

## **Joint open letter to the members of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe: Call for a PACE Special Rapporteur on Daphne Caruana Galizia's assassination and the crimes she exposed**

19 January 2018

Dear Members of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe,

Daphne Caruana Galizia was by all accounts Malta's most widely read and influential journalist. She had an immeasurable impact on Malta's politics over the course of her thirty-year career and single-handedly uncovered some of the country's biggest corruption scandals, exposing Maltese institutions for their unwillingness to pursue powerful and well-connected members of the country's business and political class.

Known by her hundreds of thousands of readers in Malta and elsewhere simply as 'Daphne', she was assassinated on 16 October 2017 in broad daylight by a remote-controlled car bomb as she left her home in Malta.

Only months before, Daphne Caruana Galizia had uncovered systemic government corruption implicating senior members of her country's government, showing how offshore structures exposed in the Panama Papers were used to receive and launder kickbacks on the sale of Maltese passports and process unexplained payments from members of Azerbaijan's ruling family.

In a January 2018 report of a European Parliament fact-finding mission to Malta, the country's Commissioner of Police confirmed on record that no police investigations took place into any of Daphne Caruana Galizia's Panama Papers revelations. The senior government figures implicated in her investigative reporting remain in public office.

In a context of complete impunity for the high-level corruption Daphne Caruana Galizia exposed and the legal, financial and other threats she faced from figures in or close to government before her assassination, her killing has underlined in shocking fashion the extent of corruption and rule of law failings in Malta. The threat to the country's liberal democracy and press freedom is a real one: Malta has slipped sixteen places in a single year in Freedom House's latest global ranking.

Daphne Caruana Galizia's violent death and the impunity for the crimes she revealed have serious consequences in the most fundamental areas of the work of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe.

At the winter session in Strasbourg, Daphne Caruana Galizia's three sons will be calling for a special rapporteur to be appointed whose mandate will involve monitoring the ongoing murder investigation in Malta, investigating the broader circumstances surrounding Daphne Caruana Galizia's death, and ensuring there is no impunity for the perpetrators of the crimes Daphne Caruana Galizia exposed.

We ask you to heed their call and to support their efforts in every possible way in the interests of all of us who work to see justice and bring an end to impunity.

Yours sincerely,

- **Ricardo Gutiérrez**, General Secretary, European Federation of Journalists (EFJ)
- **Antoine Bernard**, Deputy Director General of Reporters Without Borders (RSF)
- **Patricia Moreira**, Managing Director, Transparency International
- **Barbara Trionfi**, Executive Director, International Press Institute (IPI)
- **Carles Torner**, Executive Director, PEN International
- **Tom Gibson**, EU Representative, Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ)
- **Anna Bevan**, Assistant Director, International News Safety Institute (INSI)
- **Ernest Sagaga**, Head of Human Rights and Safety, International Federation of Journalists (IFJ)
- **Joy Hyvarinen**, Head of Advocacy, Index on Censorship
- **Natalia Yerashevich**, Director of the Secretariat, Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum
- **Katie Morris**, Head of Europe and Central Asia, ARTICLE 19
- **Antonia Byatt**, Interim Director, English PEN
- **Dr Lutz Kinkel**, European Centre for Press and Media Freedom (ECPMF)
- **William Horsley**, VP and Media Freedom Representative, Association of European Journalists (AEJ)