

Dear members of the European Court of Human Rights and the Committee Against Torture of the United Nations

We address you with the utmost respect as individuals who were subjected to torture during the late period of Franco's dictatorship and the Spanish Transition by members of the Spanish Security Forces, particularly the Politico-Social Brigade. These repressive units of the Franco's dictatorship targeted, detained, and tortured political dissidents, as well as, anyone the regime considered contrary to its promoted values and identity: members of the Roma community, people of diverse sexual and/or gender identities, national identities, individuals in situations of economic vulnerability, sex workers, among others.

It has now been 50 years since the death of the dictator Francisco Franco, and 50 years as well since we, the repressed individuals and victim groups, began demanding justice for the crimes against humanity we suffered firsthand. We have approached political leaders, organized protests, demanded access to police archives, participated in debates, conferences, and awareness campaigns, educated younger generations, filed claims, promoted legislative changes, brought cases before the courts, and contributed to or appeared in films and documentaries. Beyond occasional kind words, the response has always been the same: that the crimes committed by dictatorship's institutions had been amnestied and could not be investigated or prosecuted, and that it was best not to reopen the past. We have continued to fight, and some of us have even reached regional and international bodies like the ones you represent. Until now, these institutions have responded that our claims are too late, that they should have been filed earlier.

To this, we ask you: earlier when? In the 1980s, when systematic torture was still ongoing and the Franco's police forces and judiciary had not been purged? In the 1990s, when the so-called "pact of silence" was only beginning to break, and in front of the State's complete inaction, we were focusing our efforts on self-organizing to recover the memory of atrocities committed during the war and the early years of the dictatorship? In the 2000s, when, while working for a Historical Memory Law that ended up being little more than symbolic, and as we began to approach the courts, the first judge who attempted to investigate the dictatorship's crimes was charged and prosecuted for prevarication? Let us recall that it is precisely that 2012 Supreme Court ruling that entrenched impunity and laid the foundation that prevents justice from being served today. In the 2010s and beyond, when we collectively, as a group of victims, turned to Argentina so that crimes against humanity could be investigated there under the principle of universal jurisdiction? An investigation which, though symbolically significant, has not resulted in any effective judicial proceedings due to obstruction by Spanish authorities.

After all this, between 2015 and 2020—was that also too late? When over 100 victims filed complaints of crimes against humanity through torture across Spain, only to have them dismissed, perpetuating impunity?

It has only been with the adoption of the national Democratic Memory Law in 2022 that we finally have a legislative framework that, in theory, should respond to our long-standing demands for justice. This is why those of us now formally submitting this petition to your institution initiated criminal proceedings in Spain, believing that justice and reparation were finally possible. But the courts' response has been the same as always: the door remains closed due to a misinterpretation of the principle of legality and statute of limitations, and the 1977 Amnesty Law is cited to prevent investigations into Francoist crimes—even when these constitute crimes against humanity.

What else must happen? Many of those who suffered these crimes are no longer with us; they died without ever being heard by a judge, without their perpetrators being held accountable. We are still alive and still here, asking regional and international bodies to prevent Spain, through its judicial system, from continuing to mock the obligations it assumed when it ratified the European Convention on Human Rights and the Convention against Torture. We ask you to prevent Spanish courts from continuing, in 2025, to defy the fundamental, non-expiring values of dignity and justice.

With all due respect, but also with full conviction, we ask you to put an end to this impunity, because it is never too late for justice—but it must happen now, while we are still alive, while the perpetrators can still be held accountable for the horrific (and not subject to statutory limitations) acts they committed.

Thank you very much for your attention.

Signatures:

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Alberto Goñi Diez | Pamplona Police Station | 1979
Alpe Conceptes Plastificats | Via Laietana 43 | 1971, 1973
Andoni Bedialauneta Laka | Ondárroa Police Station | 1969
Àngel González | Portbou Barracks, Sant Pau Police Station in Barcelona and Via Laietana 43 | 1975
Àngela Gutiérrez Suárez | Madrid General Security Directorate | 1973, 1976
Antoni Serrano i Cortès | Via Laietana 43 | 1971
Antònia Garcia Benítez | Via Laietana 43 | 1973
Antonio Ontañón Toca | Santander Police Station and Torrelavega City Council | 1968 - 1973
Ascensió Solé | Via Laietana 43 | 1966
Benito Laíz Castro | Madrid General Security Directorate | 1970
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Carles Castellanos Llorens | Via Laietana 43 | 1977, 1980, 1981, 1982
Carlos Escartín Otín | Via Laietana 43 | 1975
Carlos Serrano Suárez | Madrid General Security Directorate | 1975
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Domènec Martínez | Madrid General Security Directorate | 1976
Domingo Sáiz | Madrid General Security Directorate | 1970, 1971
Elia Martínez-Cava Carrasco | Via Laietana 43 and Cornellà Civil Guard Barracks | 1976
Emilio Penado Serra | Alacant Police Station | 1968, 1971, 1974
Evaristo Colomina Climent | Madrid Police Station Pamplona | 1973
Felipe Castell Leceaga | General Directorate of Security of Madrid | 1980, 1981
Felisa Echegoyen Castanedo | Canaletes Police Station, Via Laietana 43 | 1974
Francesc Martínez López | Ourense Police Station and Santiago de Compostela Police Station | 1978
Francisco Rodríguez Veloso | Rúa Luis Taboada Police Station | 1978

Francisco Domingo García Montes | General Directorate of Security of Madrid | 1976
Francisco Javier Maestro Backsbacka | Barcelona Civil Guard Barracks | 1971, 1974, 1977
Gabriel Antonio García Ruíz | Via Laietana 43 | 1973
Genoveva Munell | General Directorate of Security of Madrid | 1975
Immaculada Pardo Acosta | Ondarroa, Bizkaia and Burguete Civil Guard Barracks | 1977, 1978, 1980
Iñaki García Arambarri | Zaldibia, Arantzazu and Tolosa Police Stations (Gipuzkoa) | 1969, 1976
Iñaki Olano Goena | Eastern Andalusia Police Headquarters (Granada) | 1974, 1976, 1977
Isabel Alonso Dávila | Via Laietana 43 | 1975
Jaume Roures Llop | General Directorate of Security of Madrid | 1969 i 1971
Jesús Rodríguez Barrio | Rúa Luis Taboada Police Station | 1972, 1974, 1975
Jesús Vázquez González | Via Laietana 43 | 1976
Joan Bové Maeztu | Rocafort Street Police Station (Barcelona) | 1972
Jordi Lozano González | Valencia Police Headquarters | 1973 i 1977
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José Gálvez Miguel | Via Laietana 43 | 1971
José Vicente Martínez Barcelo | Via Laietana 43 | 1974, 1975, 1976, 1977
Josep Rizo | Valencia Police Headquarters | 1976
Juan Porcel Satoca | General Directorate of Security, Madrid | 1974
Juan Antonio Noriega Gómez | Gordoniz Police Station | 1974
Juan José López Hernando | Via Laietana 43 | 1971
Julio Pacheco Yepes | Alacant Police Station | 1975
Lluís Cabrera Sánchez | Valencia and Valladolid Police Headquarters | 1972
Llum Quiñonero Hernández | Erandio Civil Guard Barracks and Ferrol Police Station | 1973, 1980
Lucila Aragón Carrión | Valencia Police Headquarters | 1975, 1978
Luis Suárez-Carreño Lueje | Padrón Civil Guard Barracks and Rúa Luis Taboada Police Station | 1970, 1973
Manuel Monge González | Directorate General of Security, Madrid | 1968, 1973
Manuel Sanmartín Pérez | Via Laietana 43 | 1967
Manuel Reboiras Noia | Zaragoza Police Station | 1975 i 1976
Manuel Blanco Chivite | Via Laietana 43; Police Station on Carrer de Sant Pau, Barcelona | 1970, 1973, 1975
Maria Comellas Doñate | Higher Police Headquarters of Valencia | 1971, 1874
María Sarsa Cebollero | Provincial Police Headquarters and Hospital de la Virgen de Granada | 1975
María Àngels Rabadà Nuñez | Rua Luis Taboada Police Station | 1971, 1974
María Carmen Pérez Navarro | General Security Directorate of Zaragoza | 1969
María del Carmen Morente Muñoz | Via Laietana 43 | 1975
María Luz Maset Catalá | Via Laietana 43 | 1977
Maria Pilar Jodra Peso | Via Laietana 43 | 1975
Maria Teresa Lecha Berges | General Security Directorate, Madrid | 1977, 1980, 1981, 1983
Maria Teresa Ferran Baltà | Via Laietana 43 | 1967, 1969, 1971, 1975
Maribel Ferrandiz | Via Laietana 43 | 1971
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Miguel Àngel Gómez Álvarez | General Security Directorate of Madrid | 1971 i 1973
Montse Clavé | General Security Directorate of Madrid | 1962
Montse Milà Sant Boi de Llobregat Police Station | 1971
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Valeriano Martín Pascual | Indautxu Police Station | 1973, 1975
Vicent Pérez Ventura | Lugo Civil Guard Barracks, A Coruña Police Headquarters | 1971
Vicente Carrión Martínez | Comisaría de Indautxu | 1975
Víctor Ligo Hernando | Cuartel Guardia Civil de Lugo, Jefatura Superior de Policía de A Coruña | 1971
Xabier Onaindia Rivera | Indautxu Police Station | 1979
Xosé María Brañas Pérez | Guardia Civil Station of Lugo, Superior Police Prefecture of A Coruña | 1975