

# Javier Duarte: Accused governor detained in Guatemala

**Javier Duarte, accused of stealing millions of dollars from government, found in Guatemala and could face extradition.**

16 Apr 2017 11:11 GMT

- Ex-Veracruz state governor was accused of crime, embezzlement
- Duarte resigned in 2016 and went on the run
- He allegedly stole millions of dollars from government
- After finding him in Guatemala, authorities apply for extradition

A fugitive former governor of [Mexico's](#) Veracruz state suspected of embezzling hundreds of millions of dollars has been detained in [Guatemala](#) after six months on the run, officials said on Saturday.

Javier Duarte "was located and detained for the purpose of extradition in the municipality of Panajachel", in Guatemala's Solola department, Mexico's attorney general said in a statement.

A photo released by Guatemalan police showed a bespectacled Duarte, clad in a grey shirt and black jacket-vest, being escorted by Interpol agents.

Manuel Noriega, deputy director of Interpol in Guatemala, said Duarte was located at a hotel where he was staying with his wife. He was asked to leave his room, did so voluntarily and then was arrested without incident in the lobby.

Noriega said Duarte would be presented before a judge to consider his possible extradition.

Mexico requested Guatemala's assistance in capturing the fugitive ex-governor of Veracruz, which borders the Gulf of Mexico. The operation was carried out jointly with national civil police and Interpol.

## Corruption charges

Duarte, who became governor in 2010, resigned last year before the end of his term and then went on the run.

Interpol [issued](#) an international arrest warrant against him. A reward of 15 million pesos (\$730,000) had been offered for his capture.

In January, authorities got two companies to return \$19.3m obtained illegally from the Duarte government.

A month later, authorities seized a warehouse full of Duarte's artworks, antiques and personal journals. They also found luxurious saddles, silverware sets, ostentatious furniture, school supplies and even wheelchairs - presumably owned by the government.

Investigators were said to have found a set of documents linking the ex-governor's wife, Karime Macias de Duarte, directly to the preparation and execution of actions to divert public resources for the personal benefit of some accomplices.

During Duarte's tenure, Veracruz became one of the most violent states in Mexico, with bloody murders by drug cartels, [several cases](#) of enforced disappearance and the murder of 17 journalists.

"For many Mexicans, Duarte came to symbolise the worst aspects of the political class here: corruption, incompetence and, until his capture, impunity," Al Jazeera's John Holman, reporting from Mexico City, said.

"That's why his capture is really important for Mexico's federal government because until now it seemed that they just let him slip through their fingers despite all these allegations swirling around him."

Source: Al Jazeera and news agencies

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