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NOVEMBER 29, 2017 • WASHINGTON, DC • HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATORS

## US extradites former Salvadoran official to Spain following ICE investigation

*Senior official wanted for involvement in 1989 'Jesuit massacre'*





WASHINGTON — A former Salvadoran government official was extradited to Spain Tuesday for his alleged involvement in the 1989 murder of eight people, which stemmed from a notorious incident that occurred in El Salvador during that country’s civil war.

This extradition followed an extensive criminal investigation by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement’s (ICE) Homeland Security Investigations (HSI).

Inocente Orlando Montano, 75, formerly residing in Everett, Massachusetts, and 19 other former Salvadoran military officials were indicted in Spain for the 1989 murders of five Spanish Jesuit priests during the 10-year Salvadoran civil conflict. An arrest warrant for Montano was issued in March 2011 by a Spanish magistrate judge.

“This extradition, and the investigation and prosecution that preceded it, marks the culmination of longstanding and significant collaboration among HSI Boston, ICE’s Human Rights Violators and War Crimes Center, the U.S. Attorney’s Offices in Boston and Raleigh, and DOJ’s Office of International Affairs,” said ICE Deputy Director Thomas D. Homan. “We are grateful for the support of our law enforcement partners, DOJ, and our Department of State colleagues to ensure that Montano will face justice in Spain for his crimes and will not find safe haven in the United States.”

“Criminals and those lawfully charged with criminal offenses overseas should not be able to find safe haven in the United States,” said Acting Assistant Attorney General John P. Cronan of the Justice Department’s Criminal Division. “Today’s extradition demonstrates our firm commitment to honoring our obligations under extradition treaties. As a result, an alleged human-rights violator will now face justice in Spain.”

In response to the government of Spain’s request, pursuant to the extradition treaty between the United States and Spain, the U.S. Department of Justice filed a complaint in the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of North Carolina in April 2015 seeking Montano’s extradition to Spain. According to the complaint, between 1980 and 1991, El Salvador was engulfed in a civil conflict between the military-led government and the Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front (FMLN). During this conflict, in the early

morning hours of Nov. 16, 1989, members of the Salvadoran military allegedly murdered six Jesuit priests, their housekeeper, and the housekeeper's 16-year old daughter at the Universidad Centroamericana. Five of the Jesuit priests were Spanish nationals, and the remaining victims were from El Salvador.

Montano, a citizen of El Salvador, served in the Salvadoran military for nearly 30 years, rising to the rank of colonel. From 1989 to 1992, the final years of a decade-long civil war, he served as the vice minister for public security. In 1993, after the war ended, the U.N. Truth Commission on El Salvador found substantial evidence that Colonel Montano was part of a core group of elite officers responsible for the November 1989 murders, commonly referred to as the "Jesuit massacre."

Those murders constitute one of the most notorious human rights crimes in El Salvador's history. The U.N. commission also named Colonel Montano as one of two top officials who pressured lower-level soldiers to cover up the military's role in the killings, in their testimony to the Salvadoran court investigating the crime.

In August 2013, following an extensive investigation conducted by HSI Boston, with assistance from ICE's Human Rights Violators and War Crimes Center (HRVWCC), Montano was sentenced in a Massachusetts federal court to 21 months of prison on three counts of immigration fraud and three counts of perjury. These crimes stemmed from false statements Montano made to obtain Temporary Protective Status (TPS) in the United States. The trial documented more than 1,150 human rights violations committed by units or troops under his command, including 65 extrajudicial killings, 51 disappearances and 520 cases of torture.

The HRVWCC was established in 2009 to further ICE's efforts to identify, track and prosecute human rights abusers. It leverages the expertise of a select group of agents, lawyers, intelligence and research specialists, historians and analysts who direct the agency's broader enforcement efforts against these offenders.

Since 2003, ICE has arrested more than 380 individuals for human rights-related violations of the law under various criminal and/or immigration statutes. During that same period, ICE obtained deportation orders against and physically removed 785 known or suspected human rights violators from the United States. Additionally, ICE has facilitated the departure of an additional 108 such individuals from the United States.

Currently, ICE Homeland Security Investigations has more than 160 active investigations into suspected human rights violators and is pursuing more than 1,750 leads and removals cases involving suspected human rights violators from 95 different countries. Since 2003, the HRVWCC has issued more than 70,400 lookouts for individuals from more than 110 countries and stopped 213 human rights violators and war crimes suspects from entering the United States.

Members of the public who have information about foreign nationals suspected of engaging in human rights abuses or war crimes are urged to call the ICE tip line at 1-866-DHS-2423 (1-866-347-2423). Callers may remain anonymous. To learn more about the assistance available to victims in these cases, the public should contact ICE's confidential victim-witness toll-free number at 1-866-872-4973.

Members of the public who have information about foreign fugitives are urged to contact ICE by calling the ICE tip line at 1 (866) 347-2423 or internationally at 001-1802-872-6199. They can also file a tip online by completing ICE's [online tip form](#).

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