

Chixoy dam reparations in Guatemala 40 years and still unpaid

<https://mailchi.mp/rightsaction/40-years-and-reparations-are-still-unpaid>

On Monday, October 10, 2022, hundreds of Maya Achi villagers protested in front of the Presidential Palace in Guatemala City. 40 years later, neither the World Bank and Inter-American Development Bank (IADB), nor the Guatemala government have paid reparations to the victims of World Bank / IADB's deadly and destructive "Chixoy" hydro-electric dam project in Guatemala

- Below: COCAHICH communique



COCAHICH Communiqué

To the national and international community and independent media, COCAHICH (Coordinating Committee of Communities Affected by the Construction of the Chixoy Hydroelectric Power Plant)

Manifests:

That after more than 10 years of the negotiation process for the creation of a Reparation plan with the State of Guatemala, through the presidency of the republic of Guatemala; as of 2014,

the Governmental Agreement No. 378-2014 was achieved, which gives legal life to the reparation plan.

Since 2016, the State of Guatemala should have developed and approved the regulations for collective redress, called Proyecto de Vida (Life Project) for the surviving families of 33 communities whose human rights were violated by the construction of the Chixoy hydroelectric dam. However, these regulations have not been approved.

It is worth noting that from the year of 2017 until July 2020, during 3 consecutive government administrations, consensus was reached on said draft regulations, however, they decided not to approve them.

That attitude we have qualified as a re-victimization of the surviving families of the 33 communities, highlighting the lack of political will of the governments in office to assume their commitment to comply with the reparation measures.

Currently the Presidential Commission for Peace and Human Rights -COPREDEH- is the entity responsible for following up and complying with the reparation plan of the Chixoy case, but unfortunately it is using the same tactic to evade responsibilities and the same practices of malicious delay.

In November 2021, the representation of the surviving communities, demonstrating our good faith, shared the regulations agreed upon with the authorities of COPREDEH in order to follow up on the agreements and commitments reached by the State institutions, however, to date there have been no conditions for the approval of these regulations.

THEREFORE, Mr. President Dr. Alejandro Eduartdo Giammattei Falla, we urgently request a meeting to address the situation of the implementation of the Reparation Plan in favor of the surviving families of serious human rights violations due to the construction of the Chixoy Hydroelectric Plant, and the approval of the Regulations for the implementation of the Collective Redress (Life Project).

Taking into account that they are currently failing to comply with the budgetary norm, according to Article 29, of Legislative Decree No. 16-2021, which orders the elaboration and approval of the regulation to make the collective economic redress feasible, which orders the paying of the reparation plan. At the same time, it is urgent to instruct the Executive Director of COPREDEH, Dr. Ramiro Alejandro Contreras, to comply with the reparation plan in its entirety.

1. We demand a strategic roadmap for COPREDEH, MINFIN and SEGEPLAN to make a plan for the implementation of the 12 life projects delivered in 2017 to the government of Guatemala, through COPREDEH.
2. We demand that the entities of the executive body respect the representation and organizational structure of COCAHICH, the Coordinating Association of Communities Affected by the Construction of the Chixoy Hydroelectric Dam.

3. We demand Mr. Ramiro Alejandro Contreras, director of COPREDEH, assume his role of coordinating the fulfillment of the reparation measures of the Chixoy case according to Governmental Agreement No. 378-2014.
4. We request that the International Community accompany us to observe and monitor compliance with the reparation measures agreed with the Government of Guatemala in favor of the surviving communities of the serious human rights violations caused by the construction of the Chixoy Hydroelectric Plant.
5. We demand that the Inter-American Development Bank (IADB) and the World Bank (WB) assume their commitments as co-participants in the violation of the human rights of the 33 communities affected by the construction of the Chixoy hydroelectric dam.

For the rule of law and in order to achieve a dignified reparation, we will not move from here, Mr. President Giammattei, until we reach a consensus and approve the regulations for collective redress.

Because a UNITED PEOPLE WILL NEVER BE DEFEATED

Guatemala, October 2022

More information

- Carlos Chen, ADIVIMA (Association for Integral Development of Victims of Violence in the Verapaces, Maya Achi), chenosorio.carlos@gmail.com
- Grahame Russell, Rights Action, info@rightsaction.org

Background

40th anniversary of Chixoy Dam/Rio Negro massacres in Guatemala

By Grahame Russell, Rights Action, May 14, 2022

<https://mailchi.mp/rightsaction/may-14-40th-anniversary-of-chixoy-damrio-negro-massacres-in-guatemala>

TESTIMONIO: Canadian Mining in the Aftermath of Genocides in Guatemala

Edited by Catherine Nolin & Grahame Russell

Chapter one of TESTIMONIO includes an article by Nate Einbinder about the Chixoy dam massacres, that helped set the stage for the new wave of mining exploitation, violence and harms that were soon to follow.

- <https://btlbooks.com/book/testimonio>
- www.testimoniothebook.org

Archives - Chixoy Dam/Rio Negro Massacres

<https://rightsaction.org/chixoydam-archives>

Chixoy Dam: No Reparations, No Justice, No Peace

15 minute film (2013) by Lazar Konforti: <http://vimeo.com/50015125>

Other solidarity/NGO groups working with Maya Achi genocide survivor groups

- NISGUA (Network in Solidarity with People of Guatemala): www.nisgua.org
- GHRC (Guatemalan Human Rights Commission): www.ghrc-usa.org
- Breaking the Silence: www.breakingthesilenceblog.com
- Qachuu Aloom 'Mother Earth' Association: <http://gardensedge.org/about/qachuu-aloom>

Tax-Deductible Donations (Canada & U.S.)

Since 1994, Rights Action has funded and supported many human rights and justice struggles of the Maya Achi people in the Rabinal region, including the work of COCAHICH (Coordinating Committee of Communities Affected by the Construction of the Chixoy Hydroelectric Power Plant) to seek reparations for all that was destroyed.

To support land and environmental defenders, and human rights and justice struggles in Honduras and Guatemala, make check to "Rights Action" and mail to:

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