

## **Guatemalan regime captures Orlando Lopez, a war crimes prosecutor, and detains him in military jail**

By Grahame Russell, Rights Action

<https://mailchi.mp/rightsaction/guatemalan-regime-captures-detains-orlando-lopez>

The relentless assault of the Guatemalan regime against all institutions of civil society continues. The coopted legal system is used as a tool of repression against indigenous land and human rights defenders, judges, prosecutors and lawyers.

Below, a Prensa Comunitaria article by Alexander Valdez, about arbitrary detention of Orlando Lopez, former head of Guatemalan Attorney General's Human Rights Prosecutor's Office, who led first investigations into the crime of genocide and crimes against humanity committed by the regime in the 1970s-1980s.

Just in the past few years, some 40 judges, prosecutors and lawyer have been forced into exile or jailed on trumped up charges. Hundreds of land defenders have been criminalized and jailed.

Countless war crimes prosecutions and investigations into organized crime rings operated by the Guatemalan elites have been effectively blocked by this assault on the legal system.

### **Elections again, still no democracy**

In addition to the takeover of the legal system, the regime will hold presidential elections in June 2023, using a corrupted electoral system that allows for no change to the status quo, that will lock in place four more years of exploitation and impoverishment, corruption, repression and impunity.

Elections in Guatemala serve only the interests of the "Covenant of the Corrupt" (El Pacto de Corruptos) –the traditional economic, political, military elites- and their "international community" supporters, providing justification for the governments of the U.S., Canada and E.U., plus international banks, companies

and investors, to maintain full political, economic and military relations with the "democratic government" of Guatemala.

### **Endless forced migrancy**

That many more Guatemalans will be impoverished, many forced to flee home and country ...



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### **AG's office arrests prosecutor who oversaw war crimes cases in Guatemala Now detained in a military prison**

By Alexander Valdéz, Prensa Comunitaria, March 16, 2023

<https://prensacomunitaria.org/2023/03/mp-detiene-a-exfiscal-que-lidero-casos-por-crimenes-de-guerra-en-guatemala/>

The Guatemalan Attorney General (Ministerio Public-MP) confirmed the arrest of Orlando Lopez, former head of the MP's Human Rights Prosecutor's Office, who led the first investigations into the crime of genocide and crimes against humanity committed by the regime during the internal armed conflict in our country.

López, this time, is accused by the MP of the crime of abuse of authority. "All the time that, during the year 2019, prior to the end of his employment relationship

with the MP, he exercised the profession of lawyer and notary, that was incompatible with his work as an employee of the institution," explained the MP.

The unit that executed the arrest of López is the same that has arrested former anti-corruption prosecutors of the MP's Special Prosecutor's Office against Impunity (FECI).

### **He took military officials to jail**

López was the prosecutor who investigated the Ixil Genocide criminal case. While working at the MP, he was able to bring to trial the late General Efraín Ríos Montt, who was found guilty of the crime of genocide.

Other cases he investigated were the "Plan de Sánchez" massacre and the "CREOMPAZ" case. The first relates to the massacre that occurred in July 1982 in the municipality of Rabinal, Baja Verapaz, where soldiers accompanied by patrolmen, commissioners and judicial officers executed some 200 people from the Maya Achi village of Plan de Sanchez.

In the case of the ex-military base CREOMPAZ, soldiers were tried for forced disappearances and rapes. Through mass grave exhumations that carried out inside the former military base, the remains of 558 humans found. It has been established that 90 correspond to minors; 443 adults and the elderly; and 22 undetermined at this time. Of these 558 human remains, 97 have been positively identified by DNA testing.

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### **Rights Action archives**

- Elections and no democracy in Guatemala: <https://rightsaction.org/election-archives>
- War crimes trials and work to end corruption and impunity: <https://rightsaction.org/other-war-crimes-trials-archives>

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