



A former Guatemalan Army lieutenant was extradited Friday from Canada to stand trial in Southern California on federal charges related to the massacre of 250 people in a Guatemalan village in 1982, a case that has resulted in landmark human rights prosecutions in Guatemala and the United States.

U.S. federal officers took custody of Jorge Vinicio Sosa Orantes in Calgary Friday morning and were en route to Los Angeles, U.S. officials said. Sosa, 54, is the highest-ranking officer to have been arrested on charges alleging direct involvement in the massacre by a 20-man unit of elite commandos in the northern Guatemalan farming hamlet of Dos Erres.

In May, ProPublica reported the story of Oscar Alfredo Ramírez Castañeda, who learned only last year that he was a Dos Erres survivor. He had been abducted by a commander of the unit and raised by his family.

Sosa, a karate instructor who holds both U.S. and Canadian citizenship, fled his home in the Los Angeles area in mid-2010 as agents of Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) closed in on him. He went to Mexico and then to Lethbridge in western Canada, where he has family, and was arrested in January of last year, according to U.S. and Canadian court documents. Last month, a Canadian appeals court ended his legal fight to avoid extradition to the United States.

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