



REPUBLIC OF LIBERIA
INDEPENDENT NATIONAL COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS (INCHR)
Sinkor, 20th street, Russell Avenue, Monrovia, Liberia
Email: inchr@inchrilib.org; Website: www.inchrilib.org
+231-777-410-002 / +231-888-576-796



Office of the Acting Chairperson

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

INCHR Clarifies Its Statutory Mandate on Reparations for Victims and Survivors of Liberia's Civil Conflicts

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The Independent National Commission on Human Rights (INCHR) wishes to clarify ongoing public discussions and misconceptions regarding the implementation of reparations for victims and survivors of Liberia's civil conflicts, as recommended by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC).

The INCHR reiterates that the TRC Report recommended, among other measures, the establishment of a Victims Trust Fund and the provision of reparations to victims and survivors as integral components of Liberia's broader transitional justice, accountability, and national reconciliation agenda.

The Commission emphasizes that its establishment provides the statutory institutional mechanism for the implementation, coordination, monitoring, and reporting of the recommendations of the TRC. Consequently, matters relating to human rights promotion and protection, transitional justice, accountability, reconciliation, and the implementation of relevant TRC recommendations fall squarely within the Commission's legal mandate.

In fulfillment of this mandate, the INCHR has commenced a process aimed at developing a National Reparations Framework for Liberia. This process is being undertaken through learning, consultation, dialogue, and engagement with victims and survivors, who remain at its center. The Commission firmly believes that any reparations framework must be informed by the experiences, needs, aspirations, and priorities of those who suffered violations during Liberia's periods of conflict.

The process will culminate in the development of a victim-centered national framework that provides a foundation for meaningful, inclusive, accessible, and sustainable reparations. The INCHR is undertaking this work in partnership with relevant stakeholders, including WONGOSOL, the Liberia Massacre Survivors Association (LIMASA), civil society organizations, and other national and international partners working to advance human rights and transitional justice in Liberia.

The INCHR makes it unequivocally clear to both national and international partners that, as the statutory institution mandated to coordinate and advance transitional justice initiatives in Liberia, it must be appropriately informed of, consulted on, and engaged in all ongoing transitional justice-related activities, interventions, and implementation processes.

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The Commission further categorically rejects misinformation, suggesting that the TRC recommended the establishment of a separate "Reparations Commission." The INCHR urges the public, stakeholders, and the media to distinguish clearly between the TRC's recommendation for a reparations program, including the establishment of a Victims Trust Fund, and the institutional mechanisms legally mandated to implement those recommendations. Mischaracterizations of the TRC's recommendations risk creating public confusion and undermining ongoing efforts to advance transitional justice and national reconciliation.

The INCHR's current work does not seek to create a new institution outside its statutory mandate. Rather, it represents the Commission's commitment to advancing the implementation of the TRC recommendations through existing legal and institutional frameworks, while working collaboratively with victims, survivors, government institutions, civil society organizations, and development partners.

The Commission recognizes that reparations constitute a national undertaking that cannot be achieved by a single institution acting alone. Accordingly, the INCHR calls upon victims' and survivors' groups, civil society organizations, development partners, government institutions, traditional leaders, academic institutions, faith-based organizations, and other relevant stakeholders to actively participate in this process.

The Commission particularly encourages organizations and networks already working with victims and survivors to contribute their knowledge, expertise, experiences, and resources toward the development of a reparations framework that is victim-centered, inclusive, participatory, transparent, and responsive to Liberia's unique transitional justice context.

The INCHR remains firmly committed to ensuring that the voices and lived experiences of victims and survivors are not only heard but are placed at the heart of shaping Liberia's reparations process and broader transitional justice journey.

"Reparations are not merely about compensation. They are about recognition, dignity, healing, restoration, and justice for those who suffered. As the statutory institution responsible for advancing transitional justice in Liberia, the INCHR calls for concerted, coordinated, and collaborative national action to move from recommendations to meaningful outcomes for victims and survivors."

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