



Inter-Parliamentary Union  
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# Chile/Argentina

**Decision adopted unanimously by the IPU Governing Council at its 208<sup>th</sup> session (Madrid, 30 November 2021)**



Chilean former Senator Jaime Guzmán Errázuriz (1946–1991) speaks to the press in Santiago on 20 December 1990. | Juan Carlos CACERES / AFP

## CHL-87 – Jaime Guzmán Errázuriz

### Alleged human rights violations

- ✓ Murder

#### A. Summary of the case

Chilean senator, Mr. Jaime Guzmán Errázuriz, was assassinated in Chile in April 1991. Two members of the Chilean Manuel Rodríguez Patriotic Front (*Frente Patriótico Manuel Rodríguez* – FPMR), Mr. Ricardo Palma Salamanca and Mr. Mauricio Hernández Norambuena, were found guilty and sentenced for their involvement in the murder. In 1996 both escaped from a high-security prison in Santiago de Chile.

In February 2002, Mr. Hernández Norambuena was arrested and sentenced for another crime in Brazil. He served part of the 30-year sentence handed down to him by the Brazilian courts until August 2019, when he was extradited to Chile. On 2 September 2019, he received two sentences of 15 years in prison each, one for his involvement in the senator's assassination and the second for his participation in another crime. According to information received, he is currently serving these sentences in a Chilean prison.

Two other accomplices to the murder have been tried in Chile, Mr. Enrique Villanueva Molina, who was sentenced to five years of probation (*libertad vigilada*) in August 2014, and Ms. Marcela Mardones, who was sentenced to a prison term of 10 years and one day in March 2018.

#### Case CHL-87

**Chile and Argentina:** Parliaments affiliated to the IPU

**Victim:** A male opposition member of parliament

**Qualified complainant(s):** Section I.(1)(b) of the Committee Procedure (Annex I)

**Submission of complaint:** October 2010

**Recent IPU decision:** February 2018

**IPU mission(s):** - - -

**Recent Committee hearing(s):** - - -

#### Recent follow-up:

- Communications from the authorities: Letter from the Argentine President of the Senate and the President of the Chamber of Deputies (March 2016); letter from the President of the IPU Group of Chile (October 2021)
- Communication from the complainant: September 2021
- Communication to the authorities: Letter to the Argentine President of the Senate and President of the Chamber of Deputies (October 2021)
- Communication to the complainant: October 2021

On 22 September 2021, Mr. Raúl Escobar Poblete was temporarily extradited from Mexico to Chile, accused of being the perpetrator of the murder of the senator. Mr. Escobar hid in Mexico for 20 years under a false identity until June 2017, when he was arrested and sentenced to 60 years in prison for another crime. After completion of the legal proceedings in Chile, Mr. Escobar is expected to be sent back to Mexico to continue serving that sentence.

In 2004, Mr. Galvarino Sergio Apablaza Guerra, one of the alleged masterminds of Mr. Guzmán's assassination, was apprehended in Argentina, where he asked for asylum the following year. In September 2010, the Argentine Supreme Court accepted Chile's request for the extradition of Mr. Apablaza; however, a few weeks later, Mr. Apablaza was granted refugee status in Argentina. The Chilean authorities initiated a series of legal actions and proceedings, which led the Argentine National Refugee Commission to revoke Mr. Apablaza's refugee status in December 2017. The Argentine Supreme Court approved his extradition in March 2018. The Chilean courts subsequently issued an international arrest warrant for Mr. Apablaza, who still lives in Argentina, where he regularly appears in public.

In 2012, the Argentine parliamentary authorities informed the IPU about the existence of a bi-national Argentine-Chilean parliamentary committee (the Chile-Argentina Inter-Parliamentary Friendship Group), which could play an active role in promoting dialogue between the two parliaments and contribute to putting an end to impunity in this case. In September 2021, the complainant reported that this parliamentary committee had not met since 2014.

## **B. Decision**

The Governing Council of the Inter-Parliamentary Union,

1. *Regrets* the lack of response from the Argentine parliamentary authorities to its repeated requests for information and official observations regarding the situation of Mr. Apablaza; *recalls* in this regard that, in accordance with its Rules and Practices, the Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians does everything possible to promote dialogue with national authorities, and primarily with parliaments, with a view to reaching a satisfactory settlement in the cases before it;
2. *Notes with satisfaction* that significant progress has been made in recent years to help ensure accountability in the case of the assassination of Senator Guzmán, particularly in light of the prosecution and punishment of Mr. Mauricio Hernández Norambuena, Mr. Enrique Villanueva Molina and Ms. Marcela Mardones for their involvement in this crime, as well as the recent temporary extradition of Mr. Raúl Escobar Poblete from Mexico to be tried in Chile; *wishes* to be kept informed of significant developments in the pursuit of justice in this long-standing case;
3. *Reiterates its view* that, in light of its mandate, the Chile-Argentina Inter-Parliamentary Friendship Group can, and should, take a keen interest in this matter; *trusts*, therefore, that it will soon be able to meet and will decide to closely monitor developments regarding Chile's pending request for the extradition of Mr. Apablaza; and *wishes* to be kept informed of progress made in this regard as well as to receive official information from the Argentine authorities on the current legal status of Mr. Apablaza in Argentina;
4. *Recalls* that impunity, by shielding those responsible from judicial action and accountability, decisively encourages the perpetration of further serious human rights violations, and that attacks against the life of members of parliament, irrespective of their opinions, when left unpunished, not only violate the fundamental rights of individual parliamentarians and of those who elected them, but also affect the integrity of parliament and its ability to fulfil its role as an institution; and *calls* on all IPU Member Parliaments to take concrete actions in support of the resolution of this case in a manner consistent with the respect for democratic values and human rights;
5. *Requests* the Secretary General to convey this decision to the parliamentary and other relevant national authorities, the complainant, and any third party likely to be in a position to supply relevant information to assist it in its work;
6. *Requests* the Committee to continue examining this case and to report back to it in due course.