

Reparative Justice in South Sudan

Healing historical wounds, restoring dignity, and preventing recurrence

Short presentation / talking points

A young country carrying old wounds

South Sudan's statehood is new; its wounds are not.

A reparative approach must recognize layered harms across generations: violence, displacement, family separation, sexual violence, loss of livelihoods, cattle and land, missing persons, trauma, and broken community trust.



- **1955–1972**

First civil war memories

- **1983–2005**

Liberation struggle and mass displacement

- **2013 / 2016**

New cycles of national conflict

- **Today**

Ongoing violence and unresolved grief

**Reparative justice is not charity.
It is a recognition that harm was done, dignity was
violated, and repair is owed.**

For South Sudan, it means three things:

Acknowledgement

Truth-telling, apology, and public recognition of victims and survivors.

Repair

Material, medical, psychosocial, legal, and livelihood support.

Transformation

Institutional reform, prevention, and guarantees that violence will not recur.

**victim-
centred**

**gender-
sensitive**

**community-
owned**

What does “repair” look like?

1

Restitution

Return land, property,
identity, family links
where possible

2

Compensation

Money or assets for
loss, injury, disability
and livelihood damage

3

Rehabilitation

Medical care,
psychosocial support,
legal aid and social
services

4

Satisfaction

Truth, apology,
memorials, missing
persons, public
acknowledgement

5

Non- repetition

Security reform, laws,
education,
accountability and
prevention

A serious reparations programme normally combines these forms rather than choosing only one.

Is punitive justice the only answer?

Punitive justice

Asks: who committed the crime, and how should they be held accountable?

Necessary for serious crimes, deterrence, and ending impunity.



Reparative justice

Asks: what harm was suffered, what do survivors need, and what must change?

Necessary for healing, dignity, restoration and non-repetition.

South Sudan needs both: accountability for perpetrators and repair for victims.

How do we deal with layered wounds?

Listen

Survivors define harm and priorities.

Acknowledge

State and communities recognize pain publicly.

Repair

Provide services, compensation, livelihoods and memorialization.

Reform

Change systems that allowed violence to continue.

Community dialogue matters — but it must not replace state responsibility.



South Sudan's opportunity: Chapter V mechanisms

The 2018 Revitalized Peace Agreement provides for three transitional justice institutions:

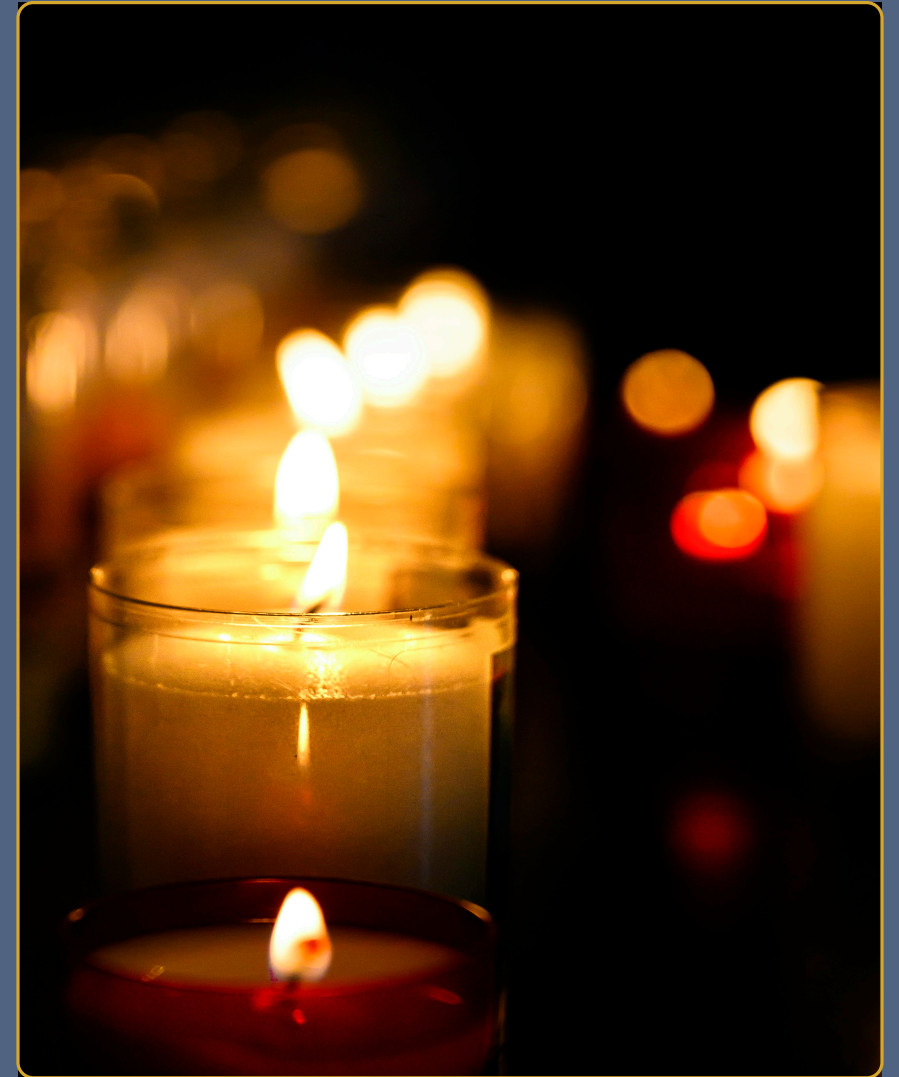


Important: the CTRH and CRA laws were signed in 2024, but full functionality and survivor access remain the real test.

Closing message

Repair must move from promise to practice.

- Recognize victims and survivors publicly.
- Prioritize urgent interim reparations for those most affected.
- Fund and operationalize the CRA and CTRH independently.
- Combine accountability with healing, services and institutional reform.





Thanks for your attention