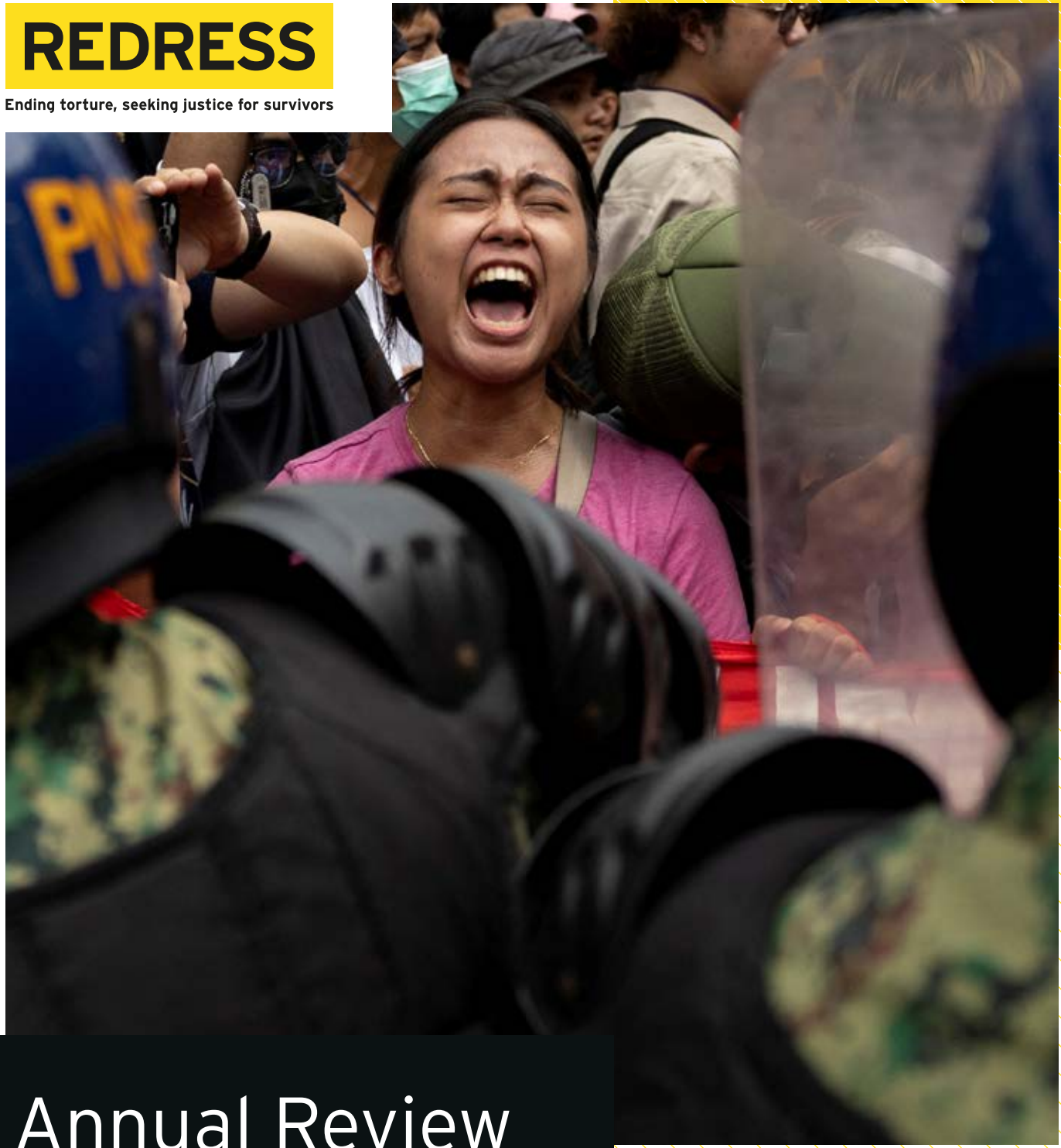
REDRESS

Ending torture, seeking justice for survivors



Annual Review 2024

© Reuters/ Monicah Mwangi. LGBTIQ+ rights festival in Nairobi.

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ANNUAL REVIEW 2024

This Annual Review provides an overview of the activities and achievements carried out by REDRESS from 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024. However, some articles cover developments in the relevant area of work up until the date of printing.

REDRESS
Unit G01, 65 Glasshill Street
SE1 0QR, London, UK
+44 (0)20 7793 1777
info@redress.org

REDRESS Nederland
+ 31 708 919 317
Info.nederland@redress.org

Charity number: 1015787
Company number: 2774071

Chamber of Commerce File Registration number: 66793319
RSIN number: 8566 99 846

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© Reuters/Josue Delavele.Access to justice is a key measure of satisfaction for torture survivors.

ABOUT REDRESS

REDRESS is an international human rights organisation that delivers justice and reparation for survivors of torture, challenges impunity for perpetrators, and advocates for legal and policy reforms to combat torture.

Our cases respond to torture as an individual crime in domestic and international law, as a civil wrong with individual responsibility, and as a human rights violation with state responsibility. Our approach is strategic, so that as well as representing an individual we target the policy reasons that enabled the torture to take place, by building a campaign that uses advocacy, community engagement, and communications to influence change.

INTRO-DUCTION

> ***"REDRESS has continued to draw attention to the problem of discriminatory torture, and the frequent use of torture in the context of protests."***

In March this year our founder and honorary president Keith Carmichael died in London at the age of 90. We will long remember Keith for his determination not only to hold his own torturers to account, but also to prevent others from enduring the same abuses he suffered. Throughout his struggle for justice, Keith acted on behalf of countless victims of torture. He made a difference, and we are honoured to continue his mission.

Sadly, in May this year we also lost Leah Levin at the age of 98, who was a founding trustee of REDRESS and a leading figure for many decades in the international human rights movement. Leah was a trustee for 25 years and said that REDRESS had 'captured her heart'. We acknowledge the immense contribution that Keith and Leah, as founders of the organisation, have made over the years.

This report sets out the achievements of REDRESS from April 2023 to March 2024. During the year the charity has consolidated its recent growth, allowing REDRESS to deliver its 2025 Strategy.

REDRESS has focused on developing and promoting a survivor centred approach to its work, through the development of a Survivor Advisory Group that has produced a manifesto for legal reform in the United Kingdom, by creating principles for promoting a survivor centred approach, and publishing practice notes on how such an approach works for delivering reparation and in the context of documentation of international crimes. Through these very concrete activities, REDRESS has been able to move beyond theory and promote the practice of survivor participation and empowerment.

In the United Kingdom REDRESS has developed a series of legal policy campaigns relating to key issues such as the repurposing of assets to provide reparation for victims of the war in Ukraine, the more effective prosecution of perpetrators of torture in the UK, the appropriate response to the continued problem of hostage diplomacy, and the need to ensure the needs of survivors are recognised and paramount. Through this work REDRESS has been able to promote concrete ways which would enable the UK to respond seriously to torture.

Across the globe REDRESS has been active in several key initiatives, including drawing attention to the problem of torture in Egypt, encouraging accountability for atrocities committed in Sudan, and demonstrating that judicial reparation can be effectively implemented through the concerted efforts of civil society. REDRESS has continued to draw attention to the problem of discriminatory torture, and the frequent use of torture in the context of protest, proposing policy solutions to reduce the repetition of such forms of torture in the future.

In all of its work, REDRESS works with our Solidarity Partners around the world, national NGOs with crucial expertise relating to torture. During the year REDRESS also joined the United Against Torture Consortium and the Global Initiative Against Impunity, allowing for a long-term co-ordinated response to both torture and the continued need to promote accountability.

These initiatives, together with the stable financial position of the charity, will allow us to focus our next strategy in ways which focus even more on achieving impact and delivering justice and reparation for survivors.

© De Sheng Lim

Rupert Skilbeck, Director

© UN Photo/Rick Barjonas

Sir Malcolm Evans, Chair

OUR STRA-TEGY

The REDRESS 2025 Strategy sets out the priorities for the charity, with specific deliverables developed each year by the staff and the board for each of the programme areas.

OUR VISION AND MISSION

The vision of REDRESS is a world without torture. Our mission is to deliver justice and reparation for survivors of torture, challenge impunity for perpetrators, and advocate for legal and policy reforms to combat torture.

OUR PROGRAMMES

Under the 2025 Strategy REDRESS focuses its work in five programme areas.

OUR VALUES

A SURVIVOR-CENTRED APPROACH.
We prioritise the interests and perspectives of survivors in our cases and campaigns.

COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIPS.
We work in partnership with national civil society groups in the countries where we operate.

EXPERTISE AND INNOVATION.
We maintain expertise through high standards for research and litigation, and by the constant engagement with experts, academics, and practitioners.

OUR METHODS

HOLISTIC STRATEGIC LITIGATION AGAINST TORTURE

We represent individual clients but also use cases to challenge the underlying problem. We adopt a holistic approach, ensuring referrals for psycho-social support and accompanying survivors through the process. We provide training and mentoring to partner NGOs.

POLICY ADVOCACY

We work with partners to deliver campaigns at national, regional, and international levels that advocate for policy reform for reparation and for the introduction of anti-torture laws and safeguards. We conduct detailed research and involve survivors in our campaigns.

COMMUNICATIONS AND THE MEDIA

We support our litigation and policy advocacy through press and social media, to influence stakeholders, draw attention to issues, ensure that survivors have a voice, and to raise our profile to enhance our influence.

IMPACT AND ACHIEVEMENTS

© Reuters/Dan Chung. REDRESS pursues justice for survivors of torture and the prosecution of perpetrators.

JUSTICE

WE PURSUE LEGAL CLAIMS FOR SURVIVORS AND THE PROSECUTION OF PERPETRATORS

The goal of this programme is to pursue justice for survivors and the prosecution of perpetrators. In the United Kingdom, we achieve this through strategic litigation relating to the UK and survivor-centred policy advocacy for reform. We achieve this internationally through strategic litigation on behalf of individual survivors, and through projects to promote accountability in particular countries where torture is widespread.

SURVIVOR-CENTRED ADVOCACY.

REDRESS advocated for legal reforms related to the ban on torture in the UK. We developed a Survivor Advisory Group with a core group of survivor advocates, which focuses on protecting the absolute prohibition of torture and putting survivors' voices at the centre of UK law and policy. Together, we created a UK Anti-Torture Coalition, composed of ten human rights organisations, and campaigned for the UK to make the prohibition of torture a priority once more. REDRESS also put forward recommendations to improve the UK government's approach to hostage diplomacy, which were echoed by the UK Parliamentary Foreign Affairs Committee, and set out principles to shape a new legal right to consular assistance for British nationals detained abroad. We published a major report with the Clooney Foundation for Justice, "Global Britain, Global Justice," on the under-utilisation of universal jurisdiction in the UK, which led to a Private Members Bill introduced in Parliament. REDRESS also opposed legislation that threatened the UK's obligations on torture such as the Illegal Migration Bill and the Safety of Rwanda (Asylum and Immigration) Bill, briefing parliamentarians on the risks that they posed.

STRATEGIC LITIGATION.

The UK Investigatory Powers Tribunal, the judicial body which probes complaints against the UK intelligence services, announced in May that it would investigate the complaint brought by Mustafa al-Hawsawi, a REDRESS client currently detained in Guantanamo Bay, against the UK intelligence services for their alleged complicity in his torture by US agents. We also represented Al-Hawsawi before the European Court of Human Rights, which ruled in January that Lithuania was complicit in his unlawful rendition, detention and torture. REDRESS intervened before the High Court of South Africa in the first case to apply the South African Torture Act, deciding in favour of five torture victims. The European Court of Human Rights found that Türkiye failed to investigate the torture suffered by our client, Mustafa Avcioglu, awarding him €10,000 in compensation. Additionally, the Museum of Memory and Human Rights in Chile created a permanent archive in their collection dedicated to the fight for justice of one of our clients, Leopoldo Garcia Lucero.

JUSTICE IN SUDAN.

Following the outbreak of an armed conflict in Sudan in April, REDRESS has worked with our national partners to draw attention to the human rights violations taking place and called for justice and accountability. We published a groundbreaking report on evidence of international crimes committed in Sudan, advocating with other NGOs for an independent investigative mechanism on Sudan. This mechanism was adopted through a UN Human Rights Council resolution in October. The African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights also found Sudan responsible for torture and other human rights violations in two key cases: the Medani and Eissa case, concerning two prominent human rights defenders, and case of S.I. – the first time that the Commission has ruled that sexual violence automatically implies gendered discrimination. REDRESS also submitted evidence to the EU and the US recommending targeted sanctions against individuals and entities in Sudan linked to human rights violations and other international crimes, many of which were subsequently sanctioned.

HOLDING WAR CRIMINALS TO ACCOUNT IN BRITAIN

© Reuters/Mohammed Badra. People walk on rubble following airstrikes by forces loyal to Syria's president in 2015 in Douma.

By Rupert Skilbeck, REDRESS Director

Britain has been at the forefront of countries in denouncing Russian war crimes in Ukraine and calling for accountability. But would a Russian general who has committed crimes against humanity in Ukraine be arrested and put on trial if he showed up at London's Heathrow airport? The answer, currently, is no.

English law recognises a principle known as universal jurisdiction, which permits the courts of any country to hold trials for crimes that "shock the conscience of mankind", such as genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes, no matter where they occur. But legal and practical challenges have meant that only three people have ever been convicted of such crimes in Britain, with the last conviction secured almost 20 years ago.

Britain lags far behind countries such as Germany and France that have recently put war criminals on trial, securing convictions of Islamic State fighters for crimes against humanity, henchmen of Bashar al-Assad, Syria's dictator, for torture, and Rwandan fighters for genocide.

Last year, we published the report Global Britain, Global Justice with the Clooney Foundation for Justice, which examined the obstacles for prosecuting universal jurisdiction cases in the UK.

A main obstacle is that Britain does not allow prosecutions for most international crimes unless the suspect is a British national or resident. This keeps Russian generals and henchmen of the Syrian dictator out of reach from the British police. Another key obstacle is that Britain has traditionally granted "special mission immunity" to foreign officials visiting the country, which has afforded them with a "get-out-of-jail-free" card, even when they have been suspected of committing international crimes.

Among the report's recommendations is the call for the UK to remove the nationality and residence requirements for prosecutions for genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes, so that any suspect present in the UK can be prosecuted. Since the report was published, we have seen some positive developments, including renewed efforts in Parliament to make Britain a hostile territory – and not a safe haven - for perpetrators of the worst crimes known to humanity, with the introduction of two private members bills to remove the nationality and residence requirement.

Read an op-ed by Amal Clooney and Rupert Skilbeck in The Economist.

PROMOTING SURVIVOR PARTICIPATION AND EMPOWERMENT

By Camila Restrepo, Communities Officer

At REDRESS, we have the privilege of witnessing the extraordinary resilience and determination of survivors of torture in our daily work. Learning from survivors has been instrumental in allowing REDRESS to grow from theory to practice in fostering survivor participation and empowerment.

As human rights practitioners, it is crucial that we do not subconsciously replicate dynamics of powerlessness in our interactions with survivors. Instead, we must seek to build trust through centring their needs and priorities.

A survivor-centred approach asks us to not see survivors simply as victims, but as human beings with agency, skills, expertise, and resilience from which we can learn. Centring survivors' voices is crucial to everything we do at REDRESS, from our work advocating for reparations for victims of conflict-related sexual violence, to fighting for justice for LGBTQ+ torture in Africa. It is one of our three core values.

REDRESS continues to develop and promote a survivor-centred approach to our work. Central to this effort is our Survivor Advisory Group, composed of survivors of torture who guide and inform our advocacy in the United Kingdom. The group's main priorities are protecting the absolute prohibition of torture and putting survivors' voices at the centre of legislative and policy proposals.

The group launched the Take Torture Seriously campaign ahead of the UK 2024 General election, which featured video testimonies from members and urged both political candidates and voters to consider survivors' needs and voices. The Survivors Advisory Group also helped REDRESS develop recommendations to the incoming government.

In addition, REDRESS has developed a range of resources to help other practitioners adopt a survivor-centred approach in their work, including a new practice note, A Survivor-Centred Approach to Seeking Reparation for Torture. This practice note offers guidance on how to ensure survivors' participation, reduce their risk of further harm and re-traumatisation, and reinforce their agency in human rights litigation and reparation processes.

© REDRESS. Meeting of the Survivor Advisory Group, who guide and inform REDRESS's advocacy on torture prevention and accountability in the United Kingdom.

REPARATION

WE DELIVER REMEDIES AND REPARATION FOR SURVIVORS

The goal of this programme is to deliver remedies and reparation for survivors. We do this by ensuring international standards for reparation through strategic litigation and policy advocacy, by promoting human rights sanctions as a form of interim reparative measure, and by encouraging financial accountability to pay for reparations.

INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS.

REDRESS successfully advocated for stronger provisions on victims' rights and asset recovery in the new Ljubljana-Hague Convention, which seeks to improve international cooperation in the investigation and prosecution of international crimes. REDRESS was one of 10 Ugandan and international organisations that intervened before the International Criminal Court (ICC) in the case against Dominic Ongwen. The ICC's reparations order in the case, delivered in February, incorporated several survivor-centred standards from our arguments.

MAGNITSKY SANCTIONS.

The UK Government sanctioned several Sudanese and Russian individuals and identities linked to human rights abuses, some of which had been recommended for sanctions by REDRESS and partners. The sanctions also addressed a wider range of human rights abuses, such as gender-based and conflict-related sexual violence, as recommended by REDRESS. Similarly, following recommendations by REDRESS, the US Government imposed sanctions against Sudanese individuals and entities to respond to the human rights crisis in Sudan. Our submission of evidence to the Governor of Anguilla led to an investigation into suspected breaches of UK sanctions related to human rights violations in Myanmar. In commemoration of Magnitsky Month in November, REDRESS published a new framework for assessing the impact of sanctions. We also gave evidence to the European Parliament on the impact of EU and UK sanctions.

FINANCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY.

REDRESS recommended legal and policy reforms to the UK Government to ensure the confiscation and repurposing of profits derived from violations of human rights and international humanitarian law to repair victims. During the year we continued to advocate for the release of the sale proceeds of Chelsea Football Club to survivors in Ukraine, calling on the UK Prime Minister to help unblock the impasse over the proceeds in a joint letter with a coalition of over 30 Ukrainian civil society organisations. We also brought together key international and Ukrainian stakeholders in Poland during the World for Ukraine Summit to identify proposals for asset recovery for reparation. We published with the Global Survivors Fund The Delivery of Reparation for Ukraine, which provides, for the first time, an overview of the reparation avenues being explored in Ukraine, in particular for survivors of conflict-related sexual violence. Following the advocacy of REDRESS and partners on this issue, in December the UK Foreign Secretary said that Russian frozen assets should be repurposed to support Ukraine. Together with an alliance of Equatorial Guinean and international organisations, we identified innovative avenues to repurpose frozen assets for the benefit of Equatorial Guineans in a way that helps combat corruption, while empowering victims.

SECURING FINANCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY FOR HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES

© Commission Air/Alamy Stock Photo. REDRESS has urged the UK government to unblock the stalemate over the use of £2.5 billion from the sale of Chelsea FC for the benefit of all victims of the war in Ukraine.

By Natalia Kubesch, Legal Officer

Despite efforts to hold individuals accused of human rights abuses accountable, many high-profile perpetrators continue to enjoy impunity. The UK, in particular, has gained an unsavoury reputation for being vulnerable to the flow of corrupt money—even from those linked to potential human rights violations, including torture.

Some of the world's most notorious human rights abusers, including in Iran, Nigeria, Sudan, China, or Egypt, have not been sanctioned by the UK. Where sanctions have been issued, they have rarely been used to benefit victims. Since the full-scale invasion of Ukraine in 2022, over £22 billion in Russian assets in the UK have been frozen. While these funds could transform the lives of millions of survivors in Ukraine, current UK law is not equipped to confiscate even a portion of these assets.

REDRESS is pursuing legal and advocacy avenues to challenge this financial impunity. Our approach focuses on strengthening targeted sanctions as a tool for international accountability and pushing for the confiscation of sanctioned assets. Where possible, perpetrators' assets should be repurposed to provide reparations to their victims.

In our report Evaluating Targeted Sanctions we set out recommendations for the effective use of sanctions. These include deploying sanctions fairly and consistently against perpetrators and adopting a robust enforcement policy so that those targeted cannot exploit loopholes by seeking refuge in other jurisdictions. We also stress the need of improving States' coordination in the implementation of sanctions, as well as engaging with civil society and victims.

REDRESS has advocated for legal and policy reforms that would enable the UK Government to lawfully repurpose profits derived from violations of human rights and humanitarian law as reparations for victims. Our recommendations show that innovative avenues are available to produce significant funds that would have a transformative impact on the lives of victims.

For example, the proceeds of the £2.5 billion sale of Chelsea FC were originally pledged to help victims of the conflict in Ukraine, but the funds have yet to be disbursed. In February, REDRESS launched a campaign calling on then-Prime Minister Rishi Sunak to unblock the impasse in an open letter, which was signed by over 60 Ukrainian and international civil society organisations.

DISSENT

WE CHALLENGE TORTURE USED TO SUPPRESS ACTIVISM AND PROTEST

© Mahamoud Hjaj, Anadolu Agency/Getty Images.
A relative pays tribute to killed anti-regime demonstrators in Karthoum.

The goal of this programme is to challenge torture used to suppress activism and protest. We deliver this through specific projects focusing on such torture in particular countries, and through strategic litigation on behalf of individual survivors.

A UNITED RESPONSE.

On the International Day in Support of Victims of Torture, REDRESS launched the United Against Torture Consortium (UATC) together with six of the world's leading anti-torture organisations, APT, FIACAT, IRCT, OMCT, and OMEGA. The Consortium responds to the growing use of torture by those in power to supress activism dissent and works in partnership with over 200 civil society organisations around the world.

DISSENT IN BELARUS.

REDRESS continued to be part of the International Accountability Platform for Belarus (IAPB), which is documenting the widespread torture that took place during and after the 2020 presidential election, and supporting Belarusian human rights defenders who are being prosecuted and tortured on politically motivated charges. Together with the Advisory Council of the Belarus Platform, we produced a briefing highlighting the difficulties of exhausting domestic remedies in Belarus before taking a case to the UN Human Rights Committee. We also held consultations to inform the strengthening and deployment of a survivor-centred approach as part of the member organisations' work.

DISSENT IN EGYPT.

REDRESS published a ground-breaking report, Torture in Egypt: A Crime Against Humanity, which found that the Egyptian authorities' use of torture is so widespread and systematic that it amounts to a crime against humanity. The conclusions of the report were partly reflected in the UN Committee Against Torture's observations on Egypt, issued in November 2023. REDRESS made a similar submission to the UN Human Rights Committee, which also recognised the systematic use of torture in Egypt in its observations. REDRESS also made submissions to UN bodies on the prevalence of short-term enforced disappearances and the risk of torture and ill-treatment for victims, using our work in Egypt and Sudan as examples, with one of our submissions informing the first General Comment by the UN Committee on Enforced Disappearances.

ENDING THE CYCLE OF VIOLENCE AGAINST PROTESTERS

© Reuters/Nasser Nuri. Egyptian authorities, including riot police, continue to use systematic torture with impunity to suppress dissent.

By Renata Politi, Legal Advisor

Amid a global surge in protests demanding change from those in power, we have witnessed excessive force used against peaceful protesters in numerous countries, including Sudan, Egypt, Bangladesh, Myanmar, the US, Georgia, and Venezuela.

REDRESS is responding to this problem with projects that aim to bring attention to the issue, determine responsibility, and push for legal and policy reforms.

In Sudan, the years that have followed the end of Omar al-Bashir's rule in 2019 have seen a continuation in the violent crackdowns on protesters, human rights activists and others and widespread violations which may amount to war crimes and crimes against humanity.

REDRESS has advocated for reforms to prevent, prosecute, and provide redress for serious human rights violations as well as drawing attention to the structural factors which have historically facilitated the violence. Last year, we joined calls from Sudanese and international civil society organisations for the UN Human Rights Council to establish an independent mechanism to investigate the serious violations committed during the ongoing conflict. Following this advocacy, the UN Human Rights Council established an independent international fact-finding mission for Sudan.

In Egypt, REDRESS and partners have highlighted how Egyptian authorities have weaponised torture as a political tool to persecute minorities and suppress dissent for decades. Our report submitted to the UN Committee against Torture concluded that the use of torture is so widespread and systematic as to amount to a crime against humanity. Subsequently, in its review of Egypt's record on torture, the UN body found "numerous and consistent allegations of systematic use of torture and ill-treatment" by Egyptian authorities.

In Belarus, the International Accountability Platform for Belarus, of which REDRESS is part, has collected information and evidence from over 2,300 survivors and witnesses related to gross human rights violations allegedly committed by Belarusian authorities to silence dissent during the 2020 presidential election and its aftermath. By providing access to the collected evidence, the IAPB has been supporting investigations of national prosecutors and international accountability bodies, including from five States, the High Commissioner for Human Rights and the OSCE Moscow Mechanism Rapporteur.

© Alet Pretorious/Reuters. Ugandan LGBTIQ+ activists demonstrate against a proposed anti-gay law in Uganda.

DISCRIMINATION

The goal of this programme is to challenge torture used against marginalised and excluded minorities. We do this through policy advocacy and strategic litigation directed towards conflict-related sexual violence and anti-LGBTIQ+ torture.

REPARATIONS FOR SURVIVORS OF SEXUAL AND GENDER BASED VIOLENCE.

REDRESS published a report on reparation for survivors of conflict-related sexual violence in Chad under the regime of the late President Hissène Habré, which will be used to advocate for the implementation of reparation in the case. In Kenya, we hosted a workshop with survivors, practitioners, partner organisations and national institutions that facilitated the development of survivor-centred strategy to implement the reparation orders in the landmark COVAW case brought by eight individuals who suffered sexual violence during the post-election violence in Kenya in 2007/2008. In March, REDRESS and partners in Nepal held a workshop to develop a strategy for implementing four decisions by the UN Human Rights Committee that awarded reparation to survivors of conflict-related sexual violence.

TORTURE AGAINST LGBTIQ+ PERSONS.

REDRESS drew attention to the need to effectively investigate discriminatory torture against LGBTIQ+ persons, publishing a legal briefing that sets out the relevant international standards and releasing a promotional video. REDRESS and partner NGOs intervened in the case of Maksim Lapunov at the European Court of Human Rights, which found Russia responsible for holding Mr Lapunov incommunicado and torturing him in custody due to discrimination based on his sexual orientation.

REPAIRING THE HARM OF SURVIVORS OF CONFLICT-RELATED SEXUAL VIOLENCE

©Reuters/Zohra Bensemra. A 24-year-old mother, who was raped by armed militiamen in West Darfur, sits outside a makeshift shelter in Chad.

By Julie Bardèche, Senior Legal Advisor

In recent years, as part of a multi-country study led by the Global Survivors Fund, REDRESS has been examining the prevalence of conflict-related sexual violence in Chad, Cambodia, Myanmar, and Bangladesh and the main obstacles that survivors face in realising their right to reparation.

These challenges were outlined in our recent report Realising Reparation for Survivors of Conflict-Related Sexual Violence, which highlights how numerous survivors still grapple with the long-lasting impact of the violence they suffered. They face stigmatisation and social exclusion even long after conflicts have ended, which discourages them from coming forward and hinders their access to justice.

The report featured examples from several countries where REDRESS has worked, including Chad, the DRC, Kenya, Nepal, Peru, Sudan, Uganda, and Ukraine. While reparation is crucial to redress the harms caused, help survivors rebuild their lives, and restore their dignity and independence, our research indicated that most survivors are not able to access reparation, and when reparation is available, it is insufficient, or too delayed to meaningfully achieve its intended impact. This leaves many survivors in a situation of extreme vulnerability, and often their suffering worsens.

REDRESS has urged States and UN bodies to challenge the prevailing impunity for conflict-related sexual violence and made recommendations to realise survivors' right to reparation.

Our submission to the UN Special Rapporteur on Torture for her report on sexual torture, presented to the UN Human Rights Council in June, illustrated the many challenges faced by survivors and identified priority areas for improvement. We also put forward recommendations to challenge the prevailing impunity for conflict-related sexual violence in Sudan and provided an analysis of the current reparation initiatives for survivors in Ukraine, outlining a roadmap to deliver comprehensive and holistic reparation to victims.

REDRESS and the Global Survivors Fund organised a briefing on this issue before the UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, the UN body of experts that monitors implementation of the main global treaty on women's rights. We have also urged the Committee to develop a specific General Recommendation on reparation for conflict-related sexual violence to help inform its practice and provide further guidance to States.

© Utu Wetu. A workshop with Utu Wetu in Kenya to discuss survivor-centred strategies to ensure reparation for CRSV.

SOLIDARITY

WE SUPPORT AND STRENGTHEN THE ANTI-TORTURE MOVEMENT

The goal of this programme is to support and strengthen the anti-torture movement. We do this by building our Solidarity Partnerships around the world, by sharing expertise, and through financial partnerships.

COMMUNITIES OF PRACTICE.

REDRESS supported partners from Sudan and Ukraine during the annual ICC-NGO roundtables in The Hague in June 2023, which promote the exchange of information between NGOs and the Court's various organs and officials. We facilitated meetings with key stakeholders, including representatives from the Office of the Public Counsel for Victims, the Trust Fund for Victims, and the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs. REDRESS also convened a meeting between the ICC Trust Fund for Victims and the Office of Public Counsel for Victims on victims' rights.

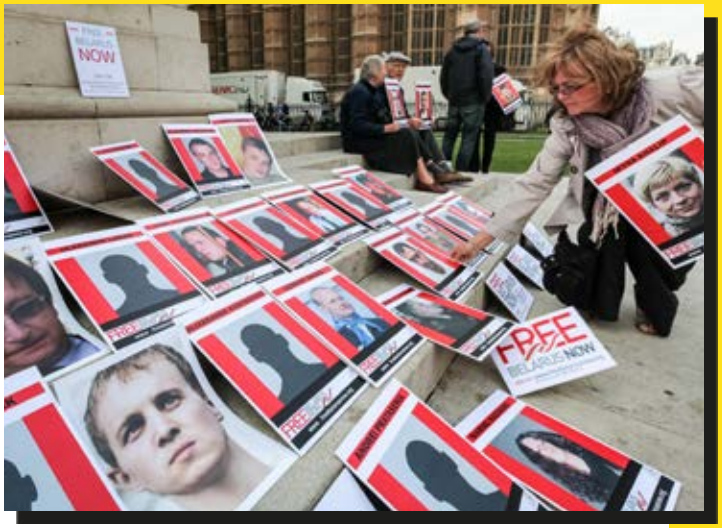
PROMOTING STRATEGIC LITIGATION.

REDRESS launched two new practice notes with practical guidance on key aspects of holistic strategic litigation against torture: Reparation for Torture Survivors and A Survivor-Centred Approach to Seeking Reparation for Torture. We hosted a webinar on regional survivor-centred practices with survivors and practitioners from various regions. We also launched the Just Reparation bulletin, a monthly roundup providing news and perspectives on reparation curated by the REDRESS legal team.

FINANCIAL PARTNERSHIPS.

As part of the United Against Torture Consortium, we provide financial support to national partners to strengthen their work challenging torture used to suppress activism and dissent and for discriminatory purposes. We also launched the Innovative Lawyers Awards to support and empower emerging anti-torture champions worldwide.

THE THREAT OF TORTURE IS TOO BIG TO TACKLE ALONE



© Guy Corbishley/Alamy Stock Photo. A protest in London to raise attention about the situation of thousands of political prisoners imprisoned in Belarus.

By Joss Gillespie, Communications and Digital Assistant

In recent years, we have witnessed a surge in torture and excessive use of force against civilians in countries such as Belarus, Bangladesh, Myanmar, the US, France, Egypt, Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories, Sudan and Venezuela. The widespread use of torture is closely linked to persistent impunity, whereby those in power are enabled to commit human rights abuses without fear of repercussion. This culture of impunity erodes the rule of law, fuels inequality and perpetuates cycles of violence.

There is an urgent need to address both the prevalence of torture and the root causes which have allowed it to grow. But the threat of torture is too big to tackle alone. This year, REDRESS joined the United Against Torture consortium and the Global Initiative Against Impunity to strengthen collective efforts to confront torture and impunity in an increasingly volatile world.

Survivors and civil society play a fundamental role in advancing justice and accountability efforts. A key objective of both the United Against Torture consortium and the Global Initiative Against Impunity is supporting different anti-torture actors, networks and movements, as well as empowering survivors in their journey for justice and accountability.

REDRESS also seeks to enhance a global community of practice to advance cases against torture through our Solidarity programme. REDRESS hosted litigation workshops with national partners to facilitate mutual learning in strategic litigation against torture. We published practice notes on Reparation for Torture Survivors and a Survivor-Centred Approach to Seeking Reparation for Torture as tools to help practitioners better support survivors in their pursuit of justice.

REDRESS also provides some financial support to partners through grants, such as our Innovative Lawyer Awards. These grants recognise the work of our partners in the anti-torture movement, many of whom are operating in challenging contexts that are hostile to human rights, and contribute to their work on strategic litigation on behalf of survivors.

Confronting the global rise of torture is no mean feat. Perpetrators do not relinquish power easily, and efforts to hold them accountable are often met with resistance. But working together with survivors and civil society we can take steps to hold perpetrators accountable and make justice a reality.

COMMUNI-CATIONS

We support our strategic litigation and policy advocacy through traditional media and social media. We influence stakeholders, draw attention to the issues and amplify the voices of survivors of torture.

This year, we used our media presence to highlight the need to change UK law to allow the prosecution of war criminals in the UK, expose the systematic use of torture in Egypt and Sudan, and advocate for innovative ways to provide reparation to survivors.

+90
mentions in UK and international media

+500,000
people reached through 41 campaigns on social media

Amal Clooney and Rupert Skilbeck on why Britain fails to hold war criminals to account.

The Economist

Three reforms are needed to make its international justice efforts more robust, say the lawyers

19 October 2023

UK spies to be investigated over claims they were complicit in torture of CIA prisoner

The Guardian

Investigatory powers tribunal to examine complaint brought by Mustafa al-Hawsawi, who was tortured while detained by CIA

31 May 2023

REDRESS Director Rupert Skilbeck speaks to Radio 4's Today programme.

BBC

Someone needs to sort out the funds from the sale of Chelsea FC because victims of the war in Ukraine 'need support now'

22 February 2024

Rwanda scheme is a source of great shame for Britain

Regardless of what the prime minister thinks, recent credible evidence of torture in Rwanda cannot be whitewashed by legislation

7 March 2024

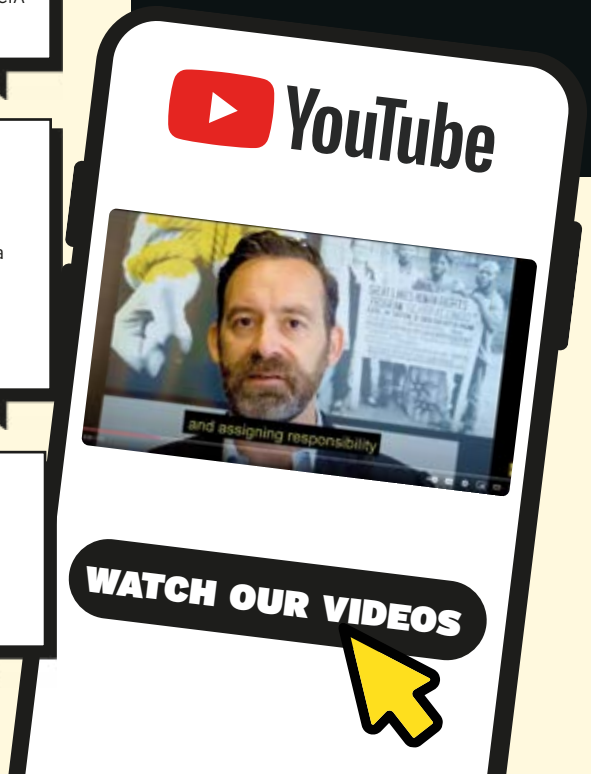
THE TIMES

The PhD student imprisoned for being a spy: 'I live with a huge amount of guilt that I'm alive'

The Telegraph

After his incarceration and torture in a UAE jail, Matthew Hedges and his wife Daniela are campaigning for change

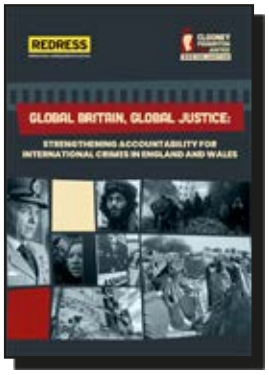
26 August 2023

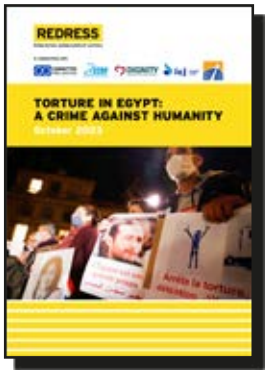


PUBLI-CATIONS

To see all our publications, visit: **redress.org/resources/publications**

REDRESS publishes critical legal and policy research on key issues relating to justice and reparation for torture. During the year REDRESS published six major reports, eleven briefing papers on key policy issues, two new practice notes, as well as bulletins relating to sanctions and reparation. Some are available in French, Arabic, Spanish, Russian and Ukrainian.





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Samina Yaqub
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(from January 2024)

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Legal Advisor

Gosia Marska
Administrative & Operations Assistant

Alejandro Rodríguez Díaz
Legal Officer

Ekaterina Rosolovkaya
Legal Assistant

Alejandra Vicente
Head of Law

During the year REDRESS was also supported by Legal Fellows

Alice Chan, Ana Cutts Dougherty, Amina Fahmy, Mira Naseer, Jacob Palmer, Surbhi Sachdeva, Isabelle Terranova, Emily Truluck and David Zuther.

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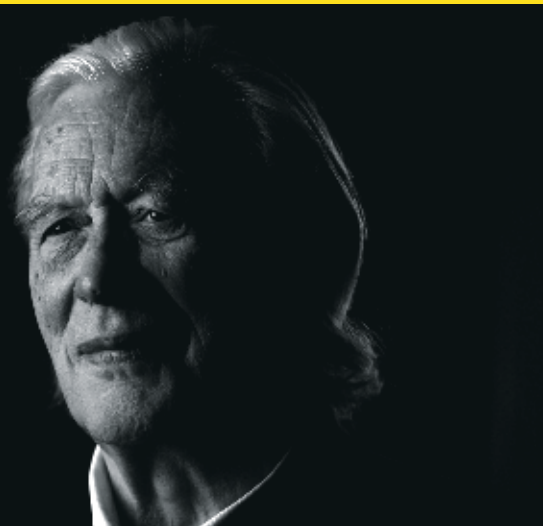
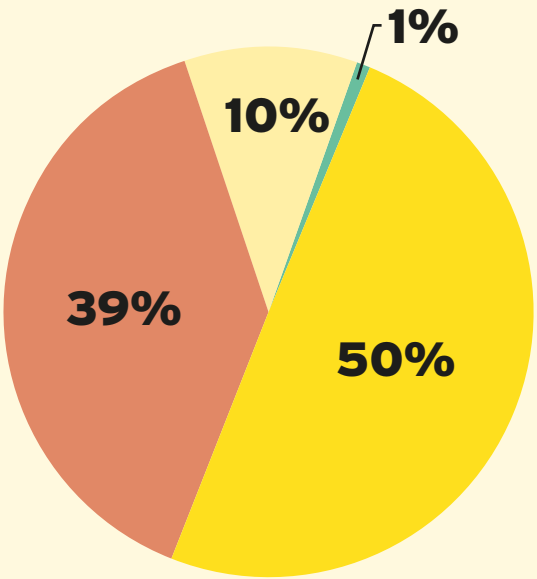
John Simpson CBE

FOUNDER AND HONORARY PRESIDENT

Keith Carmichael
(died 21 March 2024)



FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

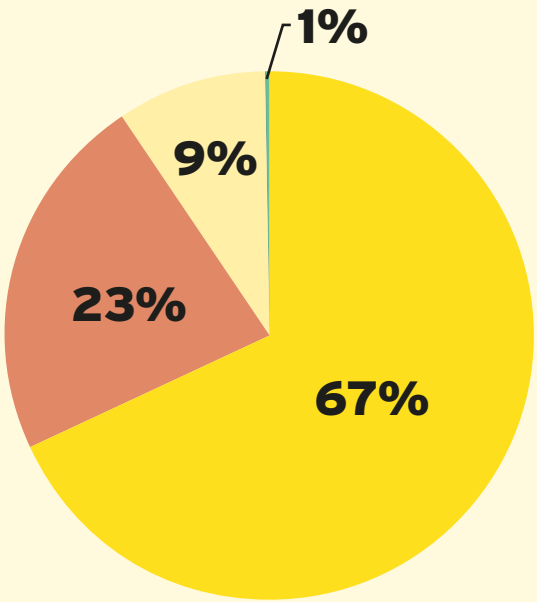


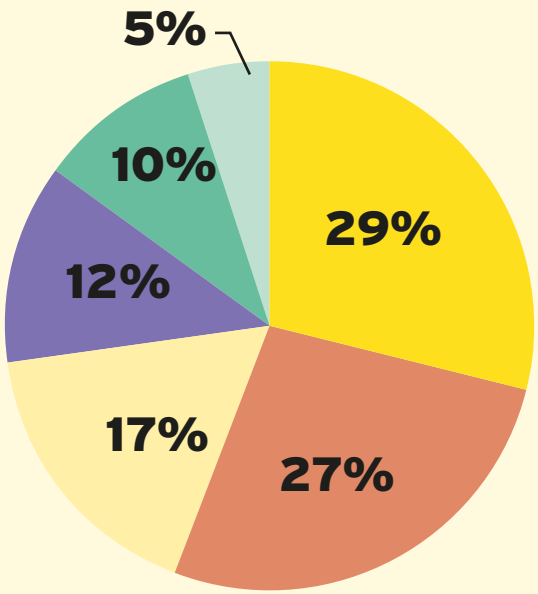
INCOME 2023-24

Charitable activities	£897,871
Donations and Legacies	£703,045
Donated services	£191,501
Investment income	£11,637
Total	**£1,804,054**

INCOME 2022-23

Charitable activities	£1,858,360
Donations and Legacies	£618,330
Donated services	£248,210
Investment income	£3,978
Total	**£2,728,878**



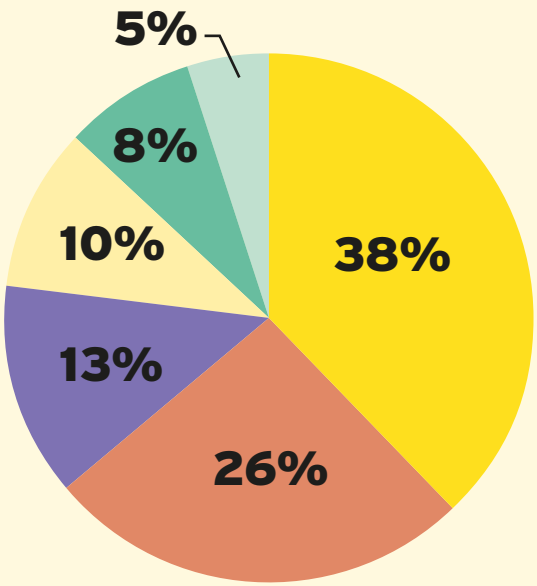


EXPENDITURE 2023-24

Reparation	£668,183
Justice	£618,973
Dissent	£383,570
Discrimination	£280,338
Solidarity	£242,408
Raising funds	£120,829
Total	**£2,314,301**

EXPENDITURE 2022-23

Reparation	£756,035
Justice	£522,398
Discrimination	£262,852
Dissent	£203,315
Solidarity	£156,003
Raising funds	£95,179
Total	**£1,995,782**



** The financial results are for the financial year 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024 and the previous financial year.*

SUPPORT REDRESS

©REDRESS. Matthew Hedges, a member of REDRESS' Survivor Advisory Group, and his wife Daniela.

For 30 years we have sought justice and reparation for survivors of torture, many targeted because of discrimination or to suppress dissent. It is the vital contributions of REDRESS's supporters which allow us to continue challenging torture where and whenever it occurs.

Giving once or supporting us whenever you can means helping REDRESS to pursue legal claims on behalf of survivors, prosecute perpetrators and change policies to protect people at risk. It also contributes to our ongoing casework representing those wrongfully imprisoned or targeted for their identity or activism. Litigation of this nature often takes several years to reach a judgement, so your sustained support allows us to see these cases through, giving survivors the assistance they need to pursue justice.

Your support also enables us to work in collaboration with local partners around the world, many of whom operate in extremely difficult circumstances, to strengthen the global anti-torture movement. We are constantly striving to promote the voices of communities affected by torture, increase awareness of human rights violations and advocate for judgements that will prevent further abuses from taking place. Donations from our supporters facilitate this work to realise our vision of a world without torture.

Help us stand with survivors of torture:
redress.org/donate

Annual Review 2024

REDRESS

Ending torture, seeking justice for survivors

HELP SHARE OUR VISION FOR A WORLD WITHOUT TORTURE

redress.org

REDRESS
Unit G01, 65 Glasshill Street
SE1 0QR, London, UK
+44 (0)20 7793 1777
info@redress.org

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Photo cover:
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A Filipina activist yells as the police block their protest march on International Women's Day at Manila, Philippines, in 2024.