



UNITED STATES INSTITUTE OF PEACE

PREVENTION

PREVENTION NEWSLETTER

MAY 2013

MISSION

USIP's Prevention Newsletter underscores the importance of preventive action, highlights the Institute's analytical and operational prevention work, and contributes to the design of prevention tools and strategies applicable in conflict situations worldwide.

CALENDAR

- May 8:** World Red Cross Day
- May 11:** Parliamentary Elections in Pakistan
- May 12:** Legislative Elections in Guinea
- May 15:** USIP Public Event: Transatlantic Atrocity Prevention
- May 21:** World Day for Cultural Diversity for Dialogue and Development
- May 26:** Parliamentary Elections in Equatorial Guinea
- May 29:** International Day for United Nations Peacekeepers
- June 11-12:** Professional Training Program on the Prevention of Mass Atrocities, MIGS, Montreal, Canada
- June 14:** Presidential Election in Iran
- June 29:** 1st Post-Referendum Presidential and Parliamentary Elections in Zimbabwe

PUBLICATIONS

- "The EU and the Prevention of Mass Atrocities" *Report* by Task Force on the EU Prevention of Mass Atrocities, February 2013
- "Conflict Analysis: Understanding Causes, Unlocking Solutions" *USIP Book* by Matthew Levinger, February 2013
- "Atrocity Prevention at the State Level: Security Sector Reform and Horizontal Equality" *Peace Brief* by Jonas Claes, April 2013

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Letter from the Editor

Peacebuilding actors continue to struggle in their efforts to prevent the kind of atrocity crimes we currently witness in Syria and throughout Central Africa. In the face of mass slaughter, the strategic focus often turns to quick-impact measures to undermine potential perpetrators, control the means to commit the crimes, and protect or empower the victims. Reports on past atrocities, however, frequently prioritize structural measures that address the root causes as a cost-effective way to prevent large-scale violence. But how does that work in practice?

On April 2nd, USIP hosted its annual input session on the Responsibility to Protect or R2P, convening policymakers, scholars, and NGO leaders to assess the utility of two structural prevention measures: security sector reform (SSR) and the promotion of horizontal equality. The findings served as input for the upcoming UN Secretary-General's report on the protection responsibilities of the state. The participants agreed that locally-led SSR and development policies can directly mitigate risk factors and strengthen state resilience as a complement to other diplomatic, economic, or military measures. The use of these instruments, however, has political ramifications. If poorly or hastily implemented, reform efforts pose significant short-term risks, as the shifting power equilibrium creates new winners and losers. Politically, the practice of R2P appears more amenable to operational prevention, i.e. efforts that address the immediate manifestation of atrocities.

So shall we work to improve operational prevention and crisis-management techniques, or find ways to overcome the political hurdles to structural prevention? The answer will impact where we focus our scarce resources and strategic efforts.

Kind regards,

Jonas Claes
Program Officer
Center for Conflict Management
U.S. Institute of Peace



PREVENTION IN PRACTICE

The Atrocities Prevention Board

Winny Chen, Senior Associate, Human Rights First

April 23 marked the one-year anniversary of the creation of the Atrocities Prevention Board (APB), a high-level interagency structure responsible for developing atrocity prevention and response strategies for the U.S. government. Over the last year, the APB has undertaken two primary areas of work: identifying and addressing emerging atrocity threats, and developing tools to enhance U.S. government capacity to prevent genocide and other mass atrocities.

In its monthly meetings, the APB scans the horizon for deteriorating situations on the trajectory of becoming mass atrocities. This process is targeted at future preventable crises, rather than full-blown atrocities such as Syria. Once the APB identifies a specific country or context, it uses a comprehensive framework to assess the situation's risk of becoming a mass atrocity and examines whether existing government activities sufficiently address the risks. If activities are inadequate, the APB offers actionable recommendations to tackle the sources of potential atrocities.

The APB also oversees the development of structural U.S. tools to address genocide and other mass atrocities, like early warning mechanisms, including alert and dissent channels; atrocity prevention training for U.S. government staff operating in high-risk countries; greater multilateral prevention and response capacity; civilian response capabilities tailored to preventing atrocities; and mechanisms for accountability.

“The APB offers actionable recommendations to tackle the sources of potential atrocities.”

Elections in Kenya

Ian Proctor, Research Assistant, U.S. Institute of Peace

The March 2013 Kenyan presidential election has come and gone without the tumult of the 2007 elections, when post-electoral violence resulted in over 1,000 deaths and several hundred thousand displaced Kenyan citizens. In contrast to the violent contest between Mwai Kibaki and Raila Odinga, this year's presidential race between Uhuru Kenyatta and Odinga was for the most part decided through a peaceful electoral process and the appropriate legal channels. The Kenyan Supreme Court has confirmed Kenyatta's ascension to the presidency – affirmed by his swearing in on April 9 – and Odinga has pledged to respect the decision of the court in order to avoid widespread violence.

While Kenya is seeking to shed the specter of violence from the 2007-2008 crisis, the country faces several lingering questions. How will the International Criminal Court charges standing against its newly-elected leadership affect the country and its international support base? Does the new 2010 Constitution hold the promise of lasting change for Kenya's tumultuous political environment? Can the Kenyan political system overcome divisive ethnic rifts and provide stability?

Prior to the 2013 election, USIP partnered with several organizations in Kenya to help local peace actors analyze indicators of potential violence and strategize mitigating actions. International partners also engaged with Kenyan officials to implement early warning and early response mechanisms, and support the Kenyan judicial system. These actions may have mitigated the risk of electoral violence, though some Kenyans fear local civil society has remained silent in the face of electoral fraud for the sake of short-term stability.



*Map of Kenya
Source: USIP Website*

The European Union

Catherine Woollard

Executive Director, European Peacebuilding Liaison Office

The Irish Presidency of the Council of the European Union has highlighted conflict prevention as one of its priorities. Policy developments include the preparation of a policy (Communication) on the Comprehensive Approach (focusing on an integrated approach by the EU towards third countries) and the publication of the EU's preliminary thinking on the Post-2015 development goals, which includes strong support for the integration of peace and security.

The European Peacebuilding Liaison Office organised a policy meeting to gather civil society input on the Comprehensive Approach, and launched a new project to take advocacy on EU peacebuilding into the member states. EPLO also published a paper on reviving the EU's Civilian Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) missions; the paper will feed into the policy debates in the run up to December CSDP Summit, which have thus far concentrated on military capabilities. Forthcoming EPLO events include meetings on DRC and Guinea Bissau where civil society representatives from the two countries will present their analysis to EU policy-makers, and a policy meeting on tackling trafficking-related violence. The meetings take place under the Civil Society Dialogue Network (CSDN), a project to facilitate dialogue between civil society and EU policy-makers.



Source: Wikipedia Commons

Iran

Daniel Brumberg, Senior Program Officer, U.S. Institute of Peace

In the week preceding the most recent round of P5+1 talks on Iran's nuclear program all sides seemed to indicate guarded hopes for a breakthrough. Having sensed some readiness within the P5 countries to put more on the table, Iranian leaders came to the early April negotiations reasonably encouraged. However, in what seems like a return to the past, the talks exposed and perhaps magnified the division between Iran and the international community. The source of the problem was not new: this time the U.S. and its Western allies were ready to put some additional incentives on the table including a measure of very limited sanctions relief. In return, they demanded that Iran give up enriching uranium at 20%, and in what the U.S. deemed a real concession, demanded that Tehran halt enrichment in the deeply buried Fardow facility, rather than shut Fardow down. But absent a clearer definition of the strategic outcome or goal of negotiations, Iranian negotiators argued that they were getting too little for too much. Indeed, they demanded that any final agreement include a guarantee for Iran's "right" to enrich uranium. In point of fact, while the Non-Proliferation Treaty does not define such a right, and while the U.S. has not rejected out of hand the idea that at the end of the day Iran might be allowed to enrich, Washington is not ready to define such an outcome without further concessions from Iran. Thus we are back at square one, with the familiar "you make the first concessions first" argument prevailing over any strategic vision of negotiations.

“The talks exposed and perhaps magnified the division between Iran and the international community.”



PREVENTION TOOL IN THE SPOTLIGHT

In each *Prevention Newsletter* we highlight a conflict prevention tool available to senior leaders and peacebuilding practitioners. This issue will assess the role of *Security Sector Reform* as a tool for preventive action.

Conflict Prevention Tool: Security Sector Reform

Conflict Prevention Tool	
Prevention Tool	Security Sector Reform
Tool Description	The process to improve a country's ability to deliver justice and security in a transparent, accountable, and professional manner. SSR is typically conducted with donor support in post-conflict settings and aims to transform relevant policies, structures, behaviors, and attitudes. Security sector actors include military and civilian security forces, intelligence communities, law enforcement and criminal justice bodies, and rule of law institutions.
Prevention Type	Structural Prevention
Preventive Function	Security Sector Reform (SSR) can reduce the risk of violent conflict by supporting a stable security environment, strengthening the rule of law, deterring instances of misconduct, and enhancing effective governance. SSR activities particularly conducive to conflict prevention include the promotion of individual professionalism among uniformed personnel, the assurance of civilian oversight, and initiatives to address impunity, corruption, and the spread of small arms.
Strengths	<p>If properly implemented, SSR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improves the long-term resilience and legitimacy of state institutions. • Creates a 'spill-over effect' enhancing other state functions.
Weakness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capacity-focused SSR without a democratic platform poses short-term risks as security structures are disproportionately strengthened. • Comprehensive SSR efforts depend on the buy-in of elite (often reluctant to change the existing power equilibrium). • Locally-led SSR suffers from the frequent lack of practical or theoretical expertise inside reforming countries.
Accomplishments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transformation of the security sector out of the apartheid regime in South Africa. • Indonesia's transition to a civilian-controlled government. • Police, justice, and customs reform efforts by European Union Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo (EULEX).
Failures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SSR efforts in Iraq and Afghanistan failed to create democratically accountable or effective security and judicial institutions. • Continued abuse of the civilian population by national security forces in Burundi and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, despite numerous reform efforts.



Q&A

On the Prevention of Genocide and the Promotion of the Responsibility to Protect (R2P) concept, with Adama Dieng



Adama Dieng, UN Special Adviser
on the Prevention of Genocide
Source: UN

In 2013, each Prevention Newsletter will feature a brief interview with senior policymakers or prevention practitioners. In this edition, the United Nations Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide, Adama Dieng, will reflect on the role of his Office, the next General Assembly dialogue on the Responsibility to Protect, and the future prospects of the R2P concept.

Mr. Dieng, thank you for agreeing to this interview.

ADAMA DIENG: You're very welcome

After eleven years as Registrar of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, you were appointed by Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon as his Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide in July 2012, and took over leadership of the United Nations Office on the Prevention of Genocide and the Responsibility to Protect in September. How do you look back at your first seven months in this new role?

AD: Despite the daily media reports on mass human rights violations I am hopeful, perhaps more than ever, that the prevention of atrocity crimes can become a reality. Ending atrocities requires political will of the member states. And, I believe that the consensual adoption of the 2005 World Summit Outcome Document, which reaffirmed the primary role of states to prevent and respond to atrocities, represents a key milestone in our quest to end atrocity crimes. While I am proud of the role and contribution of the Rwanda Tribunal to further international justice, it is also true that the Tribunal was set up as a response to the failure of the international community to respond to the Rwanda genocide tragedy. That is why I believe international commitment is key to realizing the 'never again' after Rwanda. On different occasions, since my appointment, I have been reminded of the value of our cause, and the need to advance our efforts to halt the kind of atrocities we have been witnessing in different countries such as Syria, the DRC, or Sudan. The near unanimity among the members of the Security Council to intervene in Libya can be considered as a further reaffirmation of this optimism. I am also pleased to see an increasing number of national and international initiatives to prevent genocide and other mass atrocities, which considerably reduce the number of crises and help save the lives of innocent civilians. In Latin America, a total of 18 states have established a network for the prevention of genocide. In Africa, the Constitutive Act of the African Union reaffirms the responsibility of AU member states to prevent atrocities through intervention, while the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region has set up a regional committee for the prevention and punishment of genocide and related crimes. Similarly, at national levels, countries are adopting preventive approaches to mass crimes. While the success of these efforts will require international commitments, their adoption represents a clear sense of determination to prevent mass atrocities.

Atrocity prevention has also been elevated on the policy agenda in Washington. The first Obama Administration labeled mass atrocities a core national security interest, and created an inter-agency Atrocities Prevention Board (APB). How do you view these developments in light of your mandate?

AD: States have the primary responsibility for the protection of their populations and it is very encouraging that States are taking this responsibility seriously by establishing national mechanisms for atrocity prevention. I certainly welcome the establishment of the Atrocities Prevention Board and leadership the United States continues to provide in preventing atrocities. While interacting with U.S. senior officials, I have encouraged its members to share lessons learned with other States based on what they have learned during the first year that it has been operational. I do believe that initiatives like the APB provide a tremendous opportunity for enhanced U.S.-UN cooperation and for cooperation among the Members States of the United Nations. It is also true that when key actors in international relations, like the U.S., assume leadership in confronting atrocity challenges, they can significantly encourage other countries and regional powers to implement the responsibility to protect at the national and regional levels.

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What would you like to see as outcomes for the next interactive Dialogue on R2P at the General Assembly?

AD: This year's General Assembly dialogue, which we expect to take place in September, will provide Member States with an opportunity to reflect on the 2013 report of the Secretary-General, which will address the primary protection responsibilities of the State. Essentially, this Report recognizes the reality that states have a primary role to address mass atrocities within their territories consistent with the first Pillar of the R2P. As such, states are expected to mitigate the risk of mass violence through structural reform or operational measures aimed at preventing genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing, or crimes against humanity. I hope the dialogue this year will provide us with a better understanding of the causes and dynamics of these four 'R2P crimes', as well as general best practices for national or regional atrocity prevention efforts.

The R2P principle seems to enjoy widespread support, at least rhetorically, amongst UN Member States. But a number of critics amongst practitioners and policymakers still question the operational impact of R2P, or even its sustainability as a principle in international relations. How do you foresee the future of the R2P principle in the next decade?

AD: If I could look into the future, my job would certainly be less challenging (laughter). Let us not forget that in the realm of international norms, R2P is still a juvenile: it is young, maybe a bit unpredictable, and very ambitious. It will take time to mature. In the coming years, I expect that support for R2P will continue to broaden and deepen, thanks to continued institutional and policy clarification as it regards to its implementation modalities. However, I do strongly believe that whatever questions or misgivings some member states may have regarding the R2P concept, the bottom line is that ordinary people who are the primary victims of these atrocities consider them unacceptable, and expect their governments and international institutions to act in a timely manner to prevent or stop them.

Slowly, we are moving away from our traditional ad hoc approach to responding to the risk of mass atrocities towards a normalization of R2P, and a more structured and careful consideration of the available options in the face of atrocity crimes. I strongly believe that the R2P framework represents the most effective and legitimate framework on which to build preventive action.