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# Judicial and political Chronology of Augusto Pinochet Ugarte

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1990-2006

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**CentroDerechosHumanos**  
UNIVERSIDAD DIEGO PORTALES





## Judicial and Political Chronology of Pinochet, 1990-2006

(Chronological order)

Place	Date	Event
CHILE	11 March 1990	Pinochet steps down as self-appointed head of state and Patricio Aylwin (Christian Democrat) is sworn in as democratically-elected President, representing the 17 party centre-left Concertación coalition. However, in accordance with the terms of the regime's 1980 Constitution, Pinochet is to remain as Commander in Chief of the Army until 1998
	9 February 1991	The report of the National Commission on Truth and Reconciliation ('Rettig Commission') is handed to President Aylwin. The Armed Forces and the Supreme Court dispute the contents of the report and effectively reject its criticism of their actions
	11 March 1994	Eduardo Frei Ruiz-Tagle (Christian Democrat, Concertación candidate) replaces Patricio Aylwin as president of Chile.
MADRID	28 March 1996	Spanish prosecutor Carlos Castresana, acting for the progressive prosecutors' association the UPF, registers a criminal complaint in the Spanish courts against former Argentine military officers on behalf of Spanish victims of the 1976 to 1983 Argentine military dictatorship. The complaint is accepted by Spanish judge Baltazar Garzón
	4 July 1996	A criminal complaint is lodged in Spain on behalf of Spanish – and later, Chilean - victims of the 1973-1990 Pinochet dictatorship in Chile. The complaint is brought by Castresana and the UPF, together with Spanish lawyer Joan Garcés, representing relatives of Chilean victims. The complaint is initially accepted by judge García Castellón, who later hands it over to judge Garzón to be accumulated to the ongoing Argentina case investigation
CHILE	January 1998	Chilean judge Juan Guzmán begins a domestic investigation in response to two criminal complaints lodged against Pinochet: the first by Gladys Marín, General Secretary of the Chilean Communist Party, on 12 January on behalf of all victims of the dictatorship, with particular reference to the 'Calle Conferencia' episode; the second, on 28 January, by relatives of victims of the so-called 'Caravan of Death' episode
	11 March 1998	Pinochet retires as Commander in Chief of the Army and is sworn in as an honorary lifetime Senator
	September 1998	An interim verdict in the long-running domestic 'Poblete – Córdoba' investigation establishes disappearance as a non-amnestiable, ongoing crime
LONDON	16 October 1998	Pinochet is detained by members of the London Metropolitan Police while recuperating from an operation in a UK clinic. The arrest is in response an international arrest warrant emitted by judge Baltazar Garzón. The charges are crimes against humanity



	28 October 1998	An initial judicial decision suggests that Pinochet may have immunity as a former head of state. However he is kept under house arrest pending appeal.
	25 November 1998	The UK Law Lords overturn the initial decision, voting 3 to 2 that Pinochet cannot invoke immunity due to the type of crime for which he is being charged. This second decision is successfully challenged by Pinochet's defence lawyers, and has to be set aside and reviewed by a full sitting of the Law Lords
<b>LONDON</b>	24 March 1999	The Law Lords again reject the principle of head of state immunity for Pinochet. They nonetheless rule that he can only be extradited for charges of torture committed after 29 September 1998, the date on which the UK officially recognised torture as an extraditable extraterritorial crime
	14 October 1999	Chilean president Eduardo Frei Ruiz-Tagle asks the UK Home Secretary (Minister of the Interior) Jack Straw to return Pinochet to Chile on humanitarian grounds.
	5 January 2000	Jack Straw requests medical tests on Pinochet in response to the Chilean government's request
	11 January 2000	A dispute arises over access to the medical test results for each of the four jurisdictions which have by now submitted extradition requests for Pinochet (Spain, France, Belgium and Switzerland)
	2 March 2000	Jack Straw announces his decision that to continue with extradition proceedings against Pinochet would 'serve no useful purpose' given his medical condition, which 'cannot be expected to improve'. Pinochet is freed from house arrest and leaves the same day on a Chilean Air Force flight bound for Santiago
	<b>CHILE</b>	2 March 2000
11 March 2000		In a closely fought presidential election, Ricardo Lagos (Socialist Party/PPD, Concertación candidate) replaces Eduardo Frei Ruiz-Tagle to become the first Socialist president of Chile since the deposed Salvador Allende (1970-1973).
5 June 2000		The Santiago Appeals Court impeaches Pinochet (removing legal barriers to his subsequent charging) in the Caravan of Death case
8 August 2000		The Supreme Court ratifies the Caravan of Death impeachment.
27 August 2003		The Supreme Court rejects the impeachment of Pinochet in the "Calle Conferencia" case.
28 May 2004		The Santiago Appeals Court impeaches Pinochet in the "Operación Cóndor" case. The Supreme Court ratifies the impeachment in August
July 2004		A US Senate investigation into possible illicit funding of terror networks reveals that Pinochet and his immediate family hold million-dollar bank accounts in the US Riggs Bank, some under false names. Chilean lawyers bring a criminal complaint against Pinochet for tax fraud, misuse of public funds and criminal conspiracy. Former president Patricio Aylwin publicly questions Pinochet's honour, and the first signs of fissures can be seen in the formerly solid support of the political right for Pinochet



	December 2004	The Santiago Appeals Court again impeaches Pinochet, this time in the Prats case. However, the Supreme Court later revokes the decision
	1 April 2005	The case against Pinochet in the Prats investigation is definitively suspended by investigating magistrate Alejandro Solís, due to the Supreme Court's rejection of the request to impeach him
	May 2005	In the light of the Riggs bank revelations, right-wing president Joaquín Lavín declares his previous support of Pinochet in the 1988 plebiscite to have been an "error"
	June 2005	The Santiago Appeals Court accepts an impeachment petition against Pinochet in the Riggs Bank case
	August 2005	Pinochet's wife (Lucia Hiriart Rodríguez), and one of his sons (Marco Antonio Pinochet) are processed in the Riggs case on charges of complicity in tax evasion, for activities described by the state Consejo de Defensa del Estado as 'classic examples of money laundering practices'. The two are taken into preventive detention, prompting Pinochet to publicly assume sole personal responsibility for family finances.
	18 November 2005	Investigative magistrate Victor Montiglio carries out a face to face cross examination of Pinochet and his formerly trusted confidante, ex-secret police chief Manuel Contreras, during investigation of the "Operación Colombo" case.
<b>CHILE</b>	July 2006	During an interview on Chilean national television, Manuel Contreras alleges that some of Pinochet's illicit fortune is the proceeds of drug trafficking
	10 December 2006	Pinochet dies in the Santiago Military Hospital, aged 91
	12 December 2006	Pinochet's funeral is held at the main Santiago military academy. The Chilean government refuses to declare national mourning or to offer a state funeral to the former de facto head of state, although the then Minister of Defence attended the ceremony. Pinochet's remains were cremated and his ashes buried on the family's country estate. He had declared his wish not to be buried in the family tomb in Santiago's General Cemetery for fear that it would become a target for protests or desecration
	2007-	The Pinochet Foundation, a private institution set up in 1995, dedicates itself to the preservation of the former dictator's memory and legacy