

June 29, 2003

## Argentine Will Face Charge of Genocide

By THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

MEXICO CITY, June 28 (AP) — The authorities wrapped the former Argentine military official Ricardo Cavallo in a bulletproof vest today and placed him aboard a military flight to Spain to face charges of genocide and terrorism connected to Argentina's "dirty war."

The case centers around Mr. Cavallo's alleged role as a military interrogator in his country's efforts in the 1980's to silence suspected leftists and antigovernment activists.

On June 10, Mexico's Supreme Court ruled that he could not be tried on torture charges because the statute of limitations had expired, but that he could go to trial on genocide and terrorism charges. Two courts rejected Mr. Cavallo's appeals for injunctions blocking his extradition.

The extradition was one of the first won by the crusading Spanish judge Baltasar Garzón, who will hear the case against Mr. Cavallo and has taken on major human rights cases, including that of the former Chilean dictator, Gen. Augusto Pinochet.

The case is also important because the request for the now-successful extradition was filed under the terms of a binational extradition treaty, rather than an international rights agreement, as was the failed effort to get Pinochet to stand trial in 1998.

Mr. Cavallo, the former director of Mexico's private National Registry of Motor Vehicles, was arrested in 2000 after five former political prisoners charged that he had tortured them in Argentina.

His accusers say Mr. Cavallo served at the Navy Mechanical School, one of the most notorious centers of repression in Argentina during the 1976-83 military dictatorship. At least 9,000 Argentines vanished — presumably killed, often after torture.

Mr. Cavallo has said that he was in Argentina's military, but he has denied any involvement in torture.

[Copyright 2003 The New York Times Company](#)