

REPARATIONS FOR CIVILIANS

SPECIAL EDITION: COMPENSATION
FOR CIVILIAN HARM IN IRAQ &
SYRIA

BY HUGO MCCULLAGH



Ceasefire Centre for Civilian Rights empowers civilians in war zones to monitor and document violations of international humanitarian law and human rights. This month's newsletter focuses on Ceasefire's research and advocacy work for civilians in Iraq and Syria who have been harmed by conflict, with a particular focus on the effect of the UK armed forces.

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REPARATIONS FOR CIVILIAN HARM IN UK MILITARY OPERATIONS

Ceasefire's latest report focuses on the need for a holistic policy for civilians harmed by UK military operations, as recommended by the Chilcot Report. The report is co-authored by Roseanne Burke and our own Executive Director Mark Lattimer.

On November 30th, Ceasefire Centre for Civilian Rights was delighted to hold an online event to publicise the release of our most recent research report. Our webinar, 'Reparations for Civilian Harm in UK Military Operations', hosted a range of legal and military experts who we would like to thank for their valued insights.

Sapna Malik, of Leigh Day LLP, Frank Ledwidge, author of 'Investment in Blood', Pasha Magid, author and investigative journalist and Liesbeth Zegveld, of the University of Amsterdam and Prakken d'Oliveira, provided a comprehensive and informative view of the grim reality facing civilians harmed by UK military operations.

After an introduction from our Executive Director, and co-author of the report, Mark Lattimer, Sapna Malik was our first speaker of the afternoon. Ms. Malik raised the important point that many cases settled by the Ministry of Defence were ex gratia payments. This means that they carry no acknowledgement of wrongdoing, or legal obligation, on the part of the army, a point which our report gives significant attention to.

Next, Frank Ledwidge spoke on the stark contrast between the compensation received by British soldiers injured in combat and civilians injured during a war. He provided the astonishing statistic that a blinded British veteran can expect around £570,000 compensation, while an Afghan civilian blinded during a UK military operation can expect around £7,000.

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THIS MEANS
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MENT OF
WRONGDOING

RAF
INTERVENTION IN
IRAQ/ SYRIA TO
COMBAT ISIS
CLAIMS TO HAVE
CARRIED OUT
1,700
AIRSTRIKES,
KILLING 4,000
ISIS
COMBATANTS,
BUT HAVE ONLY
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DEATH

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Pesha Magid followed, giving a fascinating talk on the circumstances faced by civilians who have been wounded by air strikes. Essentially, a civilian injured during an airstrike cannot usually expect even an ex gratia payment, as they have no means of identifying which member of a coalition force perpetrated the attack which injured them. With reference to the UK, she drew attention to the Ministry of Defence's refusal to ever release the exact locations of air strikes, making it almost impossible to make a successful claim.

Finally, Professor Zegveld gave an account of the similar situation occurring with regards to the Dutch government's response to civilian harm in its own military operations in Iraq. She pointed to the contradictory legal status of coalition attacks, whereby legally the coalition does not exist, but when asserting blame, it is the coalition who acts not an individual state. This creates a situation in which everybody, and simultaneously nobody, is responsible.



'Reparations for Civilian Harm from Military Operations: Towards a UK Policy' is now available to read on our website from the link below.

https://www.ceasefire.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/CFR_Reparations_Nov21_Final.pdf

For news on our upcoming online and in-person events, please follow our Eventbrite account at the link below. We look forward to seeing you there!

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/o/ceasefire-centre-for-civilian-rights-38338694323>

CEASEFIRE OPENS LEGAL HELPDESK IN MOSUL

Ceasefire is proud to announce the opening of our new legal helpdesk in Mosul, Iraq. Mosul was one of the worst affected areas during the ISIS occupation, serving as its headquarters, and suffered considerably during the operation to retake the city. Back in 2009, Iraq passed a law intended to provide compensation to civilians for personal injury and property damage, which is still in force. However, in practice, the law remains difficult for civilians to access due to its complexity. The documentary evidence required to file a successful claim is significant, and this can deter civilians from applying at all.

Ceasefire's legal helpdesk will help civilians to access the law and obtain the compensation to which they are entitled. Working with our partners on the ground in Mosul, the helpdesk provides pro-bono legal advice from local lawyers. It is available to the public four days a week and includes a helpdesk hotline which makes legal advice accessible by telephone. This is the first legal helpdesk in Mosul to provide free advice to civilians trying to access reparations for the damage done to them by the conflict.

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Visit the helpdesk's Facebook page (in Arabic) at the link below!

<https://www.facebook.com/dalilakiltaweed>

If you are interested in finding out more about the effect of the ISIS occupation and war on Mosul, read our report 'Mosul After the Battle: Reparations for Civilian Harm and the Future of Ninewa' below!

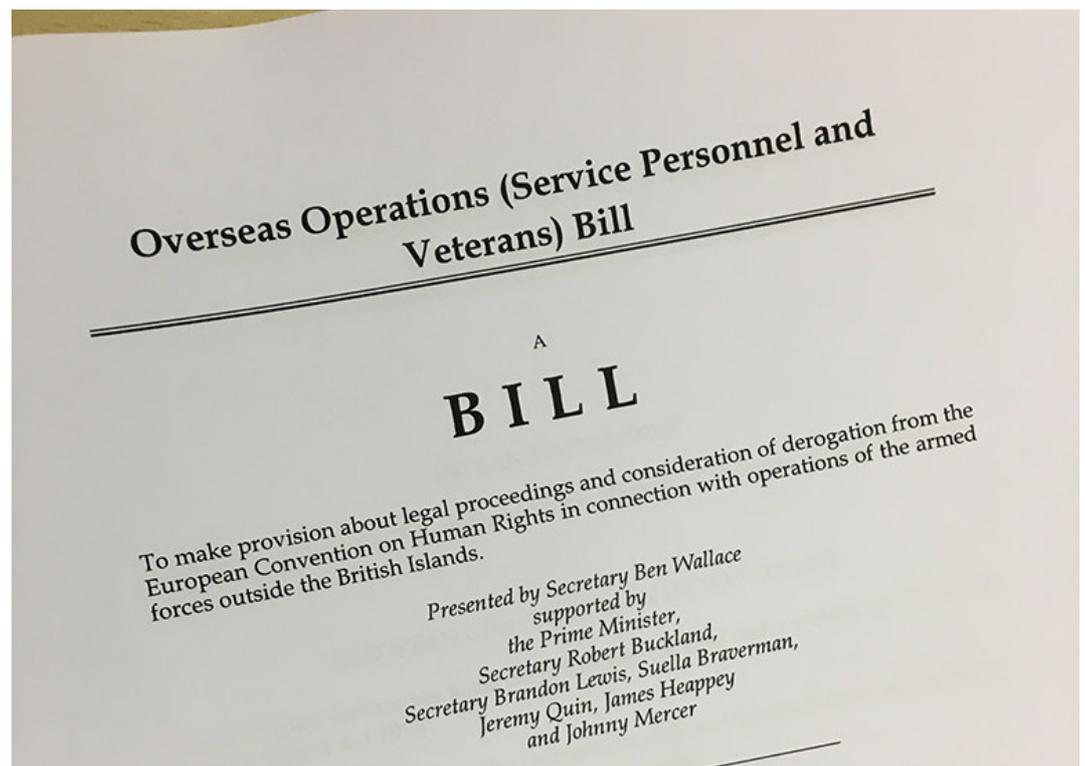
https://www.ceasefire.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/Mosul-after-the-Battle_Ceasefire-report-Jan20.pdf

UK OVERSEAS OPERATIONS BILL

On April 21st 2021, the UK government passed a bill which limits the extent to which British military personnel can be prosecuted for breaking international humanitarian law. Ceasefire's briefing on the report highlighted some of the problematic clauses in the Bill, with emphasis on those contradicting the UK's international humanitarian legal obligations. This meant that had the law been applied to the case of Baha Mousa's killing by UK servicemen, it would not have been prosecuted if brought before a court more than 5 years after the event.

One of the main concerns about the initial bill was that, while genocide was excluded, war crimes were included in the presumptions against prosecution. After tireless campaigning from Ceasefire, along with a small group of other NGOs, academics and military experts, the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Drones and Modern Conflict, and the international authorities, the UK government finally agreed to add it to the exclusions for torture, crimes against humanity, and genocide. While the Bill itself is still deeply problematic, it is now a little less so thanks to joint advocacy for civilian rights.

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CEASEFIRE FUNDRAISING EVENTS CALENDAR 2022

WOULD YOU LIKE TO PARTICIPATE IN A
CHALLENGE EVENT WHILST RAISING FUNDS FOR
AN IMPORTANT CAUSE?
CHECK OUT SOME OF THE AWESOME EVENTS
BELOW AND JOIN THE TEAM!



The Hackney Half - 22nd May 2022

The Hackney Half is a great first half-marathon for you to get involved in. A lovely flat course, teams of supporters at every corner, and plenty of green space makes this race one of London's favourite running events. We have a limited number of free spaces so sign up quick to avoid disappointment!

London Nightrider - 11th-12th June 2022

A unique opportunity to cycle through central London, passing all of London's iconic landmarks lit by the moon. Gather a team of friends or take on the challenge solo and select either the 50km or 100km route. Limited number of free spaces available to ride for Ceasefire so sign up soon!

Asics London 10k - 10th July 2022

Run London's biggest 10k event and soak up the Olympic atmosphere as you pass through the crowds of central London in the height of summer. Cruise down the banks of the Thames as you take in Regent Street, the Strand, pass the London eye, and round the final corner as you prepare for the final kilometre on the approach to Downing Street. This event is always one of London's most popular so get in quick to take in this delightful run.

Check out the 'Challenge Events' page on our website for more information. <https://ceasefire.org/challenge-events/>
If you have another event in mind, please get in contact with us. We would love to partner with you!

Email: fundraising@ceasefire.org

For more information on our art exhibition coming this spring please email: fundraising@ceasefire.org

Next newsletter issue: March 2022

Previous issues: <https://www.ceasefire.org/newsletter-archive/>

