REDRESS

Ending torture, seeking justice for survivors

## October 2026

# JUST REPARATION

Strengthening the community of practice for reparation by sharing topical developments in the field



**Just Reparation** is a regular roundup of news on reparation, curated by the REDRESS legal team.

This edition highlights key developments in the field of reparations, including the recent reparations hearing before the International Criminal Court (ICC) in the case of Ali Muhammad Ali Abd-Al-Rahman ("Ali Kushayb"); the submission of a case concerning enforced disappearances and killings during El Salvador's armed conflict to the Inter-American Court of Human Rights; ongoing challenges surrounding the use of Chelsea FC sale proceeds for victims in Ukraine; and a decision by Colombia's Special Jurisdiction for Peace (JEP) on paramilitary violence during the armed conflict, alongside a United Nations call for reparations for victims.

This issue also features insights from Arie Mora, a REDRESS consultant based in Kyiv, Ukraine, who shares his perspectives on how to ensure that the international compensation mechanism effectively responds to the needs and rights of survivors of the war in Ukraine.

If you would like to contribute a short article for our *Community Corner* section, or if your organisation is hosting an event you would like to share with our readers or on our social media, please contact our Legal Officer, Alejandro, at alejandro@redress.org.

Give us feedback

## BIG STORIES



## SUDAN

### The ICC Hold Reparation Hearing in the Ali Kushayb Case

On 8 September 2026, the International Criminal Court (ICC) held a hearing on reparations for victims of former Janjaweed militia commander Ali Muhammad Ali Abd-Al-Rahman, more commonly known as Ali Kushayb. The hearing took place one year after Kushayb was sentenced to 20 years' imprisonment for war crimes and crimes against humanity committed in Darfur between 2003 and 2004.
REDRESS, together with Rights for Peace (RfP), Darfur Women Action Group Uganda, Darfur Network for Human Rights, and the Queen's University Belfast Human Rights Centre, submitted a third-party intervention to the Court. Based on consultations with 121 victims, the submission emphasised the need for a comprehensive, survivor-centred, adaptable reparations order in light of the evolving conflict in Sudan. The ICC has yet to issue a decision on reparations.

The Court requested additional submissions from the Common Legal Representative of Victims and the Trust Fund for Victims regarding Kushayb's liability and the costs of repairing the harm suffered by victims. The ICC now faces the challenge of designing reparations for thousands of victims amid ongoing atrocities in Sudan, which remains the world's largest humanitarian crisis. Last month, *Just Reparations* dedicated a special edition to Sudan, featuring perspectives from victims and practitioners on how the reparations process can better reflect victims' needs and realities.

*Photo by: ICC CPI*




## EL SALVADOR

### Inter-American Court to Examine Civil War-Era Atrocities Against the Turcios Flores Family

On 10 June 2026, the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) submitted the case of Mario Antonio Turcios Flores and Family to the Inter-American Court of Human Rights (IACtHR). The case concerns the extrajudicial execution, torture and enforced disappearance of members of the Turcios Flores family during the Salvadoran Civil War, as well as the failure of the Salvadoran authorities to effectively investigate and prosecute those responsible.

In 1980, Santos Armando Turcios Flores, then aged 17, was assaulted and detained by soldiers from the Third Infantry Brigade in San Miguel, El Salvador. His family later found his body bearing severe signs of torture. The IACHR concluded that the incident constituted an enforced disappearance due to the deprivation of liberty and the absence of information regarding his whereabouts. Two years later, members of the Atlacatl Infantry Battalion carried out a massacre in the hamlet of Barrios, torturing and executing an estimated 49 residents, including 29 children. The IACHR found that the military's use of force was unlawful, arbitrary and intentional, and involved cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment.

The IACHR ultimately found El Salvador responsible for multiple violations of the American Convention on Human Rights, including the rights to life, personal liberty and judicial protection. As reparations, the Commission ordered full compensation and rehabilitation measures, including physical and mental healthcare. The Commission also called for effective criminal investigations, the prosecution and punishment of those responsible, and guarantees of non-repetition, including permanent human rights training for the Armed Forces and strengthened judicial capacity to investigate crimes committed during the armed conflict.

*Photo by: CIDH*



## UK/ UKRAINE

### Chelsea FC Sale Funds Remain Frozen as Debate Over Reparations Continues

On 12 October 2026, the debate over how frozen Russian-linked assets should be used gained renewed attention after BBC Panorama aired a documentary alleging that sanctioned Russian oligarch Roman Abramovich used offshore structures and falsified tax documents to conceal his wealth, allegedly with assistance from Deloitte. The claims add to ongoing scrutiny surrounding the £2.35 billion sale of Chelsea FC, which Abramovich pledged in 2022 would benefit victims of the war in Ukraine.

The proceeds from the sale remain frozen in a Barclays bank account and have generated at least £175 million in interest over the past four years. The funds remain inaccessible due to a dispute over their destination. While the UK Government maintains that the money should be used exclusively for victims in Ukraine, Abramovich has argued that it should also support broader humanitarian causes worldwide.

The disagreement reflects a wider debate about the purpose of frozen Russian-linked assets. Some commentators argue that, amid global humanitarian crises and declining aid budgets, the funds should be directed to victims of conflict regardless of nationality. Ukrainian survivors and advocates, however, have stressed that the assets represent a rare opportunity to support justice and reparations efforts linked to Russia's actions in Ukraine. For many, repurposing Russian-linked assets is not only a practical source of funding but also a means of ensuring accountability by making Russia contribute to repairing the harm caused.

The continued stalemate highlights the legal and political challenges of transforming frozen assets into meaningful reparations for victims.

*Photo by: Brent Flanders CC 2.0*



## COLOMBIA

### Colombia: UN Independent Experts Call for Ecopetrol to Provide Reparations to Victims of Armed Conflict

On 2 September 2026, Colombia's Special Jurisdiction for Peace (JEP) issued a landmark ruling attributing responsibility to former State agents and the former director of Ecopetrol, Colombia's state-owned oil company, for crimes against humanity and war crimes committed in Barrancabermeja in the late 1990s. The decision adds to a growing body of evidence documenting collaboration between State authorities and paramilitary groups during Colombia's armed conflict. While ostensibly aimed at combating guerrilla movements, the campaign also targeted human rights defenders, trade unionists, community leaders and social organisations.

The case concerns grave violations committed between 1998 and 2000, including the killing of 431 people and the enforced disappearance of 85 others. According to the JEP, the ruling marks a significant step towards truth, justice and reconciliation for victims. The court also acknowledged the suffering endured by victims and recognised the perseverance of civil society organisations that have worked for decades to ensure these crimes are neither forgotten nor left unpunished.

On 14 October 2026, UN experts welcomed the decision as an opportunity to advance truth, justice and accountability while placing victims at the centre of the reparations process. They noted that the case reflects both the corporate responsibility to provide

remedy under the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights and the State's obligation to ensure effective reparations, encouraging Ecopetrol to engage directly with victims to identify appropriate redress measures.

*Photo by: Juan Felipe Ramirez/Pexels*

# COMMUNITY CORNER

We like to include the perspectives and insights of lawyers, activists, survivors, and others engaged in the field of reparation in **Just Reparation**. Alongside updates on progress in specific cases, your contributions are invaluable for enriching our collective understanding and fostering meaningful dialogue within the reparation community of practice. If you would like to feature in the next edition of Just Reparation, we encourage you to submit your contributions by 20 November 2026 to alejandro@redress.org.

## Ensuring that the International Compensation Mechanism Works for Survivors: Lessons from Consultations with Survivors and Practitioners in Ukraine

**By Arie Mora, REDRESS Legal Consultant**

The Register of Damage for Ukraine ("the RD4U" or "the Register") is a historic step towards securing compensation for victims of Russia's aggression against Ukraine. Yet for survivors of torture, sexual violence, unlawful detention and other serious violations, submitting a claim can remain difficult, distressing and, in some cases, inaccessible.



A new REDRESS briefing paper, Strengthening Access to the Register of Damage for Ukraine for Survivors of Torture and Other Related Crimes, draws on consultations with twelve Ukrainian civil society organisations, survivor groups and practitioners to identify barriers survivors face when seeking to submit claims, and proposes measures to make the emerging international compensation mechanism more accessible and survivor-centred.

**An important mechanism, but challenges remain**

The RD4U is the first component of the developing international compensation mechanism for Ukraine. Its role is to receive, process and record claims concerning

damage, loss or injury caused by Russia's internationally wrongful acts against Ukraine. The future International Claims Commission for Ukraine will be responsible for assessing claims and determining compensation.

For survivors of torture and other serious violations, however, simply reaching the point of submitting a claim can present considerable challenges.

The report identifies eight interconnected barriers, including limited awareness of the Register; lack of trust and motivation; digital and technical difficulties; challenges obtaining and presenting evidence; risks of re-traumatisation; concerns about data protection and security; insufficient referral pathways and support; and broader structural and eligibility concerns.

Some of the most serious harms remain comparatively underrepresented among claims. By July 2026, the Register had received more than 170,000 claims overall. Only 1,113 were in the category covering torture or inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, while 234 concerned sexual violence.

**Survivors need clear information and sustained support**

For some survivors, uncertainty about whether compensation will ultimately be paid, how long the process will take and how claims will be assessed can discourage engagement. Others face more immediate priorities, including medical and psychological care, rehabilitation, housing, replacement of documents or family tracing.

Technical barriers can compound these difficulties. Claims are currently submitted digitally through Ukraine's Diia platform (the Ukrainian State's e-services platform). Survivors may lack reliable internet access, suitable devices or the digital tools required to submit a claim. Electricity cuts, air raids and displacement can interrupt applications, while technical failures sometimes require survivors to repeat work involving painful or sensitive information.

In order to submit a claim to the RD4U, Claimants have the option to submit evidence, and may wish to do so, but it is not required, and gathering evidence can pose a challenge. Survivors may have no documents because records were never created, have been destroyed, remain in occupied areas, or are held by institutions to which they have limited access. Others may already have recounted traumatic experiences repeatedly to investigators, State authorities, journalists or civil society organisations and understandably may not want to do so again.

The report therefore calls for clearer and more accessible guidance, trauma-informed safeguards, improved technical functionality, stronger referral pathways and safe routes for assisted or representative submissions. It also stresses the importance of meaningful survivor and civil society participation in the continued development of the international compensation mechanism.

**Compensation must form part of a wider reparation response**

The report also emphasises that the international compensation mechanism cannot replace domestic reparation, rehabilitation and assistance for survivors whose needs are immediate.

Survivors of torture, unlawful detention and other serious violations may require medical care, psychological and psychosocial support, legal assistance, housing, livelihood support and help with social reintegration long before international

compensation becomes available. International and domestic mechanisms should therefore reinforce one another, while minimising the number of times survivors must recount traumatic experiences or reproduce evidence.

States have a critical role to play. The report calls on States to sustainably fund the international compensation mechanism, support accessible claim-submission pathways and domestic reparation programmes, resource civil society and survivor organisations, and work towards extending the mechanism's temporal scope to address violations committed since the beginning of Russia's aggression in 2014.

Ultimately, a compensation mechanism should not be accessible only to those victims who are best equipped to navigate it. If the mechanism is to deliver meaningful reparation, the barriers facing survivors of some of the gravest violations must be addressed from the outset.

# OTHER STORIES

## SOUTH AFRICA

**Apartheid-Era Injustice Back in Court as Sharpeville Survivors Demand Reparation**

Read more



## LIBERIA

**Liberia Advances Long-Awaited Accountability Efforts Through War Crimes and Anti-Corruption Courts**

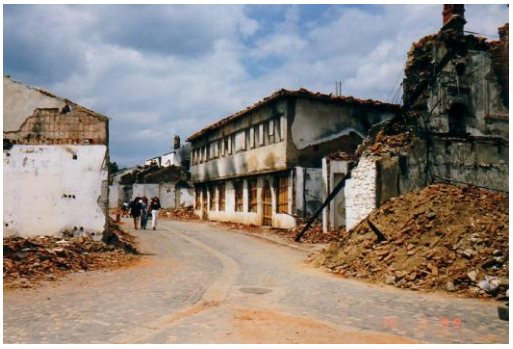
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## KOSOVO

**Kosovo Specialist Chambers Launch Reparations Process for Victims of KLA War Crimes**

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## NEPAL
**Calls for Climate Justice Following Devastating Himalayan Floods**

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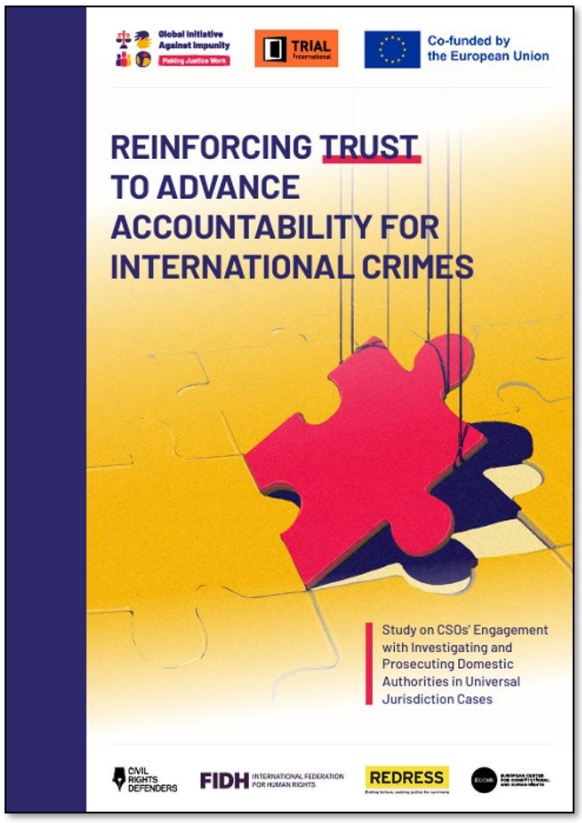


# WEEKEND READS

## Reinforcing Trust to Advance Accountability for International Crimes
**by Global Initiative Against Impunity**

Developed in the framework of the Global Initiative Against Impunity (GIAI) by TRIAL International with Civil Rights Defenders, the European Center for Constitutional and Human Rights (ECCHR), the International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH) and REDRESS, this comparative study examines what makes cooperation effective in practice, where difficulties arise, and how relationships between CSOs and domestic authorities can be strengthened.

Read the report




## The scandal of victims' funds in DRC: Kasai: FONAREV under fire
**by Justiceinfo, Caleb Kazadi**

The Kamuina Nsapu armed conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo took place ten years ago. But in Kasai FONAREV, the public body in charge of reparations for victims, is coming increasingly under fire.



Read the article

### Report – AI, memorialisation, and the future of victim testimony
**by Impunity Watch**



Recent advances in generative artificial intelligence (AI) have enabled new forms of memorialisation, testimony preservation and digital representation of the dead.

While AI offers opportunities to improve access to testimony, strengthen archival work and support memorialisation efforts, it also introduces significant ethical, legal and political risks – from the risk of reinforcing unequal recognition among victims and communities, to the possibility that commercial interests and profit motives may shape how historical events are recorded, accessed and remembered.

Read the article

# EVENTS

### REDRESS WEBINAR SERIES

### Towards a Crimes Against Humanity Convention
### 4 November 2026 | 15:00 CET

REDRESS hosts periodic webinars on reparation practices to support the anti-torture movement. These sessions share practical tips, comparative experiences, lessons learned, and other relevant insights for practitioners. They create and strengthen ties among practitioners, academics, and activists from varied backgrounds and contribute to the formation of a community of practice on reparation. Find details of previous webinar here.




REDRESS is hosting an online discussion on the future UN Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of Crimes Against Humanity and what the current negotiation process means for international justice efforts worldwide. Bringing together experts and advocates engaged in the process, the webinar will provide an update on recent developments, identify key issues under discussion, and explore opportunities for civil society engagement in the lead-up to the next phase of negotiations.

**Speakers:**

- Hugo Relva, Amnesty International
- Aakash Chandran, Asia Justice Coalition
- Tess Graham, Global Justice Center
- Akila Radhakrishnan, Human Rights Lawyer & Gender Justice Expert

Moderator: Julie Bardèche, REDRESS

The session will conclude with an interactive Q&A. Interpretation will be provided in French and Spanish.

Register here

Here are some upcoming events on strategic litigation against torture and other related topics that may be of interest to you.
If your organisation is hosting an event and would like to share it with our community of practice through this newsletter or REDRESS social media, please send the details to our Legal Officer at alejandro@redress.org.

Thank you for reading. See you next month!

Take a look at our previous editions here.
If someone has forwarded you this newsletter, please subscribe here.

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