

AI Index: PRE 01/107/2012
27 February 2012

Ruling on Baltasar Garzón is good news but crimes remain untackled

The decision by the Supreme Court of Spain to dismiss the charges against judge Baltasar Garzón for investigating human rights violations is good news but much more needs to be done to ensure justice in Spain, said Amnesty International today.

The organization called on the Spanish authorities to promptly open investigations into human rights abuses committed during the country's Civil War and the government of Francisco Franco – including extrajudicial killings, torture and enforced disappearances.

"It is a scandal that Spain has not yet tackled its dark past," said Marek Marczyński, Head of International Justice at Amnesty International.

"News about Judge Garzón is a step forward. However, what we want to see next is a full investigation into the catalogue of abuses that took place during the Civil War and Franco's regime. There must be no impunity in Spain for these most horrible crimes."

Amnesty International has not been able yet to assess the full text of the ruling. However, based on the information available so far the organisation is concerned that the interpretation of the principle of legality in the ruling may prevent victims of human rights abuses committed in the past from accessing justice.

Amnesty International calls on the Spanish authorities to fulfil its international obligations and investigate past crimes under international law -- in particular, set aside the 1977 Amnesty Law and statute of limitations.