More Than Compensation – What Are Reparations?

What Money Can't Buy: Ideas for a Comprehensive Debate on Reparations



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Haiti paid dearly for its hard-won freedom—not figuratively, but quite literally. In 1825, the former colonial power, France, extorted a so-called "independence debt" of 150 million gold francs from Haiti. This sum was intended to compensate former French plantation owners for the loss of land and enslaved people—their "property"—as a result of the Haitian Revolution. Thus, it was not the victims of enslavement and colonial violence who were compensated, but rather the former profiteers of that system.

Haiti emerged in 1804 as the first Black republic and one of the first independent countries in the Americas. The state was born out of the Haitian Revolution—the only successful revolution by enslaved people in world history that led to the founding of a permanently independent state. Before independence, Haiti had been a French colony for about 140 years under the name Saint-Domingue. The colony was among the most profitable in the world. Its wealth was based primarily on sugar and coffee plantations, where enslaved Africans were forced to work under extremely violent conditions. [1]

After independence, one might have expected France to take responsibility for this system of enslavement, exploitation, and colonial violence. In fact, the opposite happened: Haiti was forced to pay for international recognition of its independence. Until 1947—that is, for over 120 years—Haiti thus paid reparations in the wrong direction. It was not the former colonial power that compensated the people who had suffered under slavery and colonial exploitation; rather, the liberated state had to compensate those who had profited from this system. [2]

This so-called "independence indemnity" had long-term consequences. The young state was forced into a state of permanent debt dependency that severely hampered its political and economic development. Calculations by *The New York Times,* in collaboration with economic historians and economists, estimate the current cost of these payments—depending on the scenario—at between 21 and 115 billion U.S. dollars. [3] Even the lowest estimate makes it clear just how much funding Haiti lacked for education, infrastructure, health care, and economic development.

Haiti is not an isolated case. Even when slavery was abolished in the British Empire in 1833, it was not the formerly enslaved people who were compensated, but rather the so-called slave owners. For many of those affected, the abolition of slavery thus meant no redress, while those who had previously profited from colonial violence were able to secure or even expand their wealth. [4]

A look at Haiti shows that colonialism and slavery are not closed chapters. Their financial, political, and social consequences continue to this day. Haiti exemplifies a central question of restorative justice: What does it mean to not only symbolically acknowledge historical injustices, but to make amends for them materially, politically, and socially? Today, reparations primarily aim to address the consequences of serious human rights violations or crimes under international law. They are an instrument of restorative justice that seeks to acknowledge the injustices suffered and to provide redress to those affected. While Haiti was once forced to pay reparations to those who had already benefited from this unjust system, the focus today is on discussing and implementing reparations for the victims of enslavement, forced displacement, and the colonial system of injustice.

1
Oliver Gliech, *Haiti – Die 'erste schwarze Republik' und ihr koloniales Erbe*, in: Aus Politik und Zeitgeschichte, 5. Juli 2010, Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung, bpb.de/shop/zeitschriften/apuz/32627/haiti-die-erste-schwarze-republik-und-ihr-koloniales-erbe/ (last accessed July 27, 2026).

2
Toni Keppeler, Laura Nadolski und Cecibel Romero, *Kaffee: Reparationszahlungen für die Kolonialherren*, in: WOZ – Die Wochenzeitung, Nr. 27, 6. Juli 2023, woz.ch/2327/kaffee/reparations-zahlungen-fuer-die-kolonial-herren/%2152V6DMF824HM (last accessed July 27, 2026).

3
Equal Justice Initiative, *Haiti's Forced Payments to Enslavers Cost Economy $21 Billion, The New York Times Found*, 13. Juni 2022, eji.org/news/haitis-forced-payments-to-enslavers-cost-economy-21-billion-the-new-york-times-found/ (last accessed July 27, 2026).

4
University College London, *Context*, Projekt Legacies of British Slavery, o. D., ucl.ac.uk/lbs/project/context/ (last accessed July 27, 2026).

What exactly are reparations?

"Colonialism and imperialism have not paid their score when they withdraw their flags and police forces from our territories. […] The wealth of the imperial countries is our wealth, too."

– Frantz Fanon, The Wretched of the Earth, 1st ed., p. 101 ff.

Fanon makes it clear what reparations are fundamentally about. They are not about charity, development aid, or a voluntary gesture of generosity, but about redress. Reparations are based on the recognition that colonial violence—linked to enslavement, exploitation, and imperial rule—did not simply end with the formal conclusion of colonial administration. Its consequences continue to this day: in global inequalities, in racist structures, in economic dependence, in stolen knowledge, stolen land, stolen bodies, and a stolen future.

Reparations are therefore more than financial compensation. They are a mechanism enshrined in international law for restoring justice, acknowledging responsibility, and practically addressing historical and present-day injustices.[5] They ask not only "What was taken?" but also "What structures enabled this violence? Who continues to benefit from it today? And what must change so that this violence does not continue?"

In the Caribbean, CARICOM has been coordinating activities relating to claims for reparations since the 1990s and formulating corresponding political demands. Furthermore, the African Union (AU) has declared the years 2026 to 2035 the Decade of Reparations, with a particular focus on reparations and justice for the African victims of colonialism.From a global perspective, the debate on restorative justice in the context of colonialism is already in full swing.

5 Human Rights Watch, *Q&A: Reparations for Historical and Ongoing Colonial Atrocities*, 4. September 2025, hrw.org/news/2025/09/04/qa-reparations-for-historical-and-ongoing-colonial-atrocities (last accessed July 27, 2026).

"We do have to talk about definitions: What do we mean by reparations? What is it—and how is it distinguished from reparatory justice?"

– Kwesi Ochosi, Building Trust Consortium, UK

Infobox: What does "reparations" mean?

The term "reparations" was long used primarily in the context of wars: it referred to payments or benefits through which a state was expected to make amends for damages it had caused. Over the course of the 20th century, the term was increasingly expanded to include redress for serious human rights violations.

In the context of colonialism, slavery, and racist violence, reparative justice therefore means more than financial compensation. It also encompasses the acknowledgment of historical injustices, formal apologies, the return of looted cultural artifacts and *ancestral remains,* educational and health initiatives, structural changes, and guarantees that comparable conditions of violence and exploitation will not continue.

Reparations thus focus not only on past injustices but also on the political, economic, and social consequences of colonial violence that continue to this day.

See UN General Assembly: *Basic Principles and Guidelines on the Right to a Remedy and Reparation for Victims of Gross Violations of International Human Rights Law and Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law,* Resolution 60/147, 2005.

> "Reparations mean holding states and institutions accountable while transforming the structures that enabled and continue to reproduce injustice."
>
> – Esther Mamadou Blanco, International Coalition for People of African Descent, Spain

According to the United Nations' *Basic Principles and Guidelines on the Right to a Remedy and Reparation*[6], reparations encompass five interrelated dimensions:

1. Restitution — Restoration

Restitution means restoring the situation that would have existed had the injustice not occurred—to the extent possible. This may include the return of looted cultural property, the repatriation of *ancestral remains*[7], the restoration of land rights, the recognition of political rights, or the return of resources that were taken away.

2. Compensation — material and non-material redress

Compensation encompasses financial payments for measurable damages, losses, and injuries. This includes material losses as well as non-material damages: the loss of life, dignity, health, education, social security, cultural continuity, and collective self-determination. Compensation, however, is only one part of reparations—it must not take the place of comprehensive justice.

3. Rehabilitation — Support and Reconstruction

Rehabilitation refers to medical, psychological, social, and legal support for affected individuals and communities. In a colonial context, this also means: healing collective, intergenerational trauma; rebuilding destroyed social structures; and promoting education, language, culture, health, and self-determined institutions.

6
United Nations General Assembly, *Basic Principles and Guidelines on the Right to a Remedy and Reparation for Victims of Gross Violations of International Human Rights Law and Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law*, Resolution 60/147, UN Doc. A/RES/60/147, December 16, 2005, available from the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, ohchr.org/en/instruments-mechanisms/instruments/basic-principles-and-guidelines-right-remedy-and-reparation (last accessed July 27, 2026).

7
The term *ancestral remains* refers to the human remains of ancestors that were looted, collected, studied, exhibited, or preserved in European museums, universities, and scientific collections in a colonial context. For many affected communities, their repatriation is not only a matter of restitution but also of dignity, mourning, spiritual responsibility, and the restoration of broken relationships with the deceased.

4. Satisfaction — Recognition, Truth, and Remembrance

Redress encompasses non-financial forms of reparations. These include public acknowledgment of the injustice, truth-telling process, apologies, memorial sites, renaming, educational initiatives, the disclosure of historical archives, and making colonial violence visible in society. Without truth, there is no justice; without acknowledgment, there is no healing.

5. Guarantees of Non-Repetition — Structural Change

Reparations are not directed solely at the past. They must prevent violence, exploitation, and dehumanization from continuing in new forms. Guarantees of non-repetition therefore entail structural changes: in institutions, educational systems, museums, academia, law enforcement, development cooperation, foreign policy, the economy, and international law. They require a social order that is no longer based on racial hierarchy, colonial continuity, and global exploitation.

From a decolonial perspective, reparations are not limited to compensating for individual harms or repairing individual relationships. They aim to transform the political, economic, and cultural structures that have enabled colonial violence and continue to perpetuate it to this day. Reparations therefore also mean challenging the foundations of a world order in which certain states, corporations, and societies have profited for centuries from the disenfranchisement, exploitation, and dehumanization of others.

In this sense, reparations are not an endpoint but a process. They open up the possibility of rethinking international relations: on the basis of equality, dignity, mutual recognition, and collective responsibility. They are a step toward a world in which justice is not granted selectively but is the right of all.

“It is clear that the process of reparation cannot be reduced to an individual claim or to a group approach that does not question the very structure of the system in which it exists. Calling for reparation should be one of the elements that ensures the emancipation of peoples. It should be the common struggle of the forces of change fighting against the coloniality of power.”

– Mireille Fanon Mendès-France, chairperson Frantz Fanon Foundation, France

Calls for Reparations from Germany: The Case of Namibia

“The reparations movement is moving forward with or without the participation of European countries. European governments should fulfill their human rights obligations and seriously come to terms with their colonial legacy. Colonial atrocities are the cause of ongoing human rights violations for which reparations must be paid; symbolic gestures by European standards are not enough.”

– Almaz Teffera, Human Rights Watch

Germany’s war of extermination against the Ovaherero and Nama in what was then “German South West Africa” ranks among the most brutal crimes in German colonial history. Between 1904 and 1908, tens of thousands of Ovaherero, Nama, Damara, and San were killed, displaced, stripped of their rights, deported to concentration camps, forced into labor, and deprived of their livelihoods. In total, approximately 100,000 people were killed. Land grabs and expropriation, sexualized violence, racist dehumanization, and the destruction of social, political, and economic structures continue to have repercussions to this day.

For a long time, Germany refused to provide clear political and legal recognition of this violence. Only after years of German-Namibian negotiations did the German government acknowledge the events of 1904 through 1908 for what they were: genocide. Yet this acknowledgment remained limited. After years of negotiations, Germany recognized the crimes against the Ovaherero and Nama as genocide from a “contemporary perspective” in the *Joint Declaration on Coming to Terms with German Colonial History and the Genocide against the Ovaherero and Nama,* published jointly with Namibia in 2021. In addition, Germany pledged 1.1 billion euros over a period of 30 years for development programs—by way of comparison: the special fund for the German military approved in 2022 alone amounted to 100 billion euros, which is about 90 times as much. At the same time, the pledged payments were expressly not designated as reparations in the legal sense. This Joint Declaration therefore remains controversial and is

rejected by many representatives of the Ovaherero and Nama, as they were not involved in the negotiations and the declaration does not provide for direct recognition with legal consequences or reparations payments to the affected communities. Due to massive protests and legal objections, the so-called "reconciliation agreement" (Joint Declaration) has not yet been ratified by the parliaments.[8]

This is precisely where the fundamental problem with Germany's approach to colonial injustice lies. Germany wants to acknowledge the past without fully assuming responsibility. Germany wants to reconcile without involving those affected on an equal footing. Germany wants to pay without speaking of reparations. And Germany wants to acknowledge historical guilt without deriving current legal, political, and material obligations from it.

For many Ovaherero and Nama, this is unacceptable. They criticize the fact that the negotiations were conducted primarily on a bilateral basis between the governments of Germany and Namibia, while the descendants of the survivors had no direct and equal representation at the negotiating table. Their demand is therefore: "Nothing about us without us." A reparations process that speaks on behalf of those affected without taking them seriously as political subjects reproduces colonial power structures rather than overcoming them.

"This relationship is based on a violent colonial past that resulted in a genocide which profoundly reshaped the political, socio-economic, and cultural reality of Namibia in general, but specifically that of the Nama and OvaHerero peoples. [...] It was in the city of Berlin that the decision was made to carve up Africa for the exploitation of its resources and the brutal dehumanization of its people –here in Berlin. It was from Berlin that decisions were made to expropriate African land, decapitate African leaders, loot African heritage, and set in motion a lucrative trade in human remains. [...] Restitution must be more than just returning ancestral remains and artifacts. It is about restorative justice and rethinking the current economic, political, and diplomatic order that underpins this relationship."

– Sima Luipert, Nama Traditional Leaders Association (NTLA), Namibia

8 Judith Hackmack, *Das Irreparable reparieren? Der Umgang mit den langfristigen Folgen des deutschen Kolonialismus in Deutschland und Namibia*, Strategiepapier, European Center for Constitutional and Human Rights (ECCHR), 2023, p. 1.

"Now Is the Time: African Union Decade of Action on Reparations and African Heritage (2026–2035)"

Restoring Justice

Acknowledging Responsibility

Reparations

Addressing Harm

Promoting Structural Change

The Five Dimensions of Reparations

According to UN Resolution 60/147 (2005)

1	2	3	4	5
Restitution	**Compensation**	**Rehabilitation**	**Satisfaction**	**Guarantees of Non-Repetition**
restore the victim to the original situation, restoration of justice and liberty, return of property	financial compensation for material and immaterial damages	medical, psychological, social, and legal services	truth, recognition, apology, remembrance	structural changes to prevent future violence

9
Ibid., p. 5

10
Ibid., p. 9.

The German argument against reparations in the legal sense is that today's standards of human rights and international law cannot simply be applied to the colonial era. This so-called intertemporal principle holds that historical acts must, as a matter of principle, be judged according to the law of their time. Yet this is precisely where the colonial core of the problem lies: The law of that time was itself part of a racist order that systematically excluded colonized people from basic standards of protection. Relying on such a law today and using it as a shield against responsibility is a prime example of colonial continuity. For the descendants of the survivors, this has a retraumatizing effect: first, their ancestors were disenfranchised, persecuted, and murdered; today, it is precisely this disenfranchisement that serves as a legal argument against their claims.[9]

The attempt to frame German payments as "development aid" or "reconciliation payments" also misses the core of restorative justice. Development cooperation is not reparations. Projects are no substitute for acknowledging guilt. And money granted without a human rights-based framework for reparations cannot adequately address the structural consequences of colonial violence, as it amounts to renewed paternalism and thus perpetuates power asymmetries.

A just reparations process would therefore have to look different. It would have to directly and effectively involve the Ovaherero and Nama, as well as other affected groups such as the Damara and San. It would have to take diaspora communities into account and address historical dispossessions as well as contemporary issues of land restitution, land rights, and material reparations. It would have to be gender-sensitive and, in particular, bring to light the sexualized violence against Ovaherero and Nama women. It would have to establish an official "Truth and Reconciliation Forum" in which the events from 1904 to 1908 are comprehensively investigated, documented, and publicly acknowledged. And it would have to transform not only Namibia but also Germany.

For coming to terms with colonialism is not merely a matter of foreign policy. It concerns German society itself. To this day, knowledge about German colonialism, its history of violence, and its enduring consequences remains alarmingly limited. Reparative justice therefore also requires, in Germany, political education, textbook reforms, provenance research, repatriation, restitution, new forms of remembrance, and a clear confrontation with narratives that trivialize or justify colonialism.[10]

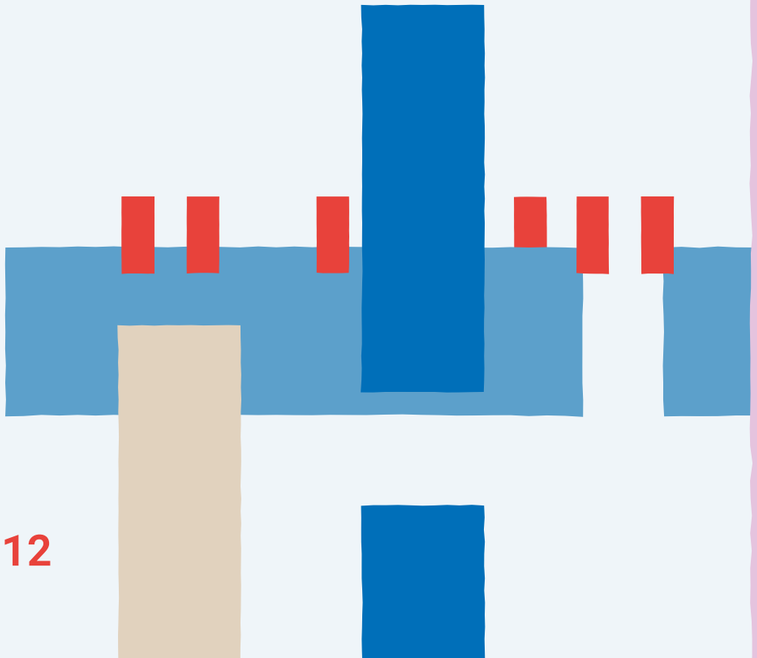
The case of Namibia shows that while the German government has begun to speak about colonial violence, it continues to refuse to use an appropriate language of accountability. As long as reparations are avoided, those affected are only involved to a limited extent, and colonial legal arguments are mobilized

against today's demands for justice, the process of coming to terms with the past remains incomplete.

Reparations to the Ovaherero, Nama, Damara, and San would not be an act of charity. Nor would they be a mere symbolic gesture. They would be a necessary step toward jointly addressing historical injustice, present-day inequality, and the enduring colonial order.[11]

"Reparations are not only about material compensation. They are also about dismantling the systems that continue to reproduce colonial and racial injustice."

– Dr. Chevy Eugene,
Pan-African Council,
Caribbean, Canada



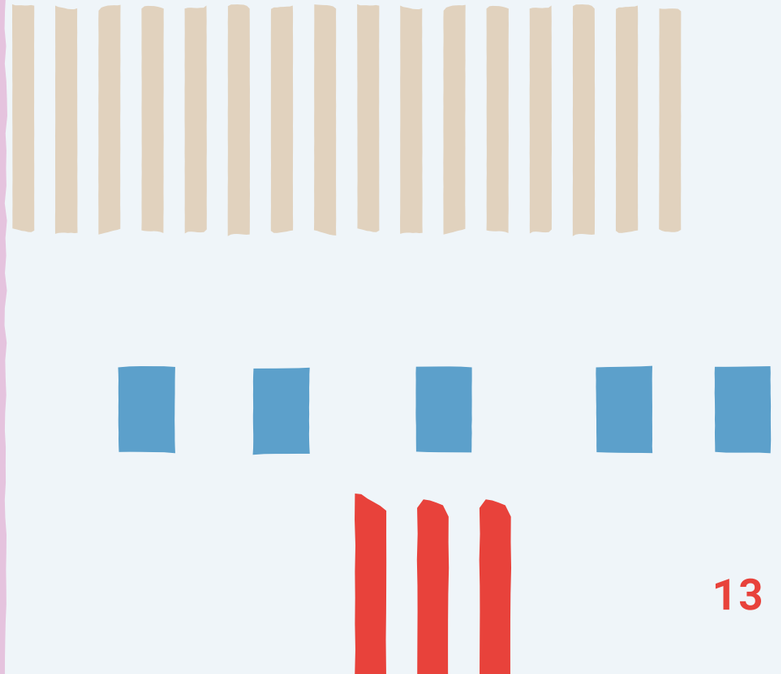
11
For further information, see the website of the transnational NGO and campaign coalition *Genocide Knows No Statute of Limitations!, Our Colonial Present: Germany's Herero and Nama Genocide*, genocide-namibia.net/ (last accessed July 27, 2026).

Calculating Reparations Claims

The material and immaterial damage caused by colonial violence can never be fully quantified. Nevertheless, there are approaches for calculating specific reparations claims in a transparent manner. One example is the 2025 publication *What Germany Owes Cameroon—On the Necessity of Climate Reparations.* It focuses on a specific aspect of colonial violence: the massive deforestation, the establishment of monoculture plantations, and the displacement of indigenous agriculture during German colonial rule in Cameroon. The consequences of these interventions are still felt today, for example in issues of land ownership, food sovereignty, and economic dependence.

According to the authors' calculations, Germany would have to pay Cameroon approximately 38 billion euros for this material damage alone. The publication thus makes it clear that demands for reparations need not remain abstract but can be based on concrete historical and ecological damages. At the same time, the authors take a broader view of climate reparations: "Climate reparations from Germany to Cameroon are one way to correct this injustice and improve Cameroon's situation. Reparations consist of three aspects: an apology, a form of material compensation, and a guarantee not to repeat the offense. In the case of the climate crisis, the latter would require the immediate decarbonization and systemic transformation of the economy." [12]

12
Oumarou F. Mfochivé, Caro Rübe und Kai Kuhnhenn, *Was Deutschland Kamerun schuldet – über die Notwendigkeit von Klimareparationen*, Konzeptwerk Neue Ökonomie, Leipzig, April 2025, p. 3, konzeptwerk-neue-oekonomie.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/08/Reparationen_Kamerun_de.pdf (last accessed July 27, 2026).



Who Is Working on Reparations?

Structures, Initiatives, and Networks

"Reparatory justice will not be handed to us. Like political independence, it must be asserted, pursued, and secured through determination and unity."

– H.E. John Dramani Mahama,
President of the Republic of Ghana and
AU Champion for Reparations

The following examples show that reparatory justice is being addressed at various levels: in international bodies, regional alliances, transnational networks, civil society initiatives, human rights debates, and local political approaches.

International and Regional Structures

AFRICAN UNION AND AUCER

In recent years, the *African Union* has made restorative justice a central political issue. The 2023 *Accra Proclamation on Reparations* established a common framework for addressing historical crimes against Africans and people of African descent—particularly slavery, colonialism, and apartheid—politically, legally, and institutionally. In this context, efforts were also made to establish the *African Union Committee of Experts on Reparations* (AUCER). This expert committee is tasked with developing a common African position on reparations and healing, as well as integrating an African-Caribbean action program. Furthermore, the committee is tasked with examining how a joint action program by the African Union and the African diaspora can contribute to strengthening a global African community. In 2025, the AU's work focused on "Justice for Africans and People of African Descent Through Reparations," thereby further establishing reparations as a long-term political program of the African Union.

au.int/en/theme/2025

au.int/en/decisions/accra-proclamation-reparations

caricomreparations.org

caricomreparations.org/caricom/caricoms-10-point-reparation-plan/

ohchr.org/en/permanent-forum-people-african-descent

reparations.mfa.gov.gh/

CARICOM REPARATIONS COMMISSION AND TEN-POINT PLAN FOR REPARATORY JUSTICE

The *CARICOM Reparations Commission* (CRC) was established in 2013 by the regional organization Caribbean Community (CARICOM) as a standing commission. It coordinates demands for reparations for the consequences of the transatlantic slave trade, colonial violence, and European exploitation at the regional level and raises international awareness of these issues. With the *Ten-Point Plan for Reparatory Justice,* the Commission articulates joint political demands directed at former colonial powers. The Ten-Point Plan demonstrates that reparations must be conceived comprehensively: as a process of recognition, apology, material restitution, cultural restoration, education, health, technology transfer, debt relief, and structural change.

NATIONAL REPARATIONS COMMITTEES IN THE CARICOM CONTEXT

In addition to the regional *CARICOM Reparations Commission,* several CARICOM member states have national reparations committees, often referred to as National Reparations Committees or *National Reparations Commissions.* These committees bring the reparations debate into their respective societies, organize educational and public awareness campaigns, support historical research, and link national demands to the regional CARICOM agenda. These include, among others, committees in Antigua and Barbuda, the Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Dominica, Guyana, Jamaica, Saint Lucia, Suriname, and Trinidad and Tobago.

UN PERMANENT FORUM ON PEOPLE OF AFRICAN DESCENT

The *UN Permanent Forum on People of African Descent* is an international body that raises awareness of the rights, perspectives, and demands of people of African descent. Reparative justice, the fight against structural racism, and the consequences of slavery, colonialism, and colonial violence are among its central themes. The Forum provides reports, meeting documents, and information on international debates regarding recognition, justice, and structural change.

GHANA MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS: REPARATIONS 2026 – HIGH-LEVEL EVENT "NEXT STEPS"

The official website provides information about the international conference in Accra from June 17 to 19, 2026. The focus was on the next steps following the UN resolution on addressing the forced removal and enslavement of African people, as well as concrete political, legal, and institutional pathways toward reparative justice.

Transnational Networks and Movement Structures

GLOBAL REPARATIONS HUB

The *Global Reparations Hub* is a transnational networking space for affected communities, civil society actors, scholars, legal professionals, and supporters who advocate for reparations worldwide. The Hub aims to bring together struggles and experiences from different regions, make knowledge and resources accessible, and embed regional initiatives within a stronger global movement. In November 2025, *Decolonize Berlin*, in collaboration with the *Global Reparations Hub,* hosted the "Reparations Now!" conference in Berlin, where the Hub's digital platform was officially launched in Europe.

"Many initiatives have remained isolated. The Hub can mobilize and coordinate efforts for reparations that go beyond financial compensation and contribute to dismantling this racialized capitalist system of oppression."

– Esther Mamadou Blanco, International Coalition for People of African Descent, Spain

reparationscomm.org/

reparationscomm.org/reparations-plan/

repaircampaign.org/

hrw.org/news/2025/09/04/qa-reparations-for-historical-and-ongoing-colonial-atrocities

hrw.org/news/2025/06/19/why-reparations-qa

woek.de/index.php?view=article&id=385:argumentationsleitfaden-reparationen-fuer-den-genozid-in-namibia&catid=10

NAARC – NATIONAL AFRICAN AMERICAN REPARATIONS COMMISSION

The *National African American Reparations Commission* (NAARC) was founded in the U.S. in 2015 and is working on a reparations agenda for people of African descent in the United States. Its *Preliminary 10-Point Reparations Program* includes, among other things, a formal apology, repatriation, land, health programs, education, housing, economic development, and institutional infrastructure. NAARC views reparations as a political demand, an educational process, and part of collective healing.

REPAIR CAMPAIGN

The *Repair Campaign* is a social movement for restorative justice in the Caribbean and is led by the CARICOM Reparations Commission. Genocide, systematic enslavement, and colonialism have inflicted profound and ongoing harm on the people of the Caribbean, while providing significant financial benefits to the colonial powers. The goal of the *Repair Campaign* is to amplify the voices from the Caribbean calling for reparations and to develop evidence-based socioeconomic plans for reparative justice.

Human Rights Classification and Argumentation Resources

HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH: HUMAN RIGHTS FRAMEWORK FOR REPARATIONS

Human Rights Watch (HRW) classifies reparations as a human rights issue and argues that historical crimes such as slavery, colonial violence, and racial exploitation continue to have lasting consequences to this day. In various analyses and Q&As, *HRW* explains that reparations do not merely entail individual compensation but can also include structural measures: recognition, truth, redress, institutional reforms, and steps to address ongoing racial inequality.

ARGUMENTATION GUIDE: REPARATIONS FOR THE GENOCIDE IN NAMIBIA?

The argumentation guide by the alliance *"No Amnesty on Genocide"* addresses key objections to reparations for the genocide against the Ovaherero and Nama. It contextualizes these objections historically, in terms of international law, and politically, and is particularly well-suited for examining the German context.

Germany and Berlin: Initiatives, Resources, and Local Approaches

DECOLONIZE BERLIN

Decolonize Berlin e.V. advocates for a critical examination of German colonialism, racism, and colonial continuities. The organization works on issues of memory policy, political education, restitution, repatriation, and decolonization across society as a whole. *Decolonize Berlin* is working on the issue of reparations because the organization understands colonial reckoning not merely as a historical issue, but as a political task in the present day.

decolonize-berlin.de

WE WANT THEM BACK!

We Want Them Back! is a project focused on the restitution and repatriation of human remains—or ancestral remains—from colonial contexts. To this day, German museums and academic institutions hold ancestral remains that were forcibly taken during the colonial era and misused for racist research. *We Want Them Back!* supports affected communities in their search for their ancestors. In doing so, the project combines the demands for rehumanization, restitution, and restorative justice.

wewantthemback.berlin

MEDICO INTERNATIONAL: NAMIBIA, COLONIAL VIOLENCE, AND REPARATIONS

medico international has been working for years on issues of colonial continuities, reparations, and memory policies, particularly in connection with the German genocide against the Ovaherero and Nama in present-day Namibia. *medico international* supports partner organizations of the descendants of survivors, strengthens their demands vis-à-vis the German and Namibian governments, and links the debate on reparations to issues of land, resources, psychosocial consequences, memory, and postcolonial economic relations.

medico.de/projekte/namibia

medico.de/reparatur-und-reparationen-19639

KONZEPTWERK NEUE ÖKONOMIE: CLIMATE JUSTICE, REPARATIONS, AND GLOBAL RESPONSIBILITY

Konzeptwerk Neue Ökonomie links the debate on reparations to issues of climate justice, global justice, and socio-ecological transformation. Using Cameroon as an example, the publication *What Germany Owes Cameroon* demonstrates how colonial environmental destruction, climate debt, and contemporary dependencies are interconnected. It becomes clear that climate reparations do not merely entail financial compensation, but also include apologies, structural change, and guarantees of non-repetition. The Konzeptwerk's publications page also features dossiers, articles, podcasts, and resources on climate debt, reparations, degrowth, and transformative justice.

konzeptwerk-neue-oekonomie.org/pressemitteilung/deutschland-muss-klimareparationen-an-kamerun-zahlen/

konzeptwerk-neue-oekonomie.org/publikationen/

ERLASSJAHR.DE

erlassjahr.de focuses on global debt injustice, debt relief, and reforms of the international financial system. The materials illustrate how debt dependency, colonial legacies, the climate crisis, and global power dynamics remain intertwined to this day.

https://erlassjahr.de

BERLIN DEVELOPMENT POLICY COUNCIL (BERLINER ENTWICKLUNGSPOLITISCHER RATSCHLAG/BER): DOCUMENTATION OF THE EXPERT DISCUSSION "CLIMATE DEBT AND REPARATIONS"

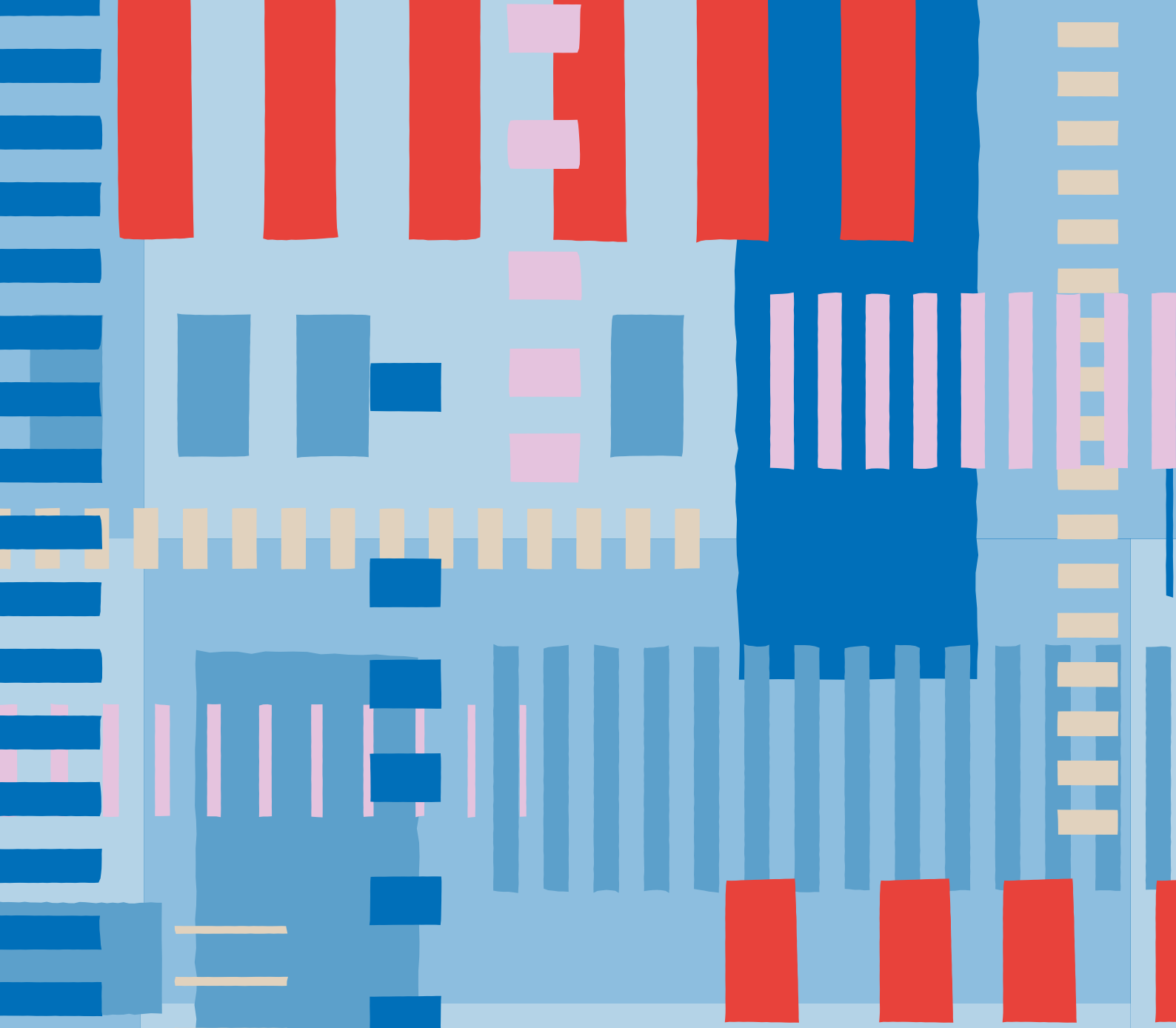
The documentation from the BER expert discussion *"Climate Debt and Reparations—What Can a Major Western European City Like Berlin Do?"* brings together several contributions on climate debt, reparations, and urban responsibility. Topics addressed include the calculation of climate reparations using Cameroon as an example, municipal approaches to reparations in the United Kingdom, and the question of what role Berlin, as a Western European metropolis, can play in a globally just urban policy.

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MUNICIPAL EXAMPLES: LAMBETH AND BRISTOL

There are also examples of reparations policies at the local level. In the United Kingdom, Lambeth and Bristol, among others, have passed resolutions on reparations and restorative justice. These approaches link local responsibility to global injustices and demonstrate that cities and districts can play a role when national governments evade calls for reparations. Political scientist Laura Kotzur has studied such municipal initiatives and presented her findings during an expert discussion organized by the Berlin Development Policy Council.

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