Timeline

1952, 1958, 1964	Socialist Senate leader Salvador Allende makes three failed attempts for the presidency under the Frente de Acción Popular (Popular Action Front).
1970	On November 3, Salvador Allende, as leader of the Unidad Popular (Popular Unity party), defeats a former president, Jorge Alessandri, to assume the presidency. Allende implements controversial social and economic reforms in his "Chilean Way to Socialism" program.
1971	Chile reestablishes political and economic ties with Cuba and Fidel Castro visits the country, lending vocal support to Allende's presidency. This act is seen by Western powers as a clear move toward communism.
1971–1972	Inflation rises precipitously in Chile, and copper, the country's chief export, loses value on the international market. The Chilean economy declines rapidly.
1973	The Christian Democrats—the majority of the Chilean Congress—and the right-wing Nationalist Party form the Confederación Democrática (Democratic Confederation) to challenge Allende's presidency. On June 29, Colonel Roberto Souper directs an unsuccessful coup against Allende outside the presidential palace. On August 22, the commander-in-chief of the Chilean army, Carlos Prats, is pressured to resign and is replaced by General Augusto Pinochet. The Chamber of Deputies publicly proclaims that Allende's socialist policies have violated the Chilean Constitution and led to the "breakdown" of Chilean democracy. On September 11, Pinochet leads the Chilean army in a violent coup that ends Allende's government and brings the country under a harsh military dictatorship. (Allende makes a farewell speech shortly before the capture of the palace and is believed to have committed suicide.) On September 13, Pinochet dissolves Congress. The junta (the military force that had taken over the country) establishes a detention camp for political dissidents at the National Stadium. On October 6, the Comité Pro-Paz (Pro-Peace Committee), a coalition of religious organizations, is organized to help people targeted by the dictatorship.

	In November, the Directorate of National Intelligence (DINA) is secretly created to eliminate, oftentimes through human rights abuses, political parties that oppose the junta.
1974	A group of women in search of disappeared family members organize the arpillera workshops.
1975	Following Pinochet's threats to abolish the Comité Pro-Paz, Cardinal Silva forms the Vicaría de la Solidaridad (Vicariate of Solidarity) to aid afflicted families and search for the disappeared.
1976	Led by newly elected President Jimmy Carter, United States legislators pass a law that restricts foreign aid to governments implicated in human rights abuses.
1978	The Chilean Supreme Court upholds a provision for amnesty for acts committed by military government officials during the first three years of the dictatorship.
1980	The military government enacts the Chilean Constitution of 1980 through a plebiscite.
1988	On October 5, under provisions in the constitution of 1980, a referendum is held to decide the country's leadership. Chileans defy Pinochet and vote for a return to democracy. The arpillera workshops under the Vicaría de la Solidaridad are dissolved. A new group of arpilleristas establishes the Fundación Solidaridad to carry on the social and political commentary of the original arpilleristas.
1989	Presidential elections are held.
1990	On March 11, Pinochet steps down and Patricio Alwyn is democratically elected president. Pinochet becomes the commander-in-chief of the army.
1991	The National Commission on Truth and Reconciliation releases the Rettig Report, which chronicles some of the human rights violations committed under the military junta.
1998	Pinochet assumes a seat in the Chilean Senate, as prescribed in the constitution of 1980.

Timeline

1998	On October 16, while seeking medical treatment in London, Pinochet is arrested by British police on a warrant issued by a judge in Spain. He is charged with major human rights violations and spends more than a year under house arrest, but he is released under pressure of the Chilean government.
2000	On March 11, Ricardo Lagos, who emerged as a leader during Chile's democratic recovery of the 1980s, is elected the thirty-third president of Chile. He enjoys record approval ratings by the time his presidency expires in 2006. In August, the Chilean Supreme Court rescinds Pinochet's immunity. He is prosecuted but is later found unfit to stand trial on account of dementia.
2004	Sergio Valech leads an investigative commission that produces a detailed report on the human rights abuses of the Pinochet regime.
2005	In November, Pinochet is found fit to stand trial and is charged with human rights violations.
2006	On March 11, Michelle Bachelet, whose father died three decades earlier at the hands of DINA, is sworn in as Chile's first female president. On December 10, Augusto Pinochet dies in Santiago at the age of 91.