

## Chixoy Dam / Rio Negro massacres in Guatemala

<https://mailchi.mp/rightsaction/make-the-world-bank-and-idb-pay>

**Please help make the World Bank and Inter-American Development Bank pay!**

### Chixoy International Financial Institution Reparations Act of 2022

In December 2022, U.S. Members of Congress Jesús García, Jan Schakowsky, Ilhan Omar, Mark Pocan and Raúl Grijalva introduced the “Chixoy International Financial Institution Reparations Act of 2022”.

The bill is named in memory of Maya Achi people in Guatemala who were tortured and raped, murdered and massacred, and the survivors forcibly displaced between 1975 and 1985, so as to make way for the construction of the Chixoy hydro-electric dam, an investment project financed and constructed by the World Bank and Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) in partnership with the U.S.-backed genocidal regimes of Generals Lucas Garcia and Rios Montt.



Depiction of Chixoy Dam/Rio Negro massacres, used in popular education work

#### Below

- Statement from congress member Jesus Garcia

- Action request from Witness for Peace Solidarity Collective
- Background information

## **Rights Action and the ‘Chixoy Dam Reparations Campaign’**

As supporters and partner groups will recall, from 1993 through almost to 2014, Rights Action was hugely involved in documenting and denouncing the Chixoy Dam / Rio Negro massacres and forced evictions carried out by successive U.S.-backed military regimes from 1975-1985, and the directly complicit roles of the World Bank and IDB.

During this time, Rights Action channeled significant funds to the Maya Achi survivors of the massacres and forced evictions, including through the years of the creation and work of the ‘Chixoy Dam Reparations Campaign’. In Guatemala, this work was led by then co-director Annie Bird.

Rights Action is heartened by the “Chixoy International Financial Institution Reparations Act of 2022”.

We encourage folks and organizations to support the efforts of the Witness for Peace Solidarity Collective as they lead work to have more Congress Members sign on to this bill.

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## **Development cannot be used to justify human rights abuses Reps. García, Schakowsky Introduce Legislation to Promote Human Rights Protections at International Financial Institutions**

December 20, 2022, Press Release

<https://chuygarcia.house.gov/media/press-releases/rebs-garcia-schakowsky-introduce-legislation-to-promote-human-rights-protections-at-international-financial-institutions>

WASHINGTON, DC —Today, Representatives Jesús “Chuy” García (IL-04) and Jan Schakowsky (IL-09), joined by their colleagues Ilhan Omar (MN-05), Mark Pocan (WI-02), and Raúl Grijalva (AZ-03), introduced the Chixoy International Financial Institution Reparations Act of 2022. This bill would help create a recourse mechanism for victims of human rights violations associated with projects supported by international financial institutions (IFIs). This bill directs U.S. representatives at IFIs to consider human rights and corruption risks before agreeing to support a proposed project.

The bill is named in memory of the Guatemalan Indigenous communities that were tortured, raped, murdered, and forcibly displaced when the World Bank and the Inter-American Development Bank financed construction of the Chixoy Dam.

“So-called ‘development’ should never come at the price of human rights violations. But despite their obligations under international law, IFIs have been repeatedly implicated, leaving

impacted communities with no options for recourse or reparation. I'm introducing this bill as part of a larger discussion we need to have about preventing human rights abuses by development banks and creating independent recourse mechanisms to hold those institutions accountable," said Congressman García.

"International Financial Institutions (IFIs) have an obligation to comply with international human rights law, yet we have seen these institutions fund projects like the Chixoy Hydroelectric Dam that have resulted in the murder, torture, rape, and displacement of indigenous people in Guatemala," said Congresswoman Jan Schakowsky. "The Chixoy International Financial Institution Reparations Act will ensure U.S. representatives at IFIs do not support any activities that contribute to human rights abuses and that impacted communities may seek reparations for the harm IFI loans have caused. We must learn from our mistakes and confront our legacy of oppression. No entity, foreign or domestic, has the right to commit human rights abuses in the name of development."

"For more than 40 years my people, Indigenous Mayans living in Guatemala have suffered violations of our human rights, environmental, cultural, social and economic rights," said Indigenous human rights leader Juan de Dios García. "The investments of the international financial entities are not all as intended, and the results have been disastrous. Today opens a beacon of hope for us with the introduction of the Chixoy International Financial Institution Reparations Act of 2022. It creates a path for us to find justice."

- A copy of the bill text can be found [here](#).
- A Spanish language translation of the bill can be found [here](#).
- A section-by-section outline of the bill can be found in English [here](#) and in Spanish [here](#).

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## **Take Action: Tell Your U.S. Congress Member to Support the Chixoy Dam Bill**

Witness for Peace Solidarity Collective  
December 21, 2022

The "Chixoy International Financial Institution Reparations Act of 2022," introduced by Representative Chuy Garcia (D-IL), would require the United States to use its "voice, vote and influence" within multilateral development institutions (MDI) to encourage the creation of a reparations mechanism for victims adversely impacted by internationally financed projects.

Among its key provisions is the creation of an independent and transparent "Remediation and Reparations Fund," that would support affected parties' full and effective participation in a reparations mechanism and would financially support the implementation of a reparations plan. In addition, the bill would require that the US encourage broader reforms to current institutional practices and safeguards.

The United States is a major financial backer of the World Bank and other leading international development banks. Ask your Representative to stand with affected communities around the world by co-sponsoring the bill today!

### **Background**

In the late 1970s, the World Bank and the Inter-American Development Bank financed the construction of the Chixoy Hydroelectric Dam in Guatemala, a project that would displace 3,500 people and is implicated in the genocide of the Indigenous Maya Achi people.

Since then, directly affected communities in Guatemala continue to live in extreme poverty as a result of their displacement and multilateral institutions have continued to finance projects that have contributed to egregious human rights violations around the world. For more information, visit our landing page <https://www.solidaritycollective.org/chixoy>.

### **Take Action Today**

1. Urge your congressional representative to sign on to the Chixoy International Financial Institution Reparation's Act: <https://actionnetwork.org/letters/ask-your-representative-to-support-the-chixoy-international-financial-institution-reparations-act>
2. After emailing, be sure to leave a voicemail in their office by calling the Capitol Hill switchboard at 202-224-3121 (voice) or 202-224-3091 (TTY) and ask to be transferred to your Representative
3. Organizationally endorse the CHIXOY REPARATIONS ACT: <https://actionnetwork.org/forms/organizational-sign-on-support-the-chixoy-international-financial-institution-reparations-act>

In solidarity,

The Honduras Team, on behalf of the Solidarity Collective

[www.solidaritycollective.org](http://www.solidaritycollective.org)

<https://twitter.com/WfPSolidCollect>

[honduras@solidaritycollective.org](mailto:honduras@solidaritycollective.org)

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### **Rights Action background information**

#### **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>

#### **More information**

Carlos Chen, ADIVIMA (Association for Integral Development of Victims of Violence in the Verapaces, Maya Achi): [chenosorio.carlos@gmail.com](mailto:chenosorio.carlos@gmail.com);

## **Chixoy Dam: No Reparations, No Justice, No Peace**

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

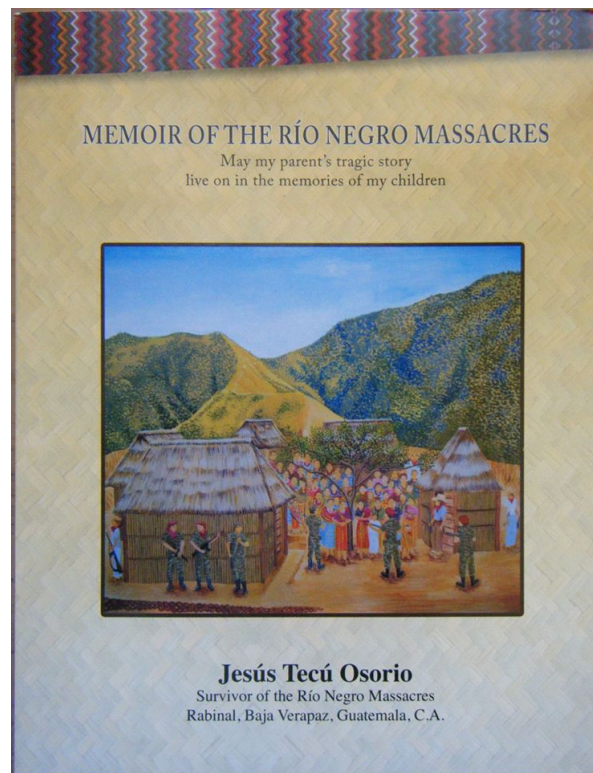
## **Archives - Chixoy Dam/Rio Negro Massacres & Reparations Campaign**

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

### **Recommend reading**

“Memoir of the Rio Negro massacres”

By Jesus Tecu Osorio



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

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

- U.S.: Box 50887, Washington DC, 20091-0887
- Canada: Box 82552 RPO Corktown, Toronto ON, M5A-1T8

Credit-Card Donations: <https://rightsaction.org/donate/>

Donations of securities in Canada and the U.S.? Write to: [info@rightsaction.org](mailto:info@rightsaction.org)

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