

Ex-President Stands Trial in Edgy Peru

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CARACAS, Venezuela, Dec. 9 — The Supreme Court in [Peru](#) will start its trial of former President [Alberto K. Fujimori](#) on Monday, making him the country's first former head of state to be tried on human rights violations, including murder and kidnapping.

Preparations for the trial have already stirred considerable unease as Peruvians grapple with revelations of the counterinsurgency methods used by Mr. Fujimori's government during his 10-year presidency, from 1990 to 2000, to combat two rebel groups, [Shining Path](#) and the Túpac Amaru Revolutionary Movement.

"I want him to be judged severely because he ordered to kill," said Raida Condor, 65, who lost her son Armando in a massacre of nine students and a professor from La Cantuta University in 1992. "For 15 years, I have searched for justice and to know why my son died the way he died."

The 10 victims were abducted in July 1992; their incinerated bodies were found a year later on a hillside outside Lima, Peru's capital. Mr. Fujimori, 69, faces charges related to those killings and another massacre, of 15 people, including an 8-year-old boy, at a barbecue in the Barrios Altos area of Lima in November 1991.

The former president faces 30 years in prison if he is convicted.

Those killings and others took place during a harrowing time of guerrilla attacks in the heart of Lima. Mr. Fujimori ultimately subdued the insurgencies, capturing Abimael Guzmán, the supreme leader of the Maoist-inspired Shining Path, in 1992, and defeating Túpac Amaru after its seizure of the Japanese ambassador's residence in 1997.

But the costs were staggering: nearly 70,000 people died in Peru's long internal war, from 1980 to 2000, a government-appointed commission determined in 2003. And Mr. Fujimori allowed his intelligence chief, [Vladimiro Montesinos](#), to create a spy apparatus infamous for its corruption, opaque finances and reports of extrajudicial killings. Both men fled the country and have been extradited to face trial.

From the start of his term in 1990, Mr. Fujimori may have recognized that human-rights atrocities could result from his counterinsurgency efforts, according to documents obtained by the National Security Archive, an organization at [George Washington University](#) that seeks and publishes declassified United States government documents.

"President Fujimori will support a two-tiered antisubversion plan," read a secret August 1990 memo from the United States Embassy in Lima, citing a former intelligence officer as its source.

One tier of the plan, the memo said, "will be public and will include a strong human rights emphasis." But a "secret portion" of the plan would strengthen the intelligence

service, while also preparing the authorities to respond to claims of human-rights abuses, the memo said.

The document is one of several the archive is posting on its Web site on Monday. Before the trial, the archive made hundreds of documents available to Peruvian human-rights groups.

“These declassified records carry a unique evidentiary value for holding even the highest human-rights violators legally accountable,” said Peter Kornbluh, a senior analyst at the archive.

Another document, which will also be made public by the archive on Monday, is a declassified [Defense Intelligence Agency](#) cable from June 1997. It ties Mr. Fujimori directly to the executions of unarmed rebels who had surrendered after the hostage crisis at the Japanese ambassador’s home. “President Fujimori issued the order to ‘take no prisoners,’” the cable said.

That episode, however, is outside the scope of this trial.

The trial, expected to last as long as a year, follows Mr. Fujimori’s extradition in September from Chile, where he had been living since 2005 after ending his self-imposed exile in Japan. He had fled to Tokyo in 2000, faxing his resignation from there amid disclosures of corruption in Peru.

Mr. Fujimori’s reckoning with Peru’s justice system should have its first results in coming days in a separate, smaller case in which he admitted to ordering the illegal search of the home of Mr. Montesinos, his former spy chief. Prosecutors have asked for a seven-year sentence, though it could be less if Mr. Fujimori pleads guilty, legal experts say.

In addition to that case and the human-rights trial, Mr. Fujimori faces charges of bribing lawmakers and journalists, illegally appropriating public funds to bribe Mr. Montesinos and widely tapping phones.

But the most haunting charges are those that have taken Peruvians back to the early 1990s, when a shadowy squad of military intelligence officers, known as the Colina Group, which was responsible for the Barrios Altos and La Cantuta killings, was formed.

Mr. Fujimori contends that he did not know the unit existed, blaming Mr. Montesinos for orchestrating its operations. But evidence indicates that the group was established within Mr. Fujimori’s military and intelligence branches with the knowledge of high-ranking officials, according to [Human Rights Watch](#) in New York and other groups.

Santiago Martín Rivas, the former army major who was the group’s chief of operations, has stated publicly that Mr. Fujimori ordered the group to carry out a policy of killing subversives.

Mr. Fujimori’s lawyer said Saturday that Mr. Martín Rivas had offered no proof.

Meanwhile, human rights advocates and relatives of people killed during the war gathered Sunday in Lima at a monument to the victims. Miguel Jugo, a director of Aprodeh, a human rights group, said, "Peru should reflect on the permanent struggle of relatives in their demands for justice and truth."