



**GLOBAL
INITIATIVE**
AGAINST TRANSNATIONAL
ORGANIZED CRIME

ASSASSINATION WITNESS

**AN ONGOING CAMPAIGN TO
REMEMBER, REPORT AND RESPOND**

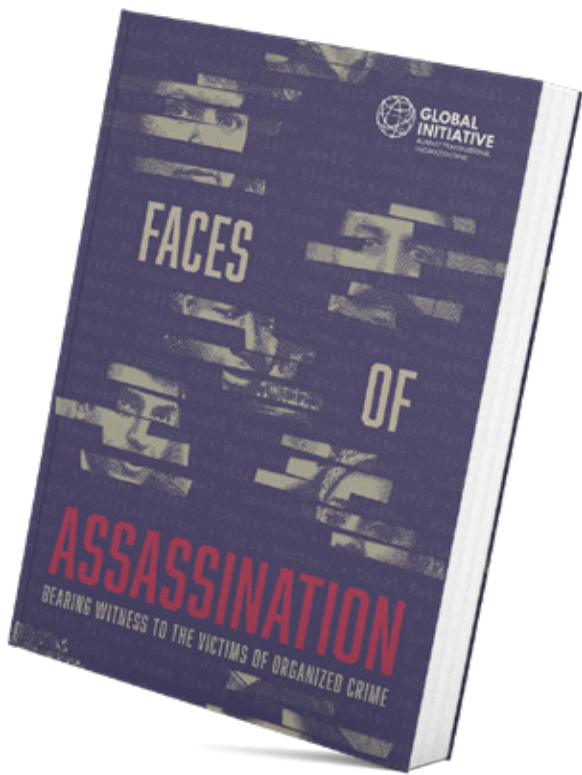
INTRODUCTION



**DURING THE 21ST CENTURY,
THOUSANDS OF CRIMINAL
ASSASSINATIONS HAVE
OCCURRED WORLDWIDE**

Berta Cáceres, Rajendra Singh, Boris Nemtsov, Ahmed Hussein-Suale Divela, Marielle Franco are just a few of the brave men and women coming from different backgrounds and locations, who had the same aim to free their communities and societies from the corroding influence of organized crime actors. While all are privately remembered, most are publicly forgotten.

With the publication of **Faces of Assassination: Bearing witness to the victims of organized crime**, the Global Initiative Against Transnational Organized Crime is launching a global campaign **#AssassinationWitness**, to shine a light on this global phenomenon that occurs in developed and developing countries alike.



**FACES OF ASSASSINATION
ASSEMBLES 50 PROFILES
OF PEOPLE ASSASSINATED
BY CRIMINAL GROUPS IN 40
COUNTRIES SINCE THE START OF
THE MILLENNIUM. THESE MEN
AND WOMEN WERE MURDERED
BECAUSE THEY CONFRONTED,
WEAKENED OR THREATENED
CRIMINAL GROUPS.**

Criminal organizations, in alliance with corrupt politicians and nefarious corporations, use assassinations to control and influence industries, judiciaries, political activities, media platforms, and basic utilities. Organized

crime effects every social structure in which the fundamental fabric of community life is woven. Broad swathes of a community's institutions suffer when one of their own is struck down: schools, businesses, places of worship, newspaper offices, police forces and the judiciary. Violence leaves an indelible and traumatic mark on countries, cities and communities worldwide. The consequences of an assassination can therefore be far-reaching, leaving repercussions that last long after the shots are fired.



Our work on assassination shows, in a tangible way, the human cost of organized crime, and how the force for change these targeted individuals brought to their communities and institutions was crushed.

Often, as people react to a killing and rally round the victim's cause, assassinations may serve to galvanize communities, sustain resilience and fuel hope.

Time and again, when a community bears witness to, memorializes, and remembers the sacrifice made and life lived, enduring change is more likely to result.

At the Global Initiative, we have seen from our own experience that civil society – both at the local and national level, and particularly where state governance is eroded, weak or compromised – is often the greatest driving force for positive change. Although this is what puts them at risk of being targeted by corrupt and criminal groups in the firstplace, it is also the very reason why it is essential to protect and support civil society in every way we can.



#ASSASSINATIONWITNESS CAMPAIGN

The launch of this book is the start of a wider commitment to keep assassinations in the public consciousness, and to seek more effective responses to prevent and respond to each and every death. We invite you to join your forces with ours in this campaign that will have four missions:

1. WE WILL MAINTAIN A GLOBAL DATABASE OF ASSASSINATIONS, to ensure that there is a reliable and regular means to monitor what is regrettably becoming a global phenomenon. This database, that will sit in the public domain, will follow estimates of the scale of the problem and allow for trends to be analyzed. The global monitor will create an irrefutable evidence basis upon which action can be demanded from states and multilateral bodies to respond.

2.

WE WILL CONTINUE TO BEAR WITNESS TO THE ULTIMATE SACRIFICE that these people have made and pay homage to their bravery and integrity in the face of violence. We will be continuing to commission profiles that tell their stories and the causes for which they lost their lives, and we hope that these profiles will serve as an enduring public tribute for their families, friends and colleagues, many of whom continue to face the same dangers and confront the same criminal interests that took the lives of their lost ones.

3.

#ASSASSINATIONWITNESS WILL KEEP EACH INDIVIDUAL CASE IN THE SPOTLIGHT, and demand justice and due process. On every death anniversary we will be actively following up on the cases of those assassinated and demanding that due process is served: that the cases are investigated, and that the perpetrators are brought to justice. We will be seeking justice for those who ordered the killing, not just those who pulled the trigger, regardless of how high up in society or the state they may go. We

will highlight cases of inaction and of obfuscation, and we hope that by increasing the public and international prominence of these cases, it may put pressure on the authorities to investigate these cases and bring those responsible to justice. We will try and support the creation of tools and processes in the hope that this will improve both global and national responses to assassinations and contribute to the global effort to make the work of anti-corruption activists, lawyers, journalists and human-rights defenders around the world safer.

4.

WE WILL JOIN FORCES WITH OTHER CIVIL-SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS who are also championing this cause and undertaking selfless advocacy work, and we will seek to amplify those efforts through podcasts and other policy-outreach activities. Many of those activists killed do not have anyone to champion their cause, educate and build capacity for prevention, or support the families of victims. In those cases, the Global

Initiative Against Transnational Organized Crime and its civil society Resilience Fund, will fill that void and will try to catalyze the creation of a sustainable framework in collaboration with others.

Brought together, our aim with these four missions is to draw public attention to the fact that, across the world, those who stand up for transparency and seek to maintain public integrity are facing a grave threat of violence. It is essential that we work to support civil society, activists, journalists and others who may be at risk – whether this is by providing financial and legal support, advice, training and protection, or by building transnational networks through which these people can share knowledge and experience.

This campaign is our call to the international community to recognise organized crime as a force that opposes the integrity, tenacity and principles shown by those who have stood against injustice and corruption, and who paid the ultimate price for having done so.

CAN WE **HELP** EACH OTHER?

You are receiving this because we have identified your organization as one advocating on behalf of an individual or a vulnerable sector that is or has been targeted by criminal groups and at risk of assassination. We want our efforts to reinforce yours, and we hope that you will support our campaign.

FACES OF ASSASSINATION
WILL BE LAUNCHED ON THE
15TH OF JUNE AT 9.00AM CEST



Here are some ways we think we can help each other:

1. **PLEASE SHARE THE LAUNCH OF FACES OF ASSASSINATION BOOK AND CAMPAIGN**, using our hashtag #AssassinationWitness via your website and social media. We can provide material to make it an easy and effective outreach.

2. **SHARE WITH US ANY HIGHLIGHTS OF YOUR WORK**, evidence or data collected that we can incorporate into our campaign – with attribution to you, of course – that will help to illustrate the impact of assassinations in your community or sector.

3. **ALERT US TO MORE ASSASSINATIONS, DEVELOPMENTS** in the cases you are following or any positive examples you can provide about how communities respond, so that we can help raising attention and sharing lessons learned.

4.

REACH OUT IF YOU WOULD BE INTERESTED IN BEING INVOLVED

in our podcasts and other feature activities as part of the campaign, or if you have ideas on other ways we can collaborate.

5.

REFER TO US PERSONS OR ORGANISATIONS YOU THINK THE GI-TOC COULD BE IN TOUCH WITH.

To communicate with us, you can email directly to the address provided at the end of this folder or by our contact form on the website.




ABOUT THE GLOBAL INITIATIVE

The Global Initiative Against Transnational Organized Crime is a network of professionals working on the frontlines of the fight against the illicit economy and criminal actors.

Through a network of global civil society observatories on the illicit economy, we monitor evolving trends and work to build the evidence basis for policy action, disseminate the expertise of our Network and catalyze multisectoral and holistic responses across a range of crime types. With the Global Initiative's Resilience Fund, we support community activists and local NGOs working in areas where crime governance is critically undermining people's safety, security and life chances.

The Global Initiative has extensive experience in partnering with international organizations and civil society. Among its many collaborative initiatives are: the Assassination Witness ZA, a partnership with the Open Society Foundation and the Institute for Safety Governance at the University of Cape Town, which monitors targeted 'hits' and contract killings in South

Africa. Additionally, through the EU-funded ENACT programme, the GI-TOC works together with the Institute for Security Studies and INTERPOL in delivering cutting-edge research, policy engagement and capacity building across Africa, including the development of unique analysis tools such as the Organised Crime Index (ocindex.net). Jointly with Babson College's Initiative on Human Trafficking and Modern Slavery and International Organization for Migration (IOM), the GI-TOC founded the initiative Responsible and Ethical Private Sector Coalition against Trafficking (RESPECT), which aims to assemble key thought leaders, practitioners, and policy makers to identify solutions to public and private sector challenges surrounding modern slavery. Moreover, together with Poseidon – Aquatic Resource Management Ltd., the GI-TOC launched the IUU Fishing Index, a tool designed to provide a better understanding of illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing worldwide. To know more about our Initiatives, please check our website.



CONTACT

Please reach out to us for more information or to discuss potential collaboration. You can also subscribe to our newsletter to receive information on our work and stay updated.

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