



Saturday, September 13, 2008

Iraq: Detainee death cases headed to trial

Two soldiers await courts-martial for alleged roles in murder plot

By [Matt Millham](#), Stars and Stripes

Mideast edition, Saturday, September 13, 2008

Two junior-ranking soldiers will face courts-martial for their role in an alleged conspiracy to murder four Iraqi detainees in April 2007, the 7th U.S. Army Joint Multinational Training Command announced late Friday.

Charges of conspiracy to commit premeditated murder against Spc. Belmor Ramos, 23, and Spc. Steven Ribordy, 25, were referred to general courts-martial on Monday by Brig. Gen. David R. Hogg, JMTC commander. Both soldiers were members of 1st Battalion, 18th Infantry Regiment at the time of the incident. The unit has since reflagged and is now part of the 172nd Infantry Brigade.

Ramos' court-martial is scheduled to start at 10 a.m. on Thursday at Rose Barracks, Vilseck, Germany, according to an Army statement. Ribordy's court-martial has not yet been scheduled.

Ramos and Ribordy both waived their right to an Article 32 hearing, which is similar to a grand jury hearing. Both soldiers were brokering plea deals as the Article 32 for two other soldiers kicked off in August.

The other soldiers, Sgt. Jess Cunningham, 27, and Sgt. Charles Quigley, 28, also have been charged with conspiracy to commit premeditated murder in the incident. Their Article 32 concluded Aug. 28.

"Those cases have not been referred to trial and are pending the recommendation of the presiding investigating officer," according to an Army statement.

Testimony given by various witnesses during the Article 32

indicated that none of the four soldiers so far charged in the case actually killed Iraqi detainees, but were nearby when three noncommissioned officers, including a company first sergeant, a platoon sergeant and a senior medic, allegedly shot four unarmed detainees near a canal in southwest Baghdad.

© 2008 Stars and Stripes. All Rights Reserved.