Justice for victims and accountability for perpetrators of war crimes and crimes against humanity.

Strategic Plan 2014-2017

Executive Summary

August 2014
Civitas Maxima coordinates a network of national and international lawyers and investigators who work for the interest of victims of international crimes. It operates in situations where no legal action to bring the perpetrators to justice has been successful and works in close partnership with the Global Justice and Research Project based in Monrovia. Civitas Maxima represents victims of war crimes and crimes against humanity from Liberia, Sierra Leone and Ivory Coast.

Civitas Maxima was registered in September 2012 as an association in Geneva, Switzerland, and is recognized by the Swiss authorities as a not-for-profit organization.

Civitas Maxima performs no advocacy unless directly connected to, and necessary for the advancement of its cases. It has no political agenda and accepts no donations from individual countries.
So that perpetrators of war crimes and crimes against humanity do not escape justice, so that no country is a safe haven for war criminals, so that victims may advocate for accountability in their own countries or in foreign courts, Civitas Maxima strengthens the capacity of local investigators, documents crimes, collects evidence and constructs case files on behalf of victims when nobody else will.
In June 2017 Civitas Maxima:

1. Has a strong track record for documenting crimes against humanity and war crimes, pursuing justice and has helped to erode impunity and to create accountability in countries where it currently operates;
2. Has begun working on the same issues in other carefully selected countries where local authorities are unable or unwilling to act;
3. Is trusted by both victims and prosecutorial authorities for its professionalism, prudence, determination and integrity;
4. Has helped build local capacity among all its partners, and in particular has helped its local partner in Liberia, the Global Justice and Research Project (GJRP) to become a leading organization in the fight against impunity and to substantially strengthen Liberian civil society;
5. Is a financially stable organization with the internal capacity to achieve its mission while supporting sustainable lives for its staff, contractors, and partners so that they may pursue this work for the time that it will require.
D - Executive Summary: Four Core Functions

Civitas Maxima’s theory of change expressed in its four core functions

1. Document Crimes
2. Pursue Justice
3. Publicize Selectively
4. Build Local Capacity

Civitas Maxima works to create local capacity in each of its activities and wherever it works. This is necessary to ensure the greatest chance for justice. No international NGO can effectively pursue justice on its own; sustainable solutions must be locally driven.

Civitas Maxima works where no other investigative or legal organization will, representing victims of international crimes who otherwise would have no access to justice for these atrocities.

August 2014
**E - Executive Summary: Four Core Functions – Major Activities:** The major activities that drive each of CM’s core functions

1 – Document Crimes
- Represent victims who seek justice
- Build case file for each victim
- Preserve all evidence
- Perform factual & legal analysis

2 – Pursue Justice
- Research jurisdiction
- Transmit case files to police and/or prosecutors
- Partner, communicate, and lobby for indictments
- Explore alternative avenues for justice should prosecutors decline to pursue a case
- Keep victims informed of the evolution of their case files
- If necessary, protect and assist victims and witnesses to maximum degree possible
- Never abandon a case file

3 – Publicize Selectively
- Publicize selectively in source countries to empower victims to demand justice
- Publicize selectively in Europe and North America to support fundraising

4 – Build Local Capacity

*This is an overarching function. It informs everything that Civitas Maxima does. While carrying out Core Functions 1 and 2 and 3, CM works to strengthen local partner capacity to:*
- Build case files
- Be financially independent
- Bring cases without outside help
- Secure victim and witness security and assistance to the extent possible
- Publicize selectively
Core Function 1: Document Crimes

Mapping the elements of documenting war crimes and crimes against humanity on behalf of victims

- Collect, Preserve Evidence on Victims’ Behalf
- Represent Victims Who Seek Justice
- Perform Legal and Factual Analysis
- Strengthen Local Partner Capacity to Carry out Investigations
- Crimes documented on behalf of victims and evidence preserved for potential future prosecution
- Potential to Seek Appropriate Jurisdiction immediately on selected case files

Completed Case Files

August 2014
Core Function 2: Pursue Justice
Mapping the elements of partnering successfully with prosecutors

**No suitable jurisdiction found:**
Leave case file open as long as perpetrator is alive and until suitable jurisdiction is found and justice is secured.

**Communicate continually with victims and protect and assist them to maximum degree possible** (Including building local capacity)

**Legal and factual analysis of case files**
Including building local capacity

**Research suitable jurisdiction**
Explore national options for justice and, if none found, explore alternative jurisdictions.

**Prosecutor takes case:**
Assist if necessary in accessing and evaluating evidence

**Prosecutor reluctant:**
Lobby for indictment; find alternative strategy (lobby UN organs, file complaint against state to human rights bodies etc)

**Suitable jurisdiction found:**
Transmit evidence to national or international prosecutor in or outside of source country.

August 2014
Core Function 3: Publicize selectively

Mapping the elements of selective publicity for CM’s activities

Source country = country in which the crime in question occurred.

Publicity will always be selective in order to avoid compromising victim and staff security.

Local demand for justice among victims is sometimes depressed by intimidation, ill health, and lack of faith in legal structures. Examples of successful quests for justice can support and strengthen this demand.

Publicize in source countries to support local demand for justice and build local capacity

3 – Selectively publicize efforts to seek justice

Sufficient Resources

Publicize in donor locations to support fundraising

Local Demand

August 2014