International Federation of Resistance Fighters (FIR) – Antifascist Association

Michel Vanderborght Award 2026

The Laureates

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Michel Vanderborght Award 2026

The Laureates

Belgium:
Julien Dohet

Germany:
“widersetzen” - antifascist network

Greece:
Gregoris Touglidis

Hungary:
Zelenka Pál
Dr. András Trom

Italy:
Vito Ailara
Mirella Aloisio
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What is the Michel Vanderborght Award"?

The International Federation of Resistance Fighters (FIR) – Antifascist Association hands over – for the fifth time – the Michel-Vanderborght-Award. The ceremony opens the XX regular congress of FIR.
This award honors people and initiatives, who according to the ideals of the anti-fascist resistance movement are engaged for the preservation of memory, for the social and political interests of the survivors and for the continuation of the legacy by special engagement against old and new Nazis. The idea of this price came from our today's President Vilmos Hanti, who proposed to create such a significant symbol for public honoring.

First, we handed over this award 2013 in Brussels, 2016 in Prague, 2019 in Budapest, 2023 in Barcelona, and now in Lisbon.

Why it is named by Michel Vanderborght?

When in summer 1951 the former resistance fighters, the political prisoners, the fighters in the ranks of the Anti-Hitler-Coalition created in Vienna the FIR, they never expected that 75 years later it is an on-going task to remember the women and men, who sacrificed their life, risked their health, and faced fascist punishment for the freedom of their own country, for their political ideals or for humanism. And until today this task is not a main-stream subject.

We underline again and again – these women and men fought not only for their own interests, but they were the basis for our idea of a peaceful and social justice development and solidarity in Europe and the world.

This idea was the political goal of Michel Vanderborght itself. He as Belgian partisan and political resistance fighter continued his political work in the youth organization, than in the anti-colonial movement and later in the preserving the memories of the resistance fight. In 2003 he took as president responsibility for the renewing of FIR until he died. That is why FIR named the price "Michel Vanderborght Award".

Short information about all laureates

Julien Dohet, Belgium

Born in 1975, Julien Dohet holds a bachelor's degree in history and an aggregation in upper secondary education from the University of Liège. After working at the Institute of Economic and Social Labor History (IHOES) and then at the Center for Secular Action (CAL), he is currently an advisor at Setca (FGTB - trade union) in Liège. His main topics are labor movement and the extreme right political powers.

He is the author of nearly 150 articles, notably in the magazine *Espace de libertés*. His other area of study is the history of the labor movement, on which he has already published three books, including *La Belgique* by Jacques Yerna (with Jérôme Jamin, Labor, 2003), and contributed to five others, f.e „Vive la sociale! Mouvement ouvrier, capitalisme et laïcité". He has always fought against capitalism and fascism alongside labor and youth movements. His work *Dis, c'est quoi le fascisme?* has been a great success. He is also a specialist on the Paris Commune and citizen cooperatives.
Julien Dohet is one of the founders of the Liège Antifascist Front (the largest such organization in Belgium) as well as the CAB—Antifascist Collaboration of Belgium. In this way he follows the movement of the students and he is in solidarity with the young people, they fight for their interests of an acceptable social chance and for good education – against the police violence and cutting of sources for schools.

Our Belgium member federation underlined:
He is truly dedicated; he helps young people fight the good fight, does everything in his power to counter the negative image of anti-fascists in the press, and has even taken on a few politicians who are drifting toward the far right, such as Georges Louis Bouchez. He has never stopped working tirelessly behind the scenes, without ever seeking the limelight.
In our view, he truly embodies the qualities this award is meant to honor.

“widersetzen” – Antifascist Action Alliance (Germany)

This antifascist network has been in existence since 2024 and, in a remarkably short time, has managed to mobilize many thousands of people across all parts of Germany to take political action against the AfD and its party conventions. After the VVN-BdA, “Stand Up Against Racism,” and other initiatives had already been mobilizing against public appearances by the AfD for many years, the action coalition was formed in 2024 with the aim of bringing together various projects.

Encouraged by mass protests in Germany following the publication of the “remigration plans” in January 2024, activists who had helped organize acts of civil disobedience against the far right for many years came together. The idea: It’s time to act and take it a step further. We’re supplementing the rallies and demonstrations already planned in Essen with acts of civil disobedience. Since the Assembly Act in North Rhine-Westphalia prohibits calls for blockades, the call for blockades was transformed into an appeal to resist together and prevent the AfD party convention. In total, approximately 50,000 people protested against the party convention—arguably the largest protest in Essen’s history.

In the years since, the coalition has organized several large-scale demonstrations and active protests against AfD party conventions, such as in the small Saxon town of Riesa with approximately 15,000 participants; in November 2025 in Gießen against the founding of the AfD’s youth organization, where over 50,000 people took to the streets; and in the summer of 2026 in Erfurt, when another 50,000 people took to the streets against the AfD, including about 17,000 who participated in blockades of the convention venue. Some party convention delegates arrived as early as 3 a.m. to bypass the blockades. Such actions—which are also symbolic—are intended to hinder the AfD’s advance. To this end, organizers also arranged door-to-door conversations, neighborhood festivals, and town hall meetings.

“widersetzen” is a nationwide anti-fascist alliance with local chapters in over 80 cities. It is supported by a broad coalition of civil society organi-

zations, trade unionists, political parties' youth organizations, and other initiatives. This alliance aims to highlight the breadth and diversity of the protest movement against the AfD and to strengthen local coalitions on the ground.

Grigoris Touglidis (Greece)

Grigoris Touglidis was born into a working-class family. His father was a member of the Greek Resistance during the Second World War. He began working at a really young age. He later studied Marine Engineering at the School of Engineering Prometheus and, in 1964, embarked on his first voyage aboard the oil tanker «Atlantic Emperor».

His trade union activities in the merchant marine made him a target of the military dictatorship. Therefore, he emigrated to former West Germany in 1970, where he worked in industry and soon emerged as a prominent trade union activist within IGM (Metal). In 1974, he joined the Communist Party of Greece (KKE). In the same year, he became a founding member of the Greek Community of Karlsruhe and was elected its first President.

After the military junta, he returned to his homeland and continued to work in the maritime industry. In 1978, he was elected Second General Secretary of the Panhellenic Union of Merchant Marine Engineers (PEMEN). He played a leading role in organizing major strike mobilizations, both in coastal shipping and among ocean-going vessels operating worldwide.

In 1981, his party, the KKE, honored him by nominating him as a candidate for parliament in the 2nd District of Piraeus. In 1982, he was elected to the Executive Board of the Piraeus Labour Centre.

He returned to sea in 1985. Following the worldwide strike organized by the Panhellenic Seamen's Federation in 1986, he became the target of employer retaliation because of his trade union activity. The vessel on which he served was the only one among the twelve ships of the company (KONKAR) fleet to participate in the 48-hour strike. As a consequence, he was effectively blacklisted and was unable to secure employment with any shipping company. To support himself and his family, he worked as a sewing machine mechanic, a trade he had learned while employed by SINGER during his years in Germany.

After retiring from the Seamen's Pension Fund (NAT) in 1995, he remained continuously active in the Union of Retired Merchant Marine Engineers. In 2019, he was elected to its Executive Board.
He subsequently served as President of the Association of Friends of the National Resistance of Piraeus and later as President of the Panhellenic Association of Descendants and Friends of the National Resistance and the Democratic Army of Greece. He held this position until the Association merged with the Panhellenic Union of Fighters of the National Resistance and the Democratic Army of Greece (PEAEA-DSE). Following the merger, he was elected to the Central Executive Board of PEAEA-DSE and subsequently served as its First Vice President.
In 2013, he was elected to the Executive Committee of the International Federation of Resistance Fighters (FIR). In this rank, he did an important work together with his comrade Christos Tzintsilonis, the former vice-president. Since 2019, he has served as Federation's Vice President.

Zelenka Pál (Hungary)

Born in 1953, after completing his training, he worked in the organization and management of various projects in the fields of civil engineering, flood control, and water supply. With the end of the state-run economic system, he entered the private sector as an entrepreneur. He took over an export company specializing in vehicle parts, including agricultural machinery and components for state-of-the-art combine harvesters and balers. Over the past decade, the plant has expanded significantly, creating new jobs in the region. Three plants now manufacture products for foreign orders, thereby contributing to the growth of the Hungarian economy.

It is impressive that Pál Zelenka has been actively involved in a wide range of charitable causes throughout his years as an entrepreneur. Since 1993, for example, his companies have supported the István Károlyi Children's Center in Fót. He assisted the Children's Nutrition Foundation (Gyermekétkeztetési Alapítvány) with the purchase of food.
As an engineer with experience in flood protection, he has on several occasions provided large sums for emergency measures related to flood and inland flood protection along the Danube and the Tisza rivers; in 2010, for example, he donated approximately 4 million HUF to aid flood victims.

For more than 10 years, he has supported schools operated by the National Roma Self-Government, as well as disadvantaged students at various elementary schools, through in-kind and monetary donations. This also includes symbolic gestures, such as distributing St. Nicholas gift packages to day centers for people with disabilities or organizing Christmas parties for disadvantaged children in collaboration with the National Roma Self-Government.
For his charitable work and as a successful entrepreneur, he has received numerous social and state honors. These include, for example, the honorary order "Ordines Internationales Pro Concordia Populorum" in recognition of his meritorious and successful work in the interest of the people. He is an honorary citizen of Budapest's 13th District. In recognition of his entrepreneurial achievements, he has also received numerous awards, particularly for revitalizing the Hungarian automotive industry and promoting vocational training.
His social recognition is reflected in the "Mercure Prize" for successful economic activity and diverse charitable engagement, the "For Budapest" award, and the Miklós Radnóti Prize against Racism, awarded by MEASZ (Association of Hungarian Resistance Fighters and Anti-Fascists), followed by the "Ambassador of Humanism" certificate.
We hereby honor Pál Zelenka, a figure who, as a successful entrepreneur in Hungary, demonstrates a high level of social and charitable commitment.

Dr. András Trom (Hungary)

András Trom was born on March 8, 1943, in Pécs. His parents were Aladár Trom and Erzsébet Bokor. He graduated from the Karl Marx University of Economics in 1966. In 1969, he defended his dissertation on communication theory. From 1966 to 1971, he worked as an editor at Hungarian Television. From 1972 to 1977, he served as an editor and foreign correspondent. Between 1977 and 1991, he was an employee of the Hungarian News Agency (MTI), serving, among other roles, as head of the Department of International Relations, as a correspondent in Tokyo, and as chief economic advisor. From 1980 to 1985, he served on a volunteer basis for the Hungarian National Commission for UNESCO.
From 1991 to 2005, he was a journalist for the business daily *Világgazdaság*. In 2005, he founded Polonia Press (Polish Press Service in Hungary). From 2012 to 2021, he worked in the foreign policy section of

MÚOSZ (Association of Hungarian Journalists), and from 2017 to 2021 he even served as vice president of MÚOSZ.

His greatest contribution to the anti-fascist cause is his role as the custodian of Sándor Radó's estate and researcher of his life story. In a comprehensive essay published in August 2026 in the Jewish biweekly magazine "Új Élet," he wrote:

"For decades, the principle of remembrance and warning—which has become one of the central ethical and moral tenets of Holocaust remembrance in modern Israel—was perhaps the most important guiding principle of my life. For me, this became a driving force, as a fortunate twist of fate allowed me to encounter an extraordinary individual, and we grew together as a family. ...

My destiny was shaped by the fact that in 1963, my mother's second husband became Sándor Radó—a geographer who had a decisive influence on 20th-century national and international cartography, and at the same time one of the most successful Soviet military intelligence officers deployed before and during World War II in the fight against Nazism and fascism. He died 45 years ago, on August 20, 1981, at the age of 81. As his adopted son and heir, as the guardian of his legacy, and as a researcher into his fate, I have since been committed to ensuring that his name and his work are not forgotten."

András Trom wrote about Sándor Radó: *"During the time of the Soviet Republic, he served as political commissar of an artillery unit in the Hungarian Red Army. After the collapse of the Soviet Republic, he emigrated to Vienna, where he was able to study geography, cartography, transportation geography, ethnography, and economic history. ... In Vienna, he met his first wife, the German Helena (Lene) Jansen ... They married in Leipzig in 1923, and Radó became chief of staff of the "proletarian hundred-man units" during the Weimar Republic. ... Beginning in 1929, Radó worked as a secret agent for the General Staff of the Red Army in Western Europe. After Hitler came to power, the family (including their two sons and Lene's mother) moved first to Paris and then, in 1936, on to Geneva. This marked the beginning of a decisive phase in Radó's life: preparations for the secret war against Germany in the service of the Soviet Military Intelligence Service (GRU). He recounted his intelligence activities in his heavily censored book *Dóra jelenti* ("Dóra Reports"), published in 1971 and translated into*

19 languages. In the fall of 1943, the Swiss "Radó Group" was exposed; by that time—beginning in 1940—"Dóra" had transmitted more than 6,000 (!) radio telegrams to headquarters in Moscow: initially regarding preparations for the attack on the Soviet Union, and later concerning German strategic plans, troop deployments, and the situation at the front and in the rear."
It was not until 2006 that András Trom was able to publish the first complete edition of his stepfather's memoirs in Hungary. Today, he is a prominent representative of anti-fascist social forces and also provides ongoing support to MEASZ.

Vito Ailara (Italy)

Vito Ailara is former Mayor of Ustica, Founder and President of the Ustica Island Study and Documentation Centre (Centro Studi e Documentazione Isola di Ustica – APS). He did an exceptional lifelong commitment to preserving historical memory, advancing research on political confinement under Fascism, and promoting the values of democracy, human rights, and anti-fascism.
Alongside imprisonment, "confino"—the Italian system of internal political exile imposed by the Fascist regime— was one of the principal instruments of repression used to silence political dissent and persecute opponents. Among those subjected to confino were Antonio Gramsci, Altiero Spinelli, Umberto Terracini, Giuseppe Di Vittorio, veterans of the Spanish Civil War after 1939, and numerous Yugoslav political prisoners.

For more than four decades, Mr Ailara has devoted himself to researching, documenting, and disseminating the history of Ustica, with particular emphasis on the island's role as a place of political confinement during the Fascist period. His work has restored visibility to the experiences of Antonio Gramsci and many other political prisoners, preserving the memory of persecution while highlighting Ustica's significance as a symbol of resistance, freedom, and democratic values.
Under his leadership, the Ustica Island Study and Documentation Centre has become an internationally recognized institution dedicated to historical research, archival preservation, public history, and civic education. Through publications, exhibitions, conferences, educational programs,

and cultural initiatives, the Centre has made a decisive contribution to ensuring that the history of political confinement is not forgotten but continues to inspire reflection on democracy, human rights, and peace.
Among the most significant initiatives are those dedicated to the study of the exile of Libyans between 1911 and 1934, who were first victims of Giolitti's colonialism and later of Fascist imperialism and the exhibition Political Confinement on Ustica in 1926–1927 – Immotus nec iners, developed by Vito Ailara and Massimo Caserta. Presented in several Italian cities and at the Italian Cultural Centre in Brussels in 2019, the exhibition demonstrates how rigorous historical research can become an effective instrument for democratic education and public engagement.

Mr Ailara's work is distinguished by scholarly excellence, intellectual integrity, and an exceptional ability to build partnerships among historians, cultural institutions, schools, and civil society organizations. His conviction that historical memory is indispensable to safeguarding democracy has guided his activities throughout his career.
The Centre has also developed a strong European dimension through its participation in the Network of Islands of Political Confinement, promoted by the National Association of Former Political Prisoners of Italian Anti-Fascism (ANPPIA). Bringing together Ustica, Ventotene, Ponza, Lipari, and the Tremiti Islands, this network promotes research, cultural cooperation, and educational initiatives that contribute to a shared European remembrance of anti-fascism, democratic resistance, and peace.
Mr Ailara's contribution demonstrates that committed scholarship and civic engagement can profoundly influence public understanding of Europe's democratic heritage. His work has transformed the history of a small Mediterranean island into a European place of remembrance, dialogue, and education, making an outstanding contribution to preserving the memory of those who resisted dictatorship and to promoting the democratic values upon which Europe is founded.

We are convinced that his lifelong dedication to historical research, democratic education, and the preservation of anti-fascist memory fully embodies the ideals and objectives that this prestigious Award seeks to honor.

Mirella Alloisio (Italy)

Mirella Alloisio (born in Sestri Ponente, Genoa, on 11 November 1925) is one of the most distinguished surviving figures of the Italian Resistance and an outstanding witness to the struggle against Fascism and Nazism. Throughout her life, she has combined her experience as a partisan with a long-standing commitment to democracy, women's rights, public education and the preservation of historical memory.

Born into a socialist working-class family Alloisio grew up in an environment where anti-fascist values were deeply rooted. Her family's opposition to Mussolini's dictatorship made resistance to Fascism a natural moral and political choice.

Following the fall of Mussolini on 25 July 1943 and, above all, after the German occupation of Italy following the Armistice of 8 September 1943, the seventeen-year-old Mirella joined the Resistance movement. She quickly became involved in clandestine activities, initially serving as a courier and liaison officer. During the underground struggle she adopted several nomi di battaglia (war names) - Olga, Marika, and finally Rossella - changing identity whenever security required it.

Despite her youth, Alloisio soon assumed responsibilities of exceptional importance within the Regional National Liberation Committee of Liguria (Comitato di Liberazione Nazionale della Liguria – CLN). She coordinated communications between the regional leadership and local Liberation Committees, maintained contacts with intellectual circles supporting the Resistance, and worked closely with the secretariat of the Military Command. Her tasks involved transporting highly sensitive documents, organising clandestine meetings, transmitting orders and intelligence, and ensuring secure communication among the various components of the anti-fascist movement. These activities exposed her daily to the risk of arrest, torture and execution. Her experience demonstrated that women were not merely auxiliaries but central actors in Italy's struggle for liberation. Throughout her later life she consistently stressed the decisive role played by women in the anti-fascist struggle and in the democratic reconstruction of Italy.

After the Liberation, Alloisio joined the Italian Socialist Party of Proletarian Unity (PSIUP) and became active in the Union of Italian Women

(UDI), one of the country's most important women's organizations. In the early 1950s she moved to Umbria, where she met and married the anti-fascist politician Francesco Alunni Pierucci, who would later serve as a member of the Italian Senate.

Her commitment to public service continued through democratic institutions. In 1956 she was elected to the Provincial Council of Perugia and served as Councillor for Public Education. Alongside her political activity she pursued a career as a teacher, devoting decades to education and civic formation before retiring in 1979. Throughout her professional life she regarded education as a continuation of the democratic values for which the Resistance had fought.

Over the following decades, Mirella Alloisio became one of Italy's most respected public witnesses to the Resistance. She has dedicated countless hours to meeting students, speaking in schools, universities and public institutions, convinced that the transmission of historical memory is an essential defense of democracy. Her testimony has consistently emphasized that the Resistance was not only a military struggle but also a moral choice based on freedom, justice, solidarity and respect for human dignity.

For her wartime service she was awarded the War Cross for Military Valour (Croce di Guerra al Valor Militare). In 2021 she was entered into the Golden Roll of Honour of the City of Perugia, and in 2025 the City of Genoa awarded her the Grifo, its highest civic honour, recognising both her role in the Resistance and her lifelong contribution to democratic values.

In 2026, at the age of one hundred, she published her memoir, Quand'ero Rossella. La mia storia di partigiana ("When I Was Rossella: My Story as a Partisan"). The book has become an important contribution to the historiography of the Italian Resistance and to civic education for younger generations.

Today Mirella Alloisio is recognised not only as one of the last surviving protagonists of the Italian Resistance but also as one of its most authoritative voices. Her life embodies the continuity between the anti-fascist struggle, the birth of democratic Italy, the defence of constitutional values, and the commitment to building a Europe founded on peace, freedom, human rights and solidarity among peoples.

Luciano Battiston (Italy)

Luciano Battiston was born on October 28, 1923 in Motta di Livenza (TV), and spent his childhood and adolescence in the hamlet of Fagnigola di Azzano Decimo, in the province of Pordenone (North East Italy).
In 1943, he received his military conscription letter, ready to be mobilized and sent to the Russian front. Because of the Armistice of September 8th, he was sent home, facing the risk to be forced recruiting into the military ranks of the fascists of „Republic of Salo“ (RSI).
Life continued slowly, always under the threat of the fascist black gangs, until, following a partisan operation, he was arrested during a raid on the night between January 5th and 6th, 1945. His home, along with that of many other young men of military age, was identified by three fascist spies.
From here he was taken by the Italian fascists to Pordenone, where he was interrogated and savagely tortured. At the end, he was tried, along with dozens of other young men, by three SS judges at the "Moderno" hotel in Pordenone. Forty of them were sentenced to death. Luciano was considered a draft evader because he had failed to report to the RSI calls. Thanks to the help of Daniele D'Agnolo, a Garibaldi partisan from San Martino al Tagliamento, he managed to obtain a pardon along with two other young men. Most of the other young men locked up in the cells were either shot or hanged during the numerous reprisals ordered by the fascists themselves to weaken the Pordenone population's support for the local resistance.
A few days later, he was transferred to the Udine prison and on the morning of February 4, 1945, he was deported to the Mauthausen concentration camp on February 7, 1945. From the very beginning, he was subjected to the harassment and abuse of the kapos and the SS. He was stripped of everything he owned except his trusty shoes. Luciano Battiston got the registration number 126625. Shaved with a conspicuous cross carved with a razor blade on his head, the striped prisoner uniform, and the red triangle with a red dot underneath, identifying him as a "dangerous prisoner," he faced 14 days of tackling the 186 steps of the "Stairs of Death," which stretched prisoners to the limit, risking their lives at every moment.

After numerous tasks inside and outside the camp, he met by chance in the camp's roll call square his fellow countryman Luigi Belluz. Twenty-one-year-old Luciano and thirty-five-year-old Luigi would never be separated again. When the prisoners were offered a "transport" to a subcamp of Mauthausen, they both agreed to share the same fate. After a journey on foot where beatings and hunger reigned supreme, they arrived at the Amstetten subcamp. Luciano's body and mind were increasingly weakened, and he was repeatedly beaten by the kapos. Later, the two friends are once again on "Transport": They arrive in Ebensee. Exhausted, just a stone's throw from the crematorium given his terrible state, he is fortunate enough to see the Ebensee subcamp liberated by US troops on May 6th, he returned by food.
Having finally returned home to Fagnigola, a few days later he was admitted to the San Vito al Tagliamento hospital for illnesses contracted during the three months of deportation and malnutrition. After weeks of treatment, he was released from the hospital: according to the report, Luciano Battiston, 1.79 cm tall, weighed 28 kg.

He recovers and, after months, decides to emigrate to find work. First he went to Chaumont, France. After marrying the love of his life, Alda Gurizzan, and having a daughter, Dilva Maria, he decides to sail to Venezuela, having found a connection there to work on construction sites. In Maracaibo, he helps as a carpenter in the construction of numerous skyscrapers for an American company.
Upon returning to Italy, he and his wife Alda decided to open a trattoria in Ceggia, in the province of Venice. During this time, he had three more daughters: Renata, Ines Regina, and Maria Rosa. Upon reaching retirement age, he returned to his native region and moved with Alda to Chions, in the province of Pordenone, where he currently lives.
A member of ANED, as long as his physique supported him, he brought his testimony to schools and among the people, always concluding his story with the pride of having forgiven the fascist spies who had led Captain Vettorini's black militiamen during the roundups of January 1945.
“Forgive, but do not forget” was the phrase with which he concluded his story until the end.

Domingos Abrantes Ferreira (Portugal)

From a very young age, he was a prominent fighter against the fascist regime of Salazar and Caetano. His entire life was marked by his deep involvement in the struggle of the working classes, in the creation of free and class-based trade unions, for social, economic, cultural and political rights and for freedom, for the overthrow of fascism and the April Revolution, and in recent decades in the struggle for peace and disarmament, in resistance and struggle against neoliberal and counter-revolutionary policies, warning against and combating the regressive and reactionary projects of the right and far right.

He was a courageous and insightful fighter, a national reference throughout his life, in the clandestine, legal and semi-legal struggle , in his party, the Portuguese Communist Party, in social organizations and in the organs of power, in the Assembly of the Republic to which he was elected in two legislatures and in the Council of State, but also for his writings, lectures and other valuable contributions to the creation of Spaces of Memory, such as the installation of Museums of Resistance and Freedom in Lisbon and Peniche.

He was born in 1936 in the Bica do Chinelo neighborhood, in Vila Franca de Xira, an industrialized municipality with traditions of workers' struggles and associative activities, where he experienced exploitation, poverty, fascist repression very early on, but also the courage and struggle of democrats, workers, and young people .

Before adolescence, he went to live with his parents in the East Zone of Lisboa. At age 11, he began working in a factory and became more familiar with the harshness of exploitation and the struggles of his comrades for rights and against fascism, thus becoming involved in the struggles of young workers.

From 1954 to 1958 he was a leader of the Youth Democratic Unity Movement (MUD Juvenil) and from 1958 to 1959 a leader of the Union of Portuguese Youth (UJP). Later he joined the Portuguese Communist Party, the only party that managed to resist the harsh repression of fascism. He was a member of its Central Committee from 1963 to 2012 and for several years served on its Secretariat and Political Commission.

During the fascist regime, he lived underground for nine years , a period

during which he was responsible for party organization in various regions of the country, particularly in the south of the country. He was a member of the editorial committee of the clandestine newspaper Avante. He was responsible for clandestine printing presses for Avante, one of which, in Seixal, was raided by the PIDE, the fascist political police, in April 1965.
Throughout the years of fascism, he was arrested twice by the PIDE (Portuguese secret police), in 1959 when he was severely tortured, and then in April 1965 in Montijo, when the clandestine house where he lived was raided by the PIDE.
During the fascist regime, he was imprisoned in Aljube, Caxias, and Peniche. He was imprisoned for 11 years, and in the latter, he ended up marrying his lifelong companion, Conceição Matos, so they could correspond. She, also imprisoned by the PIDE, was cruelly and humiliatingly treated and tortured. In December 1961, he escaped with 8 other comrades from Caxias Prison, in the famous escape in Salazar's armored car, an event that signified a major defeat for the Salazar regime and greatly contributed to the development of the anti-fascist struggle and the creation of conditions for the 25th of April 1974. At 90 years old, he is the only surviving former political prisoner from this escape.
After the 25th of April, he was a Member of Parliament, elected by the Setúbal district and, in a second term, by the Lisbon district. Between 2015 and 2022, he was a member of the Council of State, an advisory body to the President of the Republic. He is a member of URAP – Union of Portuguese Anti-Fascist Resistance Fighters, author of studies and articles published in newspapers, magazines and collective editions, with extensive participation in recent years in Conferences, Debates, Symposia, especially in hundreds of lectures in schools, for students and teachers, to which he is invited.
His participation in the Commission for the Installation of Aljube, Museum of Resistance and Freedom, in Lisbon, inaugurated in 2015, was significant and qualified. He is a member of its Advisory Council, and his participation in the Executive Committee of the Installation Commission of the MNRL - National Museum of Resistance and Freedom in the Peniche Fortress, inaugurated in 2024, was equally very significant.

Ana Bazac

Lenka and Ján Kollár (Slovakia)

Their shared motto: "History is not just a list of old events, names, and dates. Let us honor the historical truth we share and remember the heroic deeds of all those who contributed to the defeat of National Socialism and fascism and to the preservation of democracy." Both care for military cemeteries, monuments, memorial plaques, and educational trails; last but not least, they are actively involved in organizing commemorative events.
Lenka Kollár, born on November 12, 1947, comes from an anti-fascist family. Her grandfather died in the Auschwitz concentration camp. He was accused of conspiring with Czechoslovak officers—the very officers who had been sent to the front to fight against the Red Army. As a result, her mother was imprisoned in the Theresienstadt concentration camp at the age of 16. Her father was initially active in the "Pugachev" partisan group; at age 18, he enlisted as a tank soldier in the First Czechoslovak Corps under General Svoboda. He took part in the liberation of the city of Ostrava, where he was seriously wounded.
Lenka worked as a teacher for many years and always instilled in her students values such as patriotism and the defense of their homeland. She organizes visits for students to memorial sites of World War II battles, seeking to remind young people of the horrors of war and the crimes of fascist ideology.
Ján Kollár, born on September 21, 1954, grew up in an environment shaped by the views of his father—a World War II veteran and participant in the anti-fascist resistance in Slovakia. Because of his convictions, he became involved in the youth movement at a young age. Later, he himself led youth groups as part of efforts to educate young people about the history of the resistance. In light of the growing threat of fascism, he has recently organized meetings with military historians, museum visits, and historical field trips for young people and others interested in the subject. He has reported on these activities in regional newspapers to raise awareness of anti-fascist activism among a broader public.
The honoring of both is also to understand as honoring all thus they are as representatives of the civil society active in memorial work, taking responsibility for the graves of the victims and the liberators and giving the historical knowledge to the coming generations.

Baltasar Garzón Real (Spain)

He was born on October 26, 1955, in an Andalusian village to parents of modest means. Garzón originally wanted to become a priest. He attended a seminary for six years. After graduating from high school, however, he began studying law, earning his degree from the University of Seville in 1979.
In 1981, he began his career as a judge. After holding various positions, he became one of the six investigating judges at the Audiencia Nacional, Spain's highest criminal court, in 1988. In the 1993 Spanish parliamentary election, Garzón ran as the second candidate on the PSOE's list in Madrid, and he served in Parliament for several years on behalf of that party.
He became known for numerous court cases in which he also took on politically powerful figures. After returning to the Audiencia Nacional, Garzón launched investigations into the so-called Grupos Antiterroristas de Liberación (GAL, "Anti-Terrorist Liberation Groups"). In the 1980s, these death squads had carried out 28 murders of alleged ETA members or sympathizers, a third of whom, however, were proven to have had no connection to ETA whatsoever.

Garzón gained international prominence in October 1998 with an international arrest warrant against the Chilean dictator General Augusto Pinochet. Pinochet was responsible for the 1973 coup in Chile—against the democratically elected government of the Unidad Popular (UP) under President Allende—in the aftermath of which approximately 3,000 people fell victim to political murders. Garzón's arrest warrant pertained to the murder of Spanish citizens. It was the first case worldwide in which an investigation was launched against a former foreign leader on the basis of international criminal law. Pinochet was subsequently arrested in London and placed under house arrest; however, due to his health condition, he was released in 2000 on the instructions of the British government, after which he was able to return to Chile.
Garzón also launched investigations against members of the Argentine military dictatorship in connection with the disappearance of Spanish citizens, which resulted in one defendant being sentenced to a lengthy prison term.

Garzón made enemies within his own country when, in September 2008, he opened proceedings for crimes against humanity against high-ranking officials of the Franco regime. For the first time, he ordered the exhumation of nearly 20 mass graves from the early phase of Franco's regime. The aim was to investigate the circumstances of the deaths of numerous people who had disappeared during the dictatorship. Garzón cited international human rights conventions, on the basis of which an amnesty for crimes against humanity was not possible.
In February 2009, Garzón launched an investigation into allegations of corruption against high-ranking members of the Partido Popular (PP)—at the time Spain's largest opposition party and, since November 2011, the ruling party. These charges led to a series of counterclaims and defamatory attacks, as well as media, political, and legal campaigns against him—supported by the fascist Falange Española—while Garzón was invited in May 2010 to serve as an advisor at the International Criminal Court for seven months.

The campaigns were successful in that he was barred from practicing law for several years. During this time, Garzón published his book, Cuento de Navidad: es posible un mundo diferente ("A Christmas Tale: A Different World Is Possible"). In it, he addresses various political topics, including human rights, the principle of universal jurisdiction, and the International Criminal Court. In 2008, he published La línea del horizonte ("The Horizon Line"), in which he presents his views on political issues, including impunity and the forgetting of political crimes, migration, and education in a globalized world. 2017, he published his autobiographical work „En el punto de mira („In the crosshairs").

On August 27, 2009, Garzón was awarded the Hermann Kesten Prize by the German PEN Center as a "committed defender of human rights." The American Society of International Law awarded him the Goler T. Butcher Medal in 1999. 2011 he received in Freiburg the Immanuel Kant Global Citizen Award.

Carmen Negrín (Spain/France)

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he is the daughter of a pilot in the Republican Air Force during the Spanish Civil War and an American mother, born in 1947 in New Jersey (USA). Together with her brother, she first moved to Mexico and from there to Paris to live with her grandfather Juan Negrín (1892–1956), who served as Prime Minister of the Spanish Republic from May 1937 until Franco's victory in April 1939. She describes her grandfather as a "man of great kindness, with a strong sense of justice and a tolerant attitude." She also notes that it "took many years to shed light not only on the political figures but also on the historical facts."
After his death in Paris in 1956, she returned to Mexico with her father in 1960, as he had been unable to obtain a residence permit for France. She earned a degree in fine arts from the University of California, Berkeley, as well as degrees in political science and linguistics. After returning to France in 1969, she continued her studies, earning a degree in modern literature from the Sorbonne and a master's degree in education from René Descartes University. After completing her studies, she worked for UNESCO, where she held senior positions until her retirement in 2002; prior to that, she served as a consultant for various French ministries and public institutions.

For the past 15 years, she has served as honorary president of the "Fundación Juan Negrín" (Juan Negrín Foundation) in Las Palmas; this institution functions as an archive, museum, and cultural center dedicated to her grandfather and the Spanish Republic. In addition, she was recently elected president of the Center for Remembrance and Research on the Spanish Republic and the Septfonds Concentration Camp in southern France, where thousands of Republican soldiers and refugees were interned.
In this capacity—as the executor of her grandfather's will—she competently manages the valuable archives of the Ministries of Finance and War, as well as those of the Office of the Head of Government of the Spanish Republic. Her testimony is indispensable for understanding a tragedy that has not yet been fully addressed by recent history.

She has been actively involved in remembrance work for many years. The

Exile Museum in La Junquera—the most important escape route for refugees after the end of the war—and the so-called "Mina de Negrín" (the "Mina Canta" mine, where the paintings from the Prado were brought to safety) were the stops on a trip that Carmen Negrín took to Girona in mid-September 2024. There, she commented: "The work in La Junquera is extraordinary, very professional, and deeply moving. It is also forward-looking. The visits to Camprodon, the Mina Negrín, and the museum in La Junquera touched me deeply. They encourage me to continue fighting for a culture of remembrance."