

Transnational crime



The so-called Operation Condor was the most disastrous example of international cooperation and transnational crime that has ever taken place, according to Italian researcher Francesca Lessa, who has dedicated several years to study the details of this kind of transnational crime sponsored by the United States.

Although Chile, Argentina, Uruguay, Bolivia, Brazil and Paraguay participated in these extermination actions and the disappearance of activists and leftist leaders, actually their tentacles reached many more countries, including Central America.

It is known, for example, that Argentinian military officers advised and trained their Guatemalan counterparts in urban anti-guerrilla tactics, which led to the murder of dozens of fighters and the dismantling of various structures in Buenos Aires and other cities of Argentina during 1981.

Although it is thought that Operation Condor is a coordination intended to the offshore repression that began in the late 1970s and 80s, Lessa points out that at least one decade before, there was already an exchange of information between intelligence bodies of the region.

Even some of these tactics were used against Brazilian exiles in Uruguay, right after the coup d'etat in 1964.

A decisive element for its development was the imposition of the United States National Security doctrine, which included preparing hundreds of officers at the School of the Americas or in other military institutions

located in the United States, such as Fort Bragg.

Francesca Lessa told the newspaper Pagina 12 that her work allowed her to identify 763 victims of this repressive coordination and for years, attended the trials carried out in Argentina against several perpetrators.

She was unable to do the same in Uruguay because she received death threats in 2017 by the Barneix Command, a far-right underground network that harasses judges, witnesses and journalists. This clandestine group, a clear example that the claw of the condor has not disappeared, was created after the death of the Uruguayan General Pedro Barneix, who committed suicide after being prosecuted for serious human rights violations.

So far, Argentina is the only country that has seriously investigated the abuses committed by the regional armies and the police departments. In Chile and Uruguay, there were several trials, but with a very local and limited extent.

There are more questions than answers about Operation Condor and thousands of descendants of their victims still await the truth about those guilty of committing these horrendous crimes against humanity.

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