

PARAGUAY:

TRUTH AND JUSTICE COMMISSION (COMISIÓN VERDAD Y JUSTICIA, CVJ)



WHAT IS THE TRC?

The Truth and Justice Commission (Comisión Verdad y Justicia, CVJ) is a *Truth, Justice and Healing* commission established by the Paraguayan Congress and President Nicanor Duarte. It aimed to reconcile the atrocities committed during Paraguayan dictator Alfredo Stroessner's regime, as well as several secret human rights abuses uncovered thereafter.

The CVJ was initially created in 2004, following the call for acknowledgement and truth-telling of past abuses from Paraguayan lawyer and human rights activist Dr. Martin Almada. The final report of the CVJ was completed in 2008.

WHY WAS IT CREATED?

The CVJ is largely focused on the dictatorship of military leader Alfredo Stroessner, and the human rights violations he sanctioned during his regime. Stroessner took power following both a civil war in Paraguay and a war with Bolivia, using his military to capitalize on the nation's state of instability. Under Stroessner, there are various reports of limited political and legal freedoms, forced Indigenous assimilation, and the banning of Indigenous culture and language from education, among other forms of political and cultural oppression.

In addition to such, the CVJ addresses uncovered security intelligence documents such as Operation Condór, which allowed Paraguay along with Chile, Argentina, Uruguay, Bolivia, Brazil, Peru and Ecuador to monitor, torture, and kill political opponents.

MANDATES OF THE TRC

The main goals of the TRC were:

- To provide historical records of abusive governmental practices during Stroessner's regime
- To aid in the prosecutions of perpetrators of human rights abuses from 1954-1989
- Establishing a path towards victim reconciliation and the restoration of democratic peace

OUTCOMES & LEGACIES

- Recommendations to establish a public information centre as well as a genetics database
- Recommendations to include the commission in school curriculums
- The push to formally prosecute several perpetrators especially in cases involving violence against women
- Calls to continue the search for missing and displaced individuals
- Reports from the UN detailing positive reforms in development in legislation against gender discrimination
- Preservation of the Archive of Terror, including the establishment of the Archive and Documentation Center for the Defense of Human Rights
- Governmental creation of a program of reparations for victims
- Although prosecutions against Stroessner were unsuccessful, he died while in exile in 2006.

STATISTICS

Number of Commissioners: **9**

Number of Women Commissioners: **1**

Total Number of Participants: **2059**

Number of Cases Heard: **128 000**

Total Years of Conflict: **approx. 35**



THE PARAGUAYAN TRUTH AND JUSTICE COMMISSION (COMISIÓN VERDAD Y JUSTICIA, CVJ)

An Important Dates Timeline

1954

Dictator Alfredo Stroessner takes over Paraguay.

1989

General André Rodríguez overthrows Stroessner, ending the dictatorship.

1993

Paraguay is re-established as a civil government.

2004

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2008

The final report of the CVJ is completed, after hearing from 128 000 survivors.

