the time of the massacre.

Judge Jordan previously granted a default judgment against Major Hurtado for torture, extrajudicial killing, war crimes and crimes against humanity. During a trial on damages in February, the judge heard emotional and courageous testimony from the plaintiffs about witnessing Major Hurtado and his men murder 69 civilians in the remote mountain village of Accomarca, including Ms. Ochoa Lizarbe's mother, four brothers and sister, and Ms. Pulido Baldeón's mother and brother.

In his order, Judge Jordan stated, "As a general matter, a human life is not subject to intrinsic monetary valuation. Indeed, any arbitrary value placed on a life threatens to demean it or cheapen it because of its obvious inadequacy. The same goes for human suffering. But placing values, for purposes of assessing damages, is all that a court can do."

Major Hurtado appeared in court by order of the judge, but invoked his Fifth Amendment right not to testify and refused to participate in the trial. He is currently being held in an immigration detention center while he fights deportation to Peru.

The judge heard testimony about Major Hurtado's responsibility for these atrocities from Eduardo Gonzalez of the International Center for Transitional Justice, a senior editor of the Peruvian Truth Commission, and former Peruvian Senator Javier Diez Canseco, a prominent human rights defender and member of the Senate Commission that interrogated those responsible for the massacre, including Major Hurtado who admitted to his role in the killings.

Based on the evidence presented at the trial, the judge concluded, "Mr. Hurtado said he was following orders to capture and destroy the enemy, and justified the killing of children and infants by explaining that the young would be indoctrinated by the Sendero Luminoso [the Shining Path]. Significantly, Mr. Hurtado expressed no remorse for his actions."

Almudena Bernabeu, CJA attorney and member of the legal team, stated, "The Accomarca Massacre was one of the first grave atrocities committed in Peru during the 1980s. It confirmed that the military's strategy used to fight terrorism was itself a form of terror which cost the lives of thousands of innocent

civilians. This judgment, alongside the current trial against Fujimori, illustrates the courage of our clients and an important success in the struggle against impunity being waged by the Peruvian people.”

CJA is a San Francisco-based human rights organization dedicated to ending torture and other severe human rights abuses around the world and advancing the rights of survivors to seek truth, justice and redress. CJA uses litigation to hold perpetrators individually accountable for human rights abuses, develop human rights law and advance the rule of law in countries transitioning from periods of abuse.

For more information and background on the case, please visit <http://www.cja.org/cases/hurtado.shtml>.

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