

## 360 years in prison for Sepur Zarco executioners

Guatemala

Lightning against impunity

By Giorgio Trucchi | LINyM

<http://nicaraguaymasespanol.blogspot.com/2016/02/guatemala-360-anos-de-carcel-para.html>



In a crowded courtroom of Guatemala's Supreme Court of Justice, the silence almost gloomy that reigned there was abruptly interrupted by the strong and endless applause and cries of jubilation.

The judge Jazmin Barrios had just finished reading the sentence against former military Esteelmer Francisco Reyes Giron and Heriberto Valdez Alloc.

They were finally found guilty of crimes against the duties of humanity in their way of sexual violence, domestic and sexual slavery against native Q'eqchi' Mayan village women, the murder of Coc Dominga and her two daughters, Anita and Hermelinda, as well as the forced disappearance of seven men, husbands of the complainants.

For these atrocities were sentenced a total of 120 and 240 years of imprisonment respectively, and penalties are non-commutable.

- Read ["Women demand justice Sepur Zarco"](#)
- Listen to [the Sentencing here](#)
- Listen [here the integral recording of the last day of judgment](#)
- See [image gallery](#)

In 1982, one of the many military detachments deployed by the counter-insurgency policy of the Guatemalan State during the internal armed conflict, settled in the community of Sepur Zarco, in the northeast of the country.

Women were subjected by the soldiers, repeatedly raped and enslaved. Their husbands were missing. The mere fact of being in the process of legalizing their land was considered an insurgent act.

The horror of the abuse lasted for more than six months and marked their lives forever.

"The case Sepur Zarco evidences cruel and infamous treatment to which the women were subjected who were threatened in the detachment (military) to suffer constant violations by soldiers. They were subjected to sexual violation continuously and were also subjected to domestic slavery", said judge Barrios during sentencing.

For organizations that accompanied the complainants, sexual violence was a counterinsurgency military strategy and was used to control the bodies and territories.

"In rendering their statements, the women broke into tears, expressing his grief, sadness, loneliness and helplessness, not only for what happened at that time, but also for its impotence before the armed men who changed the course of their lives, regardless the consequences of their actions," proceeded Barrios.

The judge recognized his courage and bravery as people "in presenting to declare and to publicly expose the multiple sexual violations of which were the subject, those which have undoubtedly left an irreversible post-traumatic stress disorder", she said.

"Recognize the truth helps to clean up the wounds of the past and the application of justice is a right that assists victims and helps to strengthen the rule of law in our country, becoming aware that these types of crimes must not repeated again" asserted Barrios.

This sentence sets a very important precedent for Guatemala by judging violence and sexual slavery, while being conceptualized and configuring these criminal offenses with regard war crimes.

"The women decided to break the silence. They are satisfied with happy heart, and we are here accompanying them. They are an example of that in Guatemala it is possible to have justice," said a representative of the Breaking Silence and Impunity Alliance.

Source: [LINyM](#)