

Peru must pay reward in bounty case

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A federal judge in Miami ruled yesterday that Peru must pay a US\$5 million reward to Jose Guevara, who enabled the capture of Peru's former intelligence chief, Vladimiro Montesinos.

The ruling goes against an earlier dismissal of the case under the Foreign Sovereign Immunities Act (FSIA).

"This is a wonderful result," says **Michael Diaz** of **Diaz Reus**, who advises Guevara. "It supports US public policy and will encourage people to come forward and provide information to law enforcement authorities, which is something that will be increasingly important in combating terrorism and arms trafficking."

Peru had offered a reward for information on the whereabouts of Montesinos, a former advisor of former president Alberto Fujimori, who is now standing trial for corruption allegations.

Jose Guevara -- who had previously sheltered and protected Montesinos in Venezuela -- disclosed Montesinos' hiding place and assisted authorities in capturing him. But Peru rescinded its offer and refused to pay Guevara the reward.

Guevara filed a suit against Peru but the case was initially dismissed under FSIA, which protects foreign governments from lawsuits in the United States. Guevara's attorneys then made several appeals to Miami district courts.

In April, Peru lost a motion to dismiss the case, with Guevara's legal team arguing that Peru's offer constituted 'commercial activity'- an exception to the FSIA

"This ruling in favour of Guevara means we avoid a trial, and are one step closer to the final resolution of Guevara getting paid - we have been working on this case for seven years," says Diaz.

According to Diaz, Peru can appeal the ruling, but as since it has been rebuffed by the appellate court before, he doubts a new appeal "has legs."

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