

# AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

## Public Statement

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### Mexico: First step to end impunity

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Amnesty International welcomes the Supreme Court ruling that finally opens the door to justice in cases of forced disappearance from Mexico's Dirty War in the 70s and 80s.

The Supreme Court decided that forced disappearances are ongoing crimes until the victim is released. Traditionally, the Mexican judiciary has ruled that such cases are no longer prosecutable once the period after the person was abducted exceeds the statute of limitations. A judge in Monterrey earlier this year refused an arrest warrant for two senior officials accused of abducting Jesús Piedra Ibarra in 1975 on the grounds that the crime had passed the statute of limitations.

The ruling by the Supreme Court brings Mexico into line with international law that categorises forced disappearance a crime of such magnitude that it should not be bound by statute of limitations. It is hoped that the decision will serve as a precedent in many similar cases. Impunity for these cases has been total up until now. This may be the first crucial step in changing Mexico's shameful record in denying the victims and their families the right to justice.

The tireless struggle of these families - such as Rosario Ibarra, the mother of Jesús Piedra Ibarra and founder of "Comité Eureka" - to hold the state to account has been the crucial element that has kept the fight for justice alive and may finally be producing results.

The Supreme Court's decision is also an important precedent for the Mexican judiciary, which has frequently shown itself reluctant to apply international human rights standards in domestic law. It is to be hoped that this decision will also be an important first step along this route.

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