

LATIN POST

US to Prosecute Chilean Military Officer Involved in Victor Jara Death

[Rodrigo Ugarte](#). 04.17.2015



Victor Jara's resting place before his exhumation in 2009. A U.S. court has agreed to hear a case against one of Jara's executioners, who fled Chile for the U.S. (Photo : Lion Hirth / Wikimedia Commons)

A former Chilean military officer will be tried in a U.S. court for his role in the torture and murder of Chilean singer Victor Jara. A court in Florida will try Pedro Barrientos after the Jara family filed a lawsuit against him.

Pedro Barrientos has been accused of ordering the torture of Jara after the military coup of Sept. 11, 1973, in which right-wing military officers overthrew the government of Marxist president Salvador Allende with the help of the U.S. government. According to the BBC, a U.S. judge ordered that Barrientos must stand trial for what he did and will answer charges of torture and extrajudicial killing.

Barrientos fled to the U.S. after the regime's collapse and became a U.S. citizen.

Joan Jara, the singer's widow, and his daughter Amanda with the help Center for Justice and Accountability (CJA) based in the U.S., according to Al-Jazeera America, brought the lawsuit against Barrientos. The U.S. District Court for the Middle District of Florida said it would hear the case, but the court disillusioned the family with its decision to drop the crimes against humanity charge.

"We are delighted with the news that our case will move forward for torture and extrajudicial killing," said Almudena Bernabeu, a CJA attorney, in a statement.

"It is nonetheless disappointing for our clients and all of us, that the court dismissed the crimes against humanity claim, because the killing of Víctor Jara -- and thousands of crimes committed under the Pinochet regime -- should be called what it is: a crime against humanity."

Jara served as Allende's Culture Minister during his short presidency and was a member of Chile's Communist Party. Following Allende's overthrow, Jara was arrested at Santiago's State Technical University, where he taught, and was transported with other students and professors to Chile Stadium.

Having been identified upon arrival he was tortured and ultimately executed by Barrientos. Forensic investigations in 2009 determined Jara was shot 44 times.

Back in September of 2014, three more Chilean officers have been charged with Jara's murder, according to TeleSur. With Barrientos' arrest the number of those charged involved with Jara's execution and torture comes to 12.

<http://www.latinpost.com/articles/48341/20150417/us-to-prosecute-chilean-military-officer-involved-in-victor-jara-death.htm>