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A Decade on, Forbes Editor Murder in Russia Still Unsolved

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Paul Klebnikov

U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry on Wednesday called on Russia to push forward with the investigation of the still-unsolved 2004 murder of Forbes Russia editor Paul Klebnikov.

Kerry's statement marks the 10th anniversary of the death of Klebnikov, who was killed with a submachine gun outside of Forbes' office in downtown Moscow.

Russian authorities initially blamed the hit on a Chechen terrorist and mafia boss and his two alleged henchmen, but all three were cleared by a jury in 2006.

“He was a voice of conscience in the fight against corruption,” Kerry said in a statement issued by the State Department. “Paul’s senseless murder was a sickening punch in the gut.”

Klebnikov's family has likewise called on President Vladimir Putin to ensure justice in the case, Forbes Russia said Wednesday. Putin did not comment on the matter.

Klebnikov, a second-generation Russian emigrant and a graduate of the prestigious

University of California, Berkeley, began working for Forbes in 1989, at first covering alleged corruption in the Russia. He was the first editor of Forbes Russia, holding the job for a mere three months before being killed at the age of 41.

Post-Soviet Russia has a reputation as a dangerous place for journalists: Fifty-six have been killed in the country for their professional activity since 1992, according to the Committee to Protect Journalists, a New York-based watchdog.

☒Russia also made the committee's Impunity Index earlier this year with 14 unsolved journalist murders — more than in Afghanistan, Syria and Colombia.

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