

Calgary

Guatemalan massacre suspect will be stripped of Canadian citizenship

Jorge Vinicio Sosa Orantes was arrested in Alberta in 2011

The Associated Press · Posted: Apr 17, 2017 3:44 PM MT | Last Updated: April 18, 2017



This Sept. 21, 2012, file photo provided by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) shows Jorge Sosa, a former Guatemalan soldier, as he is extradited to Los Angeles from Canada. (U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement)

Canada is moving to strip citizenship from a man accused of slaughtering villagers in Guatemala using a grenade, gun and sledgehammer during the country's civil war.

The federal government said in newly filed court documents that Jorge Vinicio Sosa Orantes concealed his role in a 1982 massacre by the Guatemalan military when he obtained Canadian citizenship a decade later. He's one of four former soldiers arrested by U.S. authorities in 2010 on allegations of participating in the killing of more than 200 people in the village of Las Dos Erres.

- [Jorge Sosa guilty of lying about 1982 Guatemala massacre](#)
- [Accused Guatemalan war criminal extradited](#)

Sosa, 59, is now serving a 10-year sentence for immigration fraud in the United States, where he also held citizenship until it was revoked in 2014.

Canada has opted to strip citizenship in only a handful of modern-day war crimes cases.

Sosa was arrested in Lethbridge, Alta., in 2011 and [extradited to California](#), where he stood trial for lying about the massacre on his naturalization forms. He left Guatemala in 1985 and sought asylum in the United States, claiming he was fleeing guerrillas. When he was denied, he went to Canada, where he became a citizen. He later married an American, got a green card and applied to be naturalized in 2007.

He had been working as a martial arts instructor in Riverside County. U.S. authorities searched his home in 2010, but he had left for Mexico and later Canada, where he was arrested on U.S. charges.

'Actively participated in the killings'

He was a second lieutenant in the army during the massacre. At Sosa's trial, another former Guatemalan soldier suspected of helping carry out the massacre testified that Sosa fired his rifle and threw a grenade at villagers who screamed from within a well. Sosa is expected to be deported after his U.S. prison sentence ends.

The slaughter went unpunished for years, even after Guatemalan authorities issued 17 arrest warrants. In 2009, the Inter-American Court of Human Rights demanded the country prosecute the perpetrators.

Sosa has denied being in Las Dos Erres the day of the massacre.

In ordering his extradition to the U.S., the Alberta Court of Queen's Bench said the evidence establishes he was one of the commanding officers who decided to murder the villagers and that he "actively participated in the killings with a sledgehammer, with a firearm and a grenade."

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