



**A
World
Without
Torture**

REDRESS

Ending Torture, Seeking Justice for Survivors

Ending Torture, Seeking Justice for Survivors

REDRESS uses the law to seek justice and reparation for survivors of torture, to combat impunity for governments and individuals who perpetrate it, and to develop and promote compliance with international standards.

Who we are

REDRESS is an international human rights organisation that represents victims of torture to obtain justice and reparation. We bring legal cases on behalf of individual survivors, and advocate for better laws to provide effective reparations.

Our cases respond to torture as an individual crime in national and international law, as a civil wrong with individual responsibility, and as a human rights violation with state responsibility.

Through our victim-centred approach to strategic litigation we are able to have an impact beyond the individual case to address the root causes of torture and to challenge impunity.

We apply our expertise on torture, reparations, and the rights of victims, to conduct research and advocacy to identify the necessary changes in law, policy, and practice. We work collaboratively with international and national organisations and grassroots victims' groups.



Keith Carmichael founded REDRESS in 1992. Keith was detained in Saudi Arabia without charge from 1981 to 1984 and subjected to gross mistreatment. Keith consulted numerous experts and organisations with extensive experience in human rights who recommended the creation of a specialist NGO that would assist survivors of torture to obtain reparation.

Our values

A Victim-Centred Approach. REDRESS prioritises the interests and perspectives of survivors in all aspects of our work. In our decisions and interventions we seek to promote the well-being of survivors and avoid further traumatisation.

Collaborative Partnerships. A core value of REDRESS is to work in partnership with other civil society groups. More can be achieved when forces are joined. These collaborations ensure that we act with the consent of those most directly involved, and that we share our expertise.

Expertise and Innovation. REDRESS has been at the forefront of developments in the law relating to victims of torture and reparations for 25 years and has developed expertise through detailed research, innovative litigation, and progressive standard-setting. We maintain an innovative approach by collaborating with expert academics, practitioners, and civil society groups dealing with cutting-edge issues.

Nazanin Zaghari-Ratcliffe is a British-Iranian charity worker who has been arbitrarily detained in Iran since she was arrested on 3 April 2016. She remains in prison on unspecified charges, separated from her daughter and her husband, who lives in the UK. REDRESS has brought her case to the attention of the United Nations Working Group on Arbitrary Detention and the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Torture. The UN Working Group found in 2016 that her detention is arbitrary.



How we work

Holistic Strategic Litigation against Torture. Strategic litigation seeks to bring about a legal, political, or social impact beyond the case, by combining casework with other civil society techniques such as working with the media, advocacy, and public education, often delivered in partnership with other civil society groups.

Skills Building and Mentoring. Our collaborative partnerships often involve building the capacity of national NGOs to challenge torture and mentoring individual lawyers to represent survivors.

Research and Publications. We undertake ground-breaking research on issues to draw attention to particular problems, to identify solutions, and to develop international standards.

Advocacy. We advocate to national, regional, and international bodies to push for reform, both as part of our strategic litigation and when developing new standards.

Communities of Practice. REDRESS engages groups of NGOs through networks such as the Victims' Rights Working Group at the ICC, UJ-Info, and the Pan-African Reparations Initiative.



Leopoldo García Lucero, a supporter of Salvador Allende, was subjected to torture and forced exile under the Pinochet regime in Chile in the 1970s. In 2013, in a landmark ruling the Inter-American Court of Human Rights ordered Chile to pay him £20,000 for the lack of justice in his case and to finalise a criminal investigation within a reasonable time. On 7 March 2014, Leopoldo García received a formal apology from the Chilean government.

Where we work

Torture is a global phenomenon, and REDRESS is active in many different parts of the world.

- In the **Americas**, we work in the Inter-American human rights system, and have cases and projects in Chile, Guatemala, Mexico, Panama, Peru, and the United States.
- Much of our post-conflict work is located in **Africa**, and we also use the African Human Rights system, with cases and projects in Eastern Africa (Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, Sudan, Uganda), Southern Africa (Zimbabwe), Central Africa (Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Democratic Republic of the Congo), Western Africa (Côte d'Ivoire, Nigeria) as well as in Northern Africa (Algeria, Libya, Egypt, Tunisia).
- In **Asia** we use the UN Human Rights systems, and have cases and projects from India, Myanmar, Nepal, the Philippines, Sri Lanka, and Uzbekistan. In the Middle East we have cases and projects from Bahrain, Iran, Saudi Arabia, Syria and the UAE.
- In **Europe** we litigate before the European Court of Human Rights and have cases, projects, and clients in Cyprus, France, Greece, Lithuania, Spain, Switzerland, Turkey, Ukraine, and the United Kingdom.

Olivier Acuña Barba is a Mexican journalist who was arbitrarily detained and tortured by police officers in 2006. He spent two years in prison for a crime he did not commit, lost his home and possessions, has been separated from his family and now lives in exile in the United Kingdom. REDRESS has brought his case to the Inter-American Commission of Human Rights.



Justice for Torture Survivors

REDRESS has represented hundreds of victims of torture to bring legal claims to obtain justice and reparation. Many of these clients live in the United Kingdom and have been tortured abroad, or remain in detention where they continue to be ill-treated.

They contact us directly for help, through our website, on the phone, or by walking through our door. Many are members of groups who have been ill-treated because of who they are, and now live within those communities.

These cases can occur anywhere in the world: in Latin America, Africa, Europe, Asia, and the Middle East. REDRESS also works with local human rights partners in cases before domestic, regional and international courts and bodies.

We aim to accompany the torture survivor through the legal process, and provide support by referring them to specialist agencies for support beyond our expertise in areas such as housing, employment, health, and psycho-social support.



M is a British aid worker who was raped by a military officer at a checkpoint in Egypt in 2011. After the incident, she contacted the British embassy in Cairo for help, but they offered little sympathy and only minimal support. REDRESS complained to the Parliamentary Ombudsman, who opened a full investigation. As a result, the FCO made a full apology and provided compensation. They also changed their guidance on handling sexual violence complaints, agreed to change their guidance on torture and ill-treatment, and to train their consular staff.

Effective Reparations for Victims

International standards on the rights of victims of torture are often ignored, and some governments seek to water down hard-won protections. State immunity is still a significant obstacle to achieving redress for torture. Civil society must push for the development of new standards, the effective implementation of existing legal protections, and guard against any diminution of the standards of protection.

REDRESS has helped to develop national laws and international standards that make it easier to provide reparations and punish perpetrators, including the anti-torture laws around the world, the UN Basic Principles on the Right to a Remedy, and critical interpretations of the Convention against Torture. We then use these new standards in the legal cases we bring on behalf of our clients.

Purna Maya (not her real name) was dragged from her home to army barracks and raped by four soldiers in 2004 in Nepal, before being dumped on the street. She suffered grave injuries and had to have her uterus removed. In 2017, in its first decision involving a victim of sexual violence during the 1996-2006 Civil War in Nepal, the United Nations Human Rights Committee ordered Nepal to investigate, prosecute and punish the men who raped her and to provide her with full reparation. It also urged Nepal to adopt legislation to make torture a crime in its domestic law and to remove other barriers to justice for rape victims. REDRESS and Advocacy Forum-Nepal worked jointly in this case.

International Accountability

International conflicts and civil wars often involve large-scale situations of torture, sometimes amounting to war crimes and crimes against humanity, with groups of survivors who seek justice and accountability.

REDRESS acts on behalf of victims of international crimes to ensure that they are properly represented in the criminal justice process and that they can obtain reparation. We work to set up justice mechanisms after conflict, and advocate for the rights of victims of torture in domestic courts, special tribunals, and the International Criminal Court in The Hague. We also encourage national prosecutors to use the principle of Universal Jurisdiction to prosecute perpetrators who travel abroad.

Joseph Mpambara case: On 7 July 2011, a Dutch appeals court sentenced Joseph Mpambara to life imprisonment on war crimes charges committed during the genocide in Rwanda. Three torture victims presented statements against him with REDRESS' assistance. Since 2007, REDRESS has been working with victims of the Rwandan genocide to progress numerous criminal prosecutions in Europe, Africa and North America, where genocide suspects continue to live with impunity.

Sexual Violence in Conflict

Sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) is used as a weapon of war in conflicts around the world, frequently leaving women and girls, men and boys, without access to a remedy, while perpetrators benefit from impunity.

REDRESS has worked with NGOs in Sudan, Kenya, Uganda, DRC, Myanmar, Sri Lanka, Nepal, and Peru to ensure the effective documentation of SGBV to bring legal claims against perpetrators, and litigates on behalf of victims of conflict related SGBV before national, regional, and international venues. REDRESS has also contributed to the development and strengthening of international standards, with a focus on victims' right to redress for conflict related SGBV.

S.A. was raped by a member of the Armed Forces in the late 2000s, during the armed conflict in the Eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo. After threatening her husband and children, the attacker also stole the family's possessions. Her attacker was convicted by a domestic court, which awarded her compensation and ordered the return of her property. REDRESS and Synergie pour l'assistance judiciaire aux victimes de violation des droits humains au Nord Kivu (SAJ) have brought her case before the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights to seek the enforcement of the judgment.



Torture of Refugees and Migrants

The UN Special Rapporteur against Torture identified in a 2018 report that an average of 27% of refugees and migrants are torture survivors and, in some situations, more than 70%. Many are also ill-treated as they make their way to Europe, and on other migration routes.

REDRESS brings cases on behalf of victims of torture claiming refuge and we advocate to set standards in this context. We work in Greece to build stronger laws against torture, and with lawyers in Libya to draw attention to the treatment of migrants sent back to detention camps. We have helped develop international standards on the treatment of refugees and migrants.



Necati Zontul was raped by Greek coastguards after the boat he was travelling in with other migrants was intercepted near Crete. In 2012, the European Court of Human Rights ordered Greece to pay him €50,000 in compensation. The judgment also reaffirmed that the rape of a detainee by State officials constitutes an especially grave and abhorrent form of ill-treatment amounting to torture.

Counter-Terrorism

Since 2001 there has been an increase in the use of Counter-Terrorism legislation to challenge the absolute prohibition of torture. Governments around the world – in democracies and dictatorships – have tortured people in the interests of ‘national security’.

REDRESS works with other NGOs to maintain the international standards applicable in counter-terrorism situations, including rendition, administrative detention without trial, and government crack-downs. We draw attention to the impact of counter-terrorism and security legislation against torture, and argue for the absolute prohibition of torture in all situations.

Andargachew “Andy” Tsege, a UK citizen and father of three from London, was abducted under the orders of the Ethiopian authorities on 23 June 2014 and tried under the draconian Ethiopian anti-terrorist laws which have been used by the Ethiopian government to crush dissent. REDRESS, together with NGO Reprieve, took his case to the African Commission on Human and Peoples’ Rights and the UN Working Group on Arbitrary Detention. In May 2018 he was released.



Discrimination

In many cases, people are tortured because of who they are – because they are a human rights defender, a woman, because of their ethnicity, or because they are gay. International law is clear that when people are ill-treated for a discriminatory purpose, it amounts to torture.

REDRESS represents and advocates on behalf of victims of discriminatory torture at national, regional and international levels. This has included litigating on behalf of Sudanese human rights defenders in and outside Sudan, building capacity of partner organisations to litigate sexual violence against women, and collaborating with human rights defender networks to strengthen their capacity to document and litigate torture and related abuses.



Azul Rojas Marín is a transgender Peruvian, who was arbitrarily arrested by police officers in 2008, then raped, beaten and verbally abused due to his sexual orientation. 10 years later those responsible have not been properly prosecuted or punished. Together with two NGO partners in Peru, PROMSEX and CNDDHH, REDRESS brought Azul's case before the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights. The case has since been referred to the Inter-American Court of Human Rights, the first time that the Court will consider a case of illegal detention and sexual torture against an LGBTI person in the Americas.

Enforced Disappearance in Africa

In many conflicts in Africa, from the Algerian civil war in the 1990s, Libya under Gaddafi, Sudan during the civil war, and Zimbabwe under Mugabe, opponents of the government or people just in the wrong place at the wrong time, have disappeared. The victims of these enforced disappearances are often tortured, and their family are left behind with no information on the whereabouts or fate of their loved one.

REDRESS is working with partners in Algeria, Sudan, Zimbabwe, and Libya to support human rights lawyers to bring cases challenging enforced disappearance, and to highlight this particular problem to the African Union and specific governments.

Magdulein Abaida was campaigning for women's equality during the drafting of the new Libyan constitution when she was abducted and tortured by a militia group in 2012. She was forced to flee to the UK where she obtained asylum. REDRESS filed a complaint before the United Nations Committee for the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) demanding an apology and compensation for the harm she suffered.



Staff

REDRESS has a small but dedicated team of lawyers, advocates, and program staff at our offices in London and The Hague, with expertise in human rights law, international criminal law, strategic litigation, reparations, the rights of victims, and challenging torture.

Trustees

The work of our staff is supported by our Board of Trustees, who bring many years of experience in law, finance, NGOs, policy work, and other fields relevant to our work.

Patrons

We are grateful for the many individuals over the years who have lent their support and who act as Patrons to the charity.

Academics

REDRESS often partners with academics specializing in our areas of expertise, many of whom are members of our Legal Advisory Council. We also work with human rights law clinics.

Pro bono

We are able to run a large caseload only with the assistance of pro bono lawyers around the world, who give their time for free to undertake research or to work on individual cases.

Interns

REDRESS has arrangements with many law schools around the world to provide placements for law students to work for a period of time at REDRESS to gain experience in the field of human rights.

For further information contact:

REDRESS UK

87 Vauxhall Walk
SE11 5HJ
London
United Kingdom
+44 (0)20 7793 1777
info@redress.org

Registered Charity No. 1015787
A Limited Company Registered
in England No. 2774071

REDRESS NEDERLAND

Laan van Meerdervoort 70, Rm 5.33
2517 AN
Den Haag
The Netherlands
+31 708 919 317
info.nederland@redress.org

Chamber of Commerce
File Registration
No. 66793319

Photo credits:

Keith Carmichael (© Veronique Rolland).
SA case (© Mike Pryor).
M case (© Gwenn Dubourthoumieu/UN/OCHA).

www.redress.org

 [@REDRESSTrust](https://twitter.com/REDRESSTrust)

 [/theREDRESSTrust](https://www.facebook.com/theREDRESSTrust)

REDRESS
Ending Torture, Seeking Justice for Survivors