Mass Atrocities and Armed Conflict: Links, Distinctions, and Implications for the Responsibility to Prevent

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Key Points

- Genocide and mass atrocity prevention requires an "atrocity prevention lens" to inform and, where appropriate, direct policy development and decision making across the full spectrum of prevention-related activities.

- The relationship between armed conflict and mass atrocities is highly complex and not yet well-understood. The strong empirical correlation between the two phenomena implies a direct link. However, not all conflicts give rise to mass atrocities, and many atrocities occur in the absence of armed struggle.

- While there can be no meaningful and effective agenda for the prevention of genocide and mass atrocities that does not incorporate the prevention of armed conflict, atrocity prevention requires tailored engagement that targets both peacetime atrocities and those committed within a context of armed conflict.

- The existing common prevention agenda, which encompasses structural and direct conflict prevention, outlines the measures and programs appropriate to the prevention of both armed conflict and mass atrocity crimes.

- However, the common prevention agenda points only to the most common measures that might be used and the preventive capacities that are required. *It does not indicate the appropriate balance of measures in a given context or how those measures should be used.*

- While the tools used to prevent mass atrocities and armed conflict might be the same, their objectives are different. The key to a more targeted approach to genocide and mass atrocities lies in using the tools in an appropriate and context-sensitive fashion.

- When mobilized for atrocity prevention, common prevention measures must be used appropriately to target atrocity risk and avert the pitfalls of a conflict prevention-dominant mindset, such as a blind culture of neutrality that treats all parties as morally equivalent, the pursuit of negative peace at any price in the face of a credible threat of atrocities, and the tendency to believe that prevention ends when violence begins.

- While an atrocity prevention lens would help outline its broad parameters, the key to narrowing the atrocity prevention agenda lies in identifying strategies that target specific risks and capacity gaps in particular country and/or regional contexts.

It is widely accepted that when it comes to genocide and mass atrocities, prevention is better than cure.[1] Preventing atrocities saves lives, is less expensive than reaction and rebuilding, and raises fewer difficult questions about state sovereignty and noninterference. Little wonder that in 2001 the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty (ICISS) declared prevention to be the single most important dimension of the Responsibility to Protect (R2P), an assertion often repeated since, including by member states.[2]

However, it has proven difficult to translate rhetorical support for the prevention of genocide and mass atrocities into a cohesive strategy.[3] At the heart of the problem lay doubts about the composition of R2P's prevention agenda and its relationship with the United Nations' existing work on the prevention of armed conflict and prevention of genocide. Should R2P give rise to a distinct prevention agenda, or should it be subsumed within the prevention of armed conflict (or vice versa)? The problem is further complicated by the United Nations 2004 Action Plan to Prevent Genocide, which gave rise to the establishment of the Office of the Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide (OSAPG). In 2010, the secretary-general proposed merging this office with the Special Adviser for R2P, creating a new joint office (OSAPG/R2P).

The ICISS and former UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan argued that the prevention of armed conflict should be incorporated wholesale into the R2P agenda.[4] They maintained that because genocide and mass atrocities usually occurred within a context of armed conflict, preventing armed conflict would naturally reduce the incidence of genocide and mass atrocities. By contrast, current UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and the International Peace Institute's 2009 "Blue Paper" on conflict prevention and R2P have asserted that the prevention of armed conflict and of genocide and mass atrocities ought not to be conflated. Armed conflict and atrocity violence, they suggest, are distinct problems, confirmed by the fact that mass atrocities occur both within and outside the context of armed struggle.[5]

Resolving this question is important for moving the responsibility to prevent from rhetorical commitment to political practice. This brief argues that there can be no meaningful and effective agenda for the prevention of genocide and mass atrocities that does not incorporate the prevention of armed conflict and the measures commonly associated with it. The prevention of genocide and mass atrocities, however, requires more than the prevention of armed conflict—it requires tailored engagement targeting both peacetime atrocities and those committed within a context of armed conflict. In short, *what is required is an "atrocity prevention lens" which informs and, where appropriate, leads policy development and decision making across the full spectrum of prevention-related activities.*

This brief outlines a number of avenues for accomplishing these goals, including strengthening the OSAPG/R2P, ensuring an atrocity prevention perspective in crisis decision making, developing a methodology to assess risks and needs as a foundation for strengthening the structural prevention of mass atrocities, strengthening partnerships with regional arrangements, and appointing national focal points to ensure that the atrocity prevention lens is applied in national decision making.

Armed Conflict, Genocide, and Mass Atrocities

To what extent are genocide and mass atrocities committed within a context of armed conflict? Of 103 episodes of mass killing (defined as a minimum of 5,000 civilians killed intentionally) observed since 1945 (see Appendix 1), 69 cases (67%) occurred within, and 34 cases (33%) occurred outside, a context of armed conflict. All except five of the peacetime cases commenced prior to 1980 and since then only 15% of new episodes occurred outside of armed conflict (see Figure 1). Of these, four were in countries that had recent experience of armed conflict in which mass atrocities were committed (Burundi [twice], Democratic Republic of the Congo [DRC], and Myanmar).

Figure 1: Peacetime and Wartime Episodes of Mass Killing by Decade of Commencement: 1945–2010
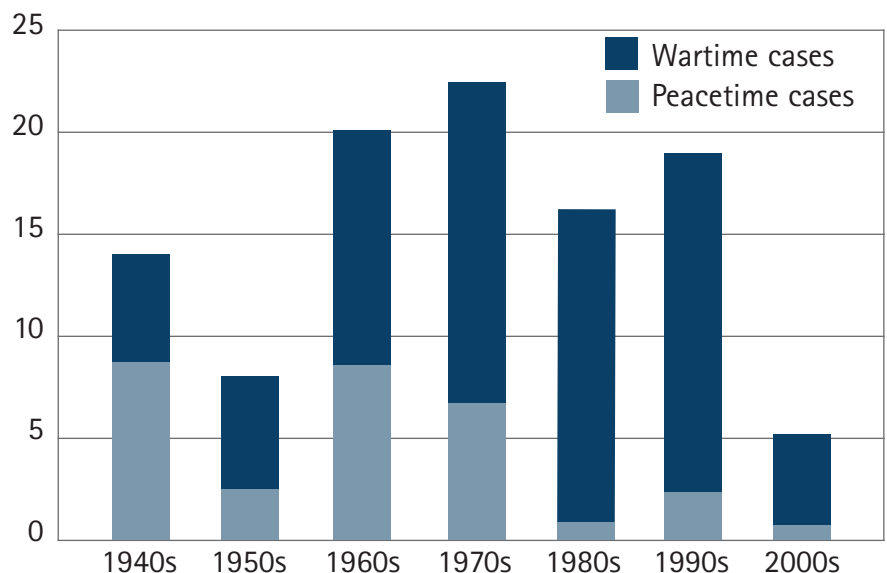
From this assessment, there is clearly a strong correlation between mass atrocities and armed conflict, one that has increased since the late Cold War. Armed conflict provides an enabling context for most mass atrocities. This lends support to the view that preventing armed conflict strengthens efforts to prevent mass atrocities.[6]

It is important to recognize that not all armed conflicts give rise to mass atrocities.[7] In fact, most armed groups do not massacre civilians—even when they have the means and opportunity to do so.[8] But this should not lead us to think that the incidence of mass atrocities can be reduced without action to prevent armed conflict.

International actors cannot realistically expect to learn to distinguish, in advance, potential armed conflicts likely to generate mass atrocities from those that are not with sufficient confidence to support such a strategy.[9] Studies show that governments of all types might resort to atrocities during armed conflict if they consider the stakes high enough and fail to win at a reasonable cost through conventional means. The likelihood of atrocities by nonstate actors appears to be influenced by their relationship to the local community and intentions to signal resolve in order to get a seat at the table, factors very difficult to identify in advance of armed conflict.[10] *A flexible process of ongoing assessment alongside determined efforts to prevent armed conflict is therefore necessary*. What is more, atrocity prevention should not end when armed conflict begins.

While reaffirming a frequent correlation between atrocities and armed conflict, the evidence presented here also supports the basic proposition of the alternative argument: that mass killing sometimes occurs outside the context of armed conflict. There appear to be three main forms of such "peacetime" atrocities:

1. **State-directed suppression.** Atrocities committed by nondemocratic regimes against opponents or marginalized ethnic groups. The most frequent type of "peacetime" mass atrocity, episodes usually begin soon after an adverse regime change (e.g. Pinochet's Chile) or attempted change (e.g. Zanzibar, Indonesia [1965-66]).[11] However, some important episodes have occurred outside the context of regime contestation (e.g. China's Cultural Revolution).

2. **Communal violence.** Atrocities committed by groups not organized by national governments or well-established nonstate armed groups. Violence is not entirely spontaneous and is usually incited or orchestrated by local or national political figures, often either state officials, politicians, or local leaders of different varieties (religious, ethnic, clan, etc.). Attacks are often religious or ethnic in nature and can be triggered by a variety of national and local events.

3. **Post-war retribution.** Atrocities committed by states and nonstate actors in the immediate aftermath of armed conflict as retribution against former enemy groups. Sometimes massacres are intended to avenge specific atrocities committed during the armed conflict (e.g. eastern DRC), but are also perpetrated for a combination of political reasons not directly connected to the commission of prior atrocities (e.g. preemptively eliminating threats/perceived future risk).

Many of the recent, smaller-scale cases of mass killing discussed in the context of R2P, such as post-election violence in Kenya, the massacre of civilians by government troops in Guinea, and killing of Uzbeks in Kyrgyzstan, occurred in one of these settings. To address these cases, R2P demands strategies tailored to preventing atrocities outside a context of armed conflict.

What is required, as Lawrence Woocher recently argued, is an approach to preventing genocide and mass atrocities that reduces the risk of armed conflict (thereby reducing the primary enabling context), addresses the risk of peacetime atrocities, and includes steps to prevent atrocities within armed conflict. Utilizing the distinction between structural/root cause prevention and direct/operational prevention that is common to most prevention frameworks gives us an atrocity prevention agenda with three main components (Table 1, page 4).

Because atrocities stem from numerous multilayered factors and incentives, our approach to prevention should be similarly multilayered. We might think of this in terms of Swiss cheese.[12] Individual slices of Swiss cheese represent layers of societal resilience and preventive action. Holes in the Swiss cheese represent failings in the layers of (local, national, international) resistance to atrocities. Atrocities occur when the holes

Table 1: Atrocity Prevention

CONTEXTS	AGENDAS
• Evidence of general risk of violent conflict	**Structural Prevention** Measures to reduce risk of armed conflict; Mitigation of risk of peacetime atrocities
• Imminent armed conflict • Serious political/social instability	**Direct Prevention** Prevent imminent armed conflict or peacetime atrocities
• Armed conflict	**Escalation Prevention** Prevent armed groups from committing atrocities

momentarily align, allowing the hazard to pass through the defenses.

Given that, like Swiss cheese, human systems always have holes, the most effective way of reducing risk is to introduce additional layers of protection. By including the structural and direct prevention of armed conflict, the prevention of peacetime atrocities, and prevention of atrocities within armed conflict within our system of atrocity prevention, we add layers of cheese and reduce the likelihood of the holes momentarily aligning.

A Common Prevention Agenda

To understand where atrocity prevention, genocide prevention, and conflict prevention overlap and diverge, we need to understand more about their content. This section analyses the principal measures called for by four prevention agendas: (1) the prevention of armed conflict (as presented by UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan and Carnegie Commission on Preventing Deadly Conflict); (2) the prevention of armed conflict as part of R2P (as presented by ICISS and Gareth Evans); (3) the prevention of genocide (as presented by the Office of the Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide, the Genocide Prevention Task Force, and leading expert Barbara Harff); and (4) the prevention of R2P crimes and violations (as presented by UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and the Asia-Pacific Centre for the Responsibility to Protect (APR2P). (See Appendix 2.)

There is a strong degree of overlap among the four agendas. The prevention of armed conflict and R2P agendas are very similar in size and content, while the genocide prevention agenda is somewhat narrower, perhaps reflecting its more specif-

ic mandate. Not only are the conflict prevention and R2P agendas similar in size, they espouse almost identical sets of measures. (Table 2 lists measures common to at least three of the agendas, including R2P.) Both contain structural and direct measures to tackle underlying risks and imminent crises respectively; structural measures common to both include economic, governance, security, human rights, and social dimensions; they espouse a similar range of diplomatic, economic, military, and legal measures to prevent imminent violence; and they endorse strengthening the United Nations' capacity for early warning.

Why has it not been possible to identify a narrower set of measures that targets the prevention of mass atrocities?

First, *the structural conditions that give rise to armed conflict are similar to those that give rise to genocide and mass atrocities*. Both require intergroup competition and conflict, the presence of political, economic, and/or social grievances, a preparedness and capacity (of at least one party) to use violence and violate human rights, and a perceived absence of legitimate pathways for nonviolent conflict resolution.

Second, *these structural conditions are interconnected and cannot be effectively isolated*. For example, in a context where group rivalry is animated by perceived horizontal inequalities, the problem is unlikely to be solved without some improvement in the real economic, social, and political opportunities open to group members.[14] If it is necessary to reduce horizontal inequalities among groups, then the full range of economic and governance factors come into play.

Table 2: The Common Prevention Agenda[13]

STRUCTURAL PREVENTION	DIRECT PREVENTION
Economic Measures • Reducing deprivation and poverty. • Reducing inequalities, especially horizontal. • Promoting economic growth. • Supporting structural reform. • Providing technical assistance. • Improving the terms of trade and trade openness. • Supporting community development and local ownership. **Governance Measures** • Building institutional capacity and ensuring delivery of social services. • Strengthening and supporting democracy. • Supporting the diffusion or sharing of power. • Strengthening the independence of judiciaries. • Eradicating corruption. • Strengthening local conflict resolution capacity. **Security Measures** • Strengthening rule of law. • Ending/preventing impunity. • Reforming the security sector. • Encouraging disarmament and effective arms control/management with particular reference to small arms. **Human Rights Measures** • Protecting fundamental human rights and building national capacity, with specific protection of minority, women, and children's rights. • Supporting the work of the International Criminal Court. **Social Measures** • Intergroup confidence building, including interfaith dialogue. • Strengthening and supporting civil society. • Establishing freedom of the press. • Preventing and punishing incitement and hate speech. • Educating on diversity and tolerance.	**Early Warning** • Establishing a UN early warning and assessment capacity. **Diplomatic Measures** • Fact-finding. • Forming "groups of friends" among UN membership. • Deploying eminent persons/envoys. • Exercising the good offices of the secretary-general. • Pursuing arbitration (including International Court of Justice). • Supporting indigenous conflict resolution processes. **Sanctions** • Banning travel. • Embargoing trade and arms. • Freezing assets. • Imposing diplomatic sanctions. **Inducements** • Promoting economic or trade incentives. • Offering political inducements. **Military Measures** • Mobilizing preventive deployments. • Developing and/or threatening rapid deployment capability. • Jamming and other means of preventing incitement. **Legal** • Referring matter to the International Criminal Court.
	ESCALATION PREVENTION
	• This agenda has not yet been articulated.

Here again, atrocity prevention and the more general conflict prevention and economic development agendas overlap. Redistributing slices of the economic pie so that disadvantaged groups have greater equality of opportunity, thereby reducing intergroup tensions that can precede mass atrocities, is more palatable for privileged groups if the economic pie itself is growing—suggesting that redistribution goes hand-in-hand with a more traditional focus on overall growth. Furthermore, the perception of horizontal inequalities is sometimes created and exploited by political figures to serve their own purposes. Thus, a range of measures addressing political leadership, hate speech and incitement, and intercommunal trust and understanding might also be needed.

Third, *direct prevention of all varieties is about changing the behavior of specific actors, and we have a good idea about the repertoire of measures international players can use to induce, persuade, or coerce actors they engage.* That said, while the tools used to prevent mass atrocities and armed conflict might be the same, their objectives are different. Atrocity prevention targets a specific actor and seeks to dissuade it from committing atrocities. Conflict prevention/resolution targets several actors in the hope of arriving at a consensual agreement among them.[15] This distinction is important, and carries significant implications for policy development.

Fourth, *it makes no sense to consider reducing the range of possible policy options*. In most cases, policymakers already have too few options from which to choose in order to prevent mass atrocities. As the secretary-general has made clear, policymakers benefit most from a broad range of available options and the flexibility to apply them in ways appropriate to the specific context.[16] This not only requires the articulation of a broad-based toolkit but also, and more importantly, the strengthening of international capacity to give practical meaning to those options.

Preventing Escalation to Atrocities

We know comparatively little about preventing atrocities within the context of ongoing armed conflict. Preventing armed and actively engaged combatants from resorting to mass, civilian-targeted violence is an area that is conceptually and practically underdeveloped.

Armed conflict can create new incentives and opportunities to target civilians. Once a conflict has begun, for example, target populations associated with combatants to the conflict are often left exposed, virtually unarmed or too weak to protect themselves (e.g. Tibet [1959], East Timor [1976-77], and Guatemala). In such cases, effective measures to prevent armed conflict would also prevent the commission of mass atrocities. As soon as a conflict begins, however, new risks and vulnerabilities develop. In these situations, the distinction between prevention and reaction becomes fuzzy.[17]

Moreover, escalation prevention raises difficult questions about the appropriate relationship between humanitarian action, the protection of civilians, and the prevention of genocide and mass atrocities. Awarding humanitarian action a preventive role is especially fraught with danger and complexity given the centrality of concepts of neutrality and impartiality to humanitarian work. But if we take seriously the view that atrocity prevention does not end when armed conflict begins, we need to tackle these and other thorny questions. More work is needed to identify concepts and strategies for preventing atrocities within a context of armed conflict and to build a consensus around them.[18]

Preventing Peacetime Atrocities

While it has little to say about preventing the escalation of armed conflict, the common agenda does provide a framework for preventing peacetime atrocities. Properly conceived, structural prevention reduces the risk of both armed conflict and peacetime atrocities. To demonstrate this we could ask whether the common agenda sufficiently addresses the risk factors associated with genocide that have been identified by the OSAPG, which establish risk irrespective of the presence of armed conflict (Appendix 3). Doing this, we find that the common agenda articulates a range of mitigating factors for each of the risk factors identified by the OSAPG.

Alternatively, we could revisit the three circumstances in which peacetime atrocities occur and examine the common agenda's suitability:

Scenario A: State-directed suppression. If a regime is committed to abusing and killing its population, no amount of structural prevention can dissuade it. This assertion is largely true but not wholly so,

because structural prevention promises to reduce the incidence of abusive government in the first place by supporting democracy, the rule of law, and other barriers to it. Assuming this ship has sailed, however, there is little that structural prevention can do to avert atrocities. The best that can be done is to detect the risk through early warning and utilize direct measures to: (1) persuade, deter, induce, or coerce the potential perpetrators; or (2) to deny them the means to perpetrate atrocity crimes. The primary measures to do so are already part of the common prevention agenda.

Scenario B: Communal violence. Several aspects of the common agenda speak directly to this type of problem, not least those relating to strengthening the capacity of local security forces to fulfill national directives to protect populations through security sector reform, deterring violations by ending impunity and reinforcing the rule of law, dampening communal tensions by reducing economic inequities, creating economic opportunities, building confidence and trust among groups, educating for tolerance, and supporting local pathways for conflict resolution. If the risk persists, direct measures such as the use of envoys, inducements, and peacekeepers might be called upon.

Scenario C: Post-war retribution. The third scenario is similar to Scenario A and likely to require similar measures because reprisal killings are usually committed by the victors—and hence by governments themselves. Sometimes, however, the national government itself is not directly involved in retributive killing (e.g. Algeria, 1962), opening opportunities for prevention through immediate security assistance, assistance to strengthen the security sector and rule of law, and the use of diplomacy, sanctions, and inducements as necessary to encourage the state to step in to protect the victims.

This exercise at least demonstrates that the programmatic content of the common prevention agenda is as well suited to the prevention of peacetime atrocities as it is to the prevention of armed conflicts that can give rise to atrocities. The prevention of mass atrocities does not, therefore, require an entirely new agenda set apart from existing prevention agendas, nor is there a need to radically rethink the core components of prevention for R2P purposes.

However, while preventing armed conflict is an important component of preventing mass atrocities, and while there is a common repertoire of measures that might be used for both purposes, there is a critical need to ensure that activities are guided by an atrocity prevention lens and are carefully tailored to the unique objectives and context of mass atrocity scenarios.

This conclusion is grounded in the following observations:

• There is no one-size-fits-all approach to prevention. Prevention strategies must be carefully tailored to each country's individual needs, defined by a contextual assessment of risks and vulnerabilities that accounts for international political will and the availability of international capacity.

• The common prevention agenda points only to the most common measures that might be used and preventive capacities that are required. *It does not indicate the appropriate balance of measures in a given context or how those measures should be used.*

• While direct prevention measures employ common tools (such as diplomacy) for the prevention of genocide and mass atrocities, these tools must be used appropriately to target atrocity risk and avert the pitfalls of a conflict prevention-dominant mindset, such as a blind culture of neutrality that treats all parties as morally equivalent, the pursuit of negative peace at any price in the face of a credible threat of atrocities, and the tendency to believe that prevention ends when violence begins.

• Early-warning analysis must pay due attention to the circumstances that give rise to peacetime atrocities and not fixate on armed conflict.

• Strategies and assessments should ensure that progress in one area (such as fostering economic growth or strengthening security capacity) does not come at the expense of progress or create problems elsewhere (such as increasing perceived horizontal inequalities or creating new security capacities that can be readily mobilized for atrocities).

• The key to narrowing the atrocity prevention agenda lies in identifying strategies that target

specific risks and capacity gaps in particular countries or regions.

Although the metaphor is well worn, it is useful to think of the common prevention agenda as a toolkit that can be used in multiple ways to achieve different outcomes depending on the circumstances.[19] Just as artisans put identical tools to different uses, the institutional and bureaucratic arrangements established for the prevention of armed conflict should be used in a targeted, tailored, and flexible fashion to achieve maximum effect in specific contexts.

To do this, we need to know more about how and by whom the tools might be used. What is more, while we know what general tools we ought to see in the kit, we do not know how full the kit is, or whether all the tools are in working order. Finally, we need a clear idea of the jobs that need doing—not only the immediate work identified by early warning and assessment but also the longer-term, pre-crisis structural work.

An Atrocity Prevention Lens

Effective prevention of mass atrocity crimes requires the development of an atrocity prevention lens within existing institutional frameworks dedicated to the prevention of armed conflict. Such a lens would identify the risk of mass atrocities and advise policymakers and political leaders on the most appropriate courses of action. This may involve tailoring ongoing prevention work to specific risk factors in individual countries or, when risk is high and imminent, prioritizing atrocity prevention and directing the whole range of preventive activities toward this goal.

Although there is significant overlap between mass atrocities and armed conflict, as well as among the general tools employed to prevent armed conflict and mass atrocities, the objectives isolated in the prevention of each are different— and likely to require different strategies. There are three main reasons for this:

Conflict prevention and atrocity prevention have different purposes. As Lawrence Woocher points out, while the prevention of genocide and mass atrocities targets a specific actor and seeks to dissuade it from committing atrocities, conflict prevention targets several actors and pursues a consensual agreement among them.[20] When an imminent threat of atrocities is detected, prevent-

ing these atrocities requires direct measures designed to persuade, deter, and even coerce, elites and/or impede their ability to commit such crimes.[21] Such direct measures are rarely appropriate for more general conflict prevention.

Conflict prevention strategies are sometimes unsuited to the prevention of mass atrocities. In Bosnia (1992-1995), for example, the international community prioritized conflict resolution over atrocity prevention in the face of ongoing mass atrocities committed primarily by one party. Internationally sponsored negotiations gave equal weight to the views of perpetrators and victims and an arms embargo applied to both groups, inhibiting the victims' capacity to protect themselves. Likewise, the international community's preoccupation with maintaining the peace settlement for Rwanda agreed in the Arusha Accords blinded it to evidence that Hutu extremists were planning genocide. More recently, the international community privileged the Comprehensive Peace Agreement for Sudan over the prevention of mass atrocities in Darfur by refusing to adopt measures to deter, prevent, or punish the Sudanese government's actions.

Conflict prevention activities may inadvertently create incentives to commit atrocities. When conflict prevention takes priority, rebel groups may be encouraged to commit atrocities during transitional phases in order to "earn" a seat at the negotiating table by signalling resolve.[22] Similar incentives can be prompted by the deployment of impartial peacekeepers. It is worth remembering that more civilians were killed *after* peacekeepers were deployed to Bosnia, Rwanda, and the DRC than before.[23]

These points underscore that while the generic tools for preventing imminent armed conflict appear similar to those used for preventing imminent atrocities, application of each tool should be adapted to its particular context. There is a clear need for an atrocity prevention lens to be applied at every stage of the conflict cycle, operating alongside and informing more general conflict prevention/resolution activities and, where appropriate, guiding those activities.

In addition to improving preventive strategies, the inclusion of an atrocity prevention lens promises to make the best use of scarce resources. Although the different prevention agendas are

similar in scope and require analogous generic international capacities, it does not follow that every aspect of the common prevention agenda needs to be given equal weight in every context, producing an impossibly comprehensive and burdensome agenda unlikely to be implemented. Indeed, there may be tensions between the tools themselves—such as between curtailing hate speech and supporting freedom of the press—that can only be resolved through dialogue among policymakers in relation to specific contexts.

It is not possible to identify in the abstract a universally applicable, discrete agenda for genocide and mass atrocity prevention because the relative mix of risks differs from case to case and over time. There is no substitute for detailed examination of individual countries to determine the nature and source of risks and the extent of resilience and protective capacities (state-based and otherwise) as a basis for determining the appropriate combination of programs, measures, and strategies that might be utilized to reduce the risk of genocide and mass atrocities.

The key to a more targeted approach, therefore, lies in using the tools in an appropriate and context-sensitive fashion. It is also important to learn lessons from past cases and desktop exercises and to think about the general repertoire of measures and tactics that might be employed in specific kinds of situations in order to bridge the gap between totally generic and totally country-specific prevention strategies.

An atrocity prevention lens would identify atrocity risk, as well as provide insight into how best to tailor preventive action to respond to such risks and avoid the pitfalls associated with prioritizing elements of a preventive strategy ill-suited to addressing mass atrocity dynamics. As the UN secretary-general has recognized, an atrocity prevention lens should not be used to provide a one-off evaluation of a situation, but should rather be integrated as a central element of ongoing assessment and dialogue with stakeholders about the emergence and treatment of risk factors.

This brings us to two questions about the application of an atrocity prevention lens. The first relates to how an atrocity lens might identify specific risks so that policymakers can make judgments about which tools and strategies to adopt and, more generally, about whether to prioritize atrocity prevention or conflict prevention or give equal weight to both. The second considers how institutional meaning might be given to the atrocity prevention lens.

The following sections explore these questions, first in relation to the "preconditions" for mass atrocities requiring structural prevention, and then in relation to a "path of escalation" requiring direct and escalation prevention.[24]

Mass Atrocity Preconditions and Implementing Structural Prevention

The preconditions of genocide and mass atrocities can be thought of as necessary but insufficient risk factors that are best addressed through the structural measures identified in the common prevention agenda. The presence of one or more of these conditions is necessary for the future commission of genocide or mass atrocities, but their presence does not mean that genocide or mass atrocities are inevitable or that these crimes will occur within a given period of time. The presence of several preconditions and heightened severity increases the likelihood of future genocide and mass atrocities but, theoretically at least, mass atrocities are possible with the presence of only one precondition and may not occur even if all are present.

Based on the existing literature, Table 3 (see page 10) identifies the most prominent risk factors associated with mass atrocities.

This framework is a relatively accurate indicator of general risk. To test it, we used data available in 1997 to conduct a risk analysis as if it were 1998. We attached numerical scores to the data to represent the gravity of the problem. On a five-point scale ranging from extreme risk to negligible risk, the analysis identified ten countries at extreme risk. Of those, nine did indeed succumb to atrocities over the following decade. A larger number of countries were judged to be at "high" risk and, of these, a little over half succumbed to atrocities in the following decade (see Table 4, page 10).

The only case of mass atrocities between 1998 and 2008 that did not rate "extreme" or "high" on the basis of this framework was Russia's second war in Chechnya. This framework therefore provides a useful guide to the sorts of factors that an atrocity prevention lens needs to investigate in

Table 3: Preconditions of Genocide and Mass Atrocities

	Key Elements
Social Factors	• politicization of religious or ethnic divisions. • social, economic, or political discrimination. • history of genocide and mass atrocity.
Regime Factors	• human rights violations. • absence of rule of law. • absence of democracy.
Economic Factors	• low GDP per capita. • low economic interdependence. • horizontal inequalities.
Armed Conflict	• presence of multiple armed groups/illicit arms flows. • establishment of militia (government and nongovernment). • group-based recruitment practices. • presence of armed conflict.

Table 4: Risks in 1998 and Mass Arocities 1998-2008

Threat Level	Atrocities Committed	Atrocities Not Committed	Percentage
Extreme	DRC Liberia Sudan Afghanistan Iraq Sierra Leone Somalia Myanma Rwanda	Burundi	90%
High	Angola DPR Korea[25] Uganda Chad Yugoslavia Indonesia Algeria Nigeria Kenya Cote d'Ivoire	Ethiopia Iran Azerbaijan Bangladesh China Eritrea Laos Pakistan Syria	47%

order to identify a generalized risk of mass atrocities and the sorts of issues that ought to be taken into account in developing a tailored program of structural prevention utilizing the tools identified in the common prevention agenda.

Using the Atrocity Lens to Tailor Structural Prevention

Structural prevention programs to reduce the risk of genocide and mass atrocities before they manifest themselves in clear early-warning signals need to be carefully tailored to individual contexts. This should be a reflective and ongoing process that addresses the root causes of mass atrocities and reduces the overall risk of armed conflict.[26]

Structural prevention encompasses work already undertaken by different arms of the UN System as well as by some regional arrangements, NGOs, and private businesses, and usually takes the form of economic development programs, capacity building, human rights assistance, humanitarian relief, democracy support, rule of law support, and/or security sector reform, to name a few areas.

To ensure that this ongoing work adds value to the capacity of states and societies to reduce the risk of genocide and mass atrocities, existing programs must incorporate an atrocity prevention lens and the United Nations must "deliver as one."

The first step to achieving this is to establish a commonly accepted methodology for assessing the mass atrocity risks and protection needs in particular countries and to test this methodology in relation to actual cases. Needs assessment, which could be based on a framework similar to the one identified above, would focus on identifying risks in need of mitigation and gaps in protection capacity, and provide a basis for developing preventive strategies. Among other things, needs assessments could:

- Identify the presence and nature of specific national factors associated with the risk of atrocities.

- Assess sources of social resilience and stability.

- Assess national capacity and identify protection gaps.

- Map existing preventive activities.

- Identify areas requiring additional support.

This would need to be a dynamic process of assessment/reassessment because, in the words of the special adviser for R2P, "we need a moving picture, not a snapshot…[a]ssessment entails understanding the mosaic not the pieces, the pattern not a single act."[27]

Significant progress has already been made in developing conflict assessment tools, and such tools might be adapted for this purpose.[28] The initial research needed to develop a methodology could be conducted by the OSAPG/R2P or by an independent research body commissioned by the OSAPG/R2P.

From this, a methodology for needs assessment and strategic planning could be developed by the OSAPG/R2P. This could be used by the OSAPG/R2P as an assessment and planning tool to: (1) guide inputs into other UN interagency frameworks (such as those relating to peacebuilding/post-conflict reconstruction, humanitarian affairs, economic development, human rights, or the prevention of armed conflict) to ensure that a R2P/atrocity prevention lens is mainstreamed across the UN System and to strengthen the organization's capacity to "deliver as one"; (2) inform partnership with regional arrangements and member states about building capacity and strengthening preventive action; and (3) strengthen early warning and assessment by providing additional context and a deeper knowledge base to inform policymaking.

The methodology might be shared with and used by regional arrangements to guide their own prevention work. It might also be appropriate for the General Assembly to consider how best to strengthen the structural prevention of genocide and mass atrocities as part of its annual informal interactive dialogue on R2P.

Paths of Escalation and Direct/Escalation Prevention

Analyzing the preconditions can tell us which countries or regions are especially vulnerable, distinguish situations in which the outbreak of armed conflict might be expected to produce mass atrocities, and help identify specific areas of vulnerability in a country that might be addressed through targeted structural prevention efforts. However, this is a notoriously imprecise science and such analysis cannot tell us whether, when, and how the risk of mass atrocities will be realized.

In order for risk to manifest as mass atrocities, at least three additional factors need to be in place. First, there needs to be a *reason* to commit mass atrocities. Typically, actors select mass atrocities as a rational strategy for pursuing their objectives, such as countering a serious existential threat, coercing compliance from or exploiting unfriendly civilians, securing a seat in international negotiations, and/or changing the ethnic or religious composition of a particular territory. In weighing their options, some actors make a strategic determination that viable alternatives are either nonexistent or too costly.[29]

Whether committed in the course of armed conflict, to eliminate a challenge to the regime, or to effect radical social transformation, atrocities are means to an end, not an end in themselves. Unless there is reason to think that their use might serve some purpose, even actors that are strongly predisposed toward committing atrocities will be unlikely to do so. This reason is usually provided by an acute crisis, but can also be generated by an elite's ideology.

Second, potential perpetrators require the *means* to commit mass atrocities. At the very least, they require a sufficient number of people who are prepared to commit atrocity crimes. Third, they require the *opportunity* to commit mass atrocities, whether enabled by a weakening of domestic institutional restraints or the support and/or acquiescence of external actors.

A useful way of thinking about these issues is to conceptualize them as processes of escalation in three distinct stages: (1) the emergence of a crisis which produces social conflict; (2) the mobilization of an armed group or groups, and (3) the outbreak of limited violence against civilians which, if left unchecked, escalates into full-blown atrocities.

Where the preconditions indicate high levels of risk, this pattern of crisis, mobilization, and violence is quite likely to produce atrocities unless stemmed by one of two principal factors: (1) the regime's capacity to end the crisis before resorting to atrocities or (2) effective international engagement.

Of course, real cases are unlikely to proceed in precisely this fashion and the temporal gaps may be quite long (i.e. years) or very short. The point of the framework is not to pinpoint when and where atrocities will occur, but to highlight some red flags that analysts might use to identify the risk of atrocities and contribute atrocity-specific inputs to international policy development, especially existing conflict prevention and mitigation efforts.

Step 1: Crisis. Most episodes of genocide or mass atrocity are directly preceded by some type of crisis. Crises often provide actors with the *reasons* and *opportunity* to commit mass atrocities. Without a crisis, even actors predisposed toward mass atrocities would have little justification to commit atrocity crimes. Crises also tend to weaken domestic constraints and institutional resilience, creating an environment more conducive to an atrocity-based strategy. An absence of such a crisis partly explains why some nondemocratic states are able to endure persistently high levels of risk without succumbing to mass atrocities.

Four principal forms of political crisis provide the catalyst for genocide and mass atrocities. Each form has its own subsets and the list is not exhaustive:

1. **Armed contests:** *civil war, external intervention, reneging on peace agreements.*

2. **Unconstitutional regime changes:** *coups and attempted coups, disputed elections, contested succession, contested secession.*

3. **State incapacity:** *new states with low legitimacy, failed/failing state.*

4. **Radical revolutionary government:** *ideological commitment to radical transformation.*

Other forms of crises such as economic collapse or natural disasters can also provide the catalyst for escalation, but usually they are the immediate cause of a political crisis, which ultimately precipitates a process as outlined above.

Step 2: Mobilization. Although the interval between the eruption of a crisis and the commission of genocide and mass atrocities can be very short, a crisis in itself is still insufficient to spark mass atrocities. Mass atrocities require some degree of organization aimed at preparing and strengthening a particular group and weakening, excluding, or targeting victim groups. Typically, mobilization involves at least one of the following:

- Marginalization of moderates within the elite.

- Organization of "hate groups" dedicated to the vilification of the target group.

- Purging the security forces of minority groups and those thought disloyal, and expanding recruitment among dominant and radicalized groups.

- Establishment, arming, and training of militias.

- Escalation of unpunished human rights abuses against targeted groups.

- Publication of hate propaganda.[30]

Sometimes, there are also moves to marginalize minority groups through segregation, displacement, the establishment of camps or ghettos, and exclusion from schools and employment. Of course, elements of mobilization are likely to be evident prior to the emergence of a crisis, especially in countries suffering from high levels of risk. But when a crisis erupts, we might expect to see the acceleration of mobilization if mass atrocities are imminent.

Step 3: Violence. It is common for organized, if still low-level, violence to erupt prior to the commission of mass atrocities. The nature of this violence provides some clues as to the likelihood that an imminent armed conflict will degenerate into genocide or mass atrocities. Some rules of thumb can be used here—though again this is an imprecise science and assessment needs to be done on an ongoing and context-sensitive basis.

If one or more of the following factors are evident in these early violent exchanges, then the potential for mass atrocities ought to be considered a genuine and imminent risk:

1. Violence intentionally targeted against civilians.

2. Impunity for the perpetrators of these early crimes.

3. The existence of a significant threat to the survival of the governing regime and failure of initial attempts to counter that threat.

Early violence becomes especially indicative of the potential for a wider campaign of mass atroc-

ities when it takes the form of "trial massacres." Typically, these target the victim group in relatively small numbers and are sometimes conducted as a test for negative repercussions in the form of arrests or substantive international engagement. If the perpetrators enjoy impunity, this may be seen as a "green light" to expand a genocidal or mass atrocity campaign.[31] In other words, a culture of impunity will have been established.

These early massacres provide what Manus Midlarsky refers to as "continuity and validation": (1) they give future perpetrators something to identify with; and (2) they are evidence that the commission of further massacres are likely to go unpunished.[32] This creates a cycle of impunity that facilitates the escalation of massacres (see Figure 2).

Figure 2: The Cycle of Impunity

Commission of atrocities

Perpetrators praised, rewarded, or left unpunished

Culture of impunity established
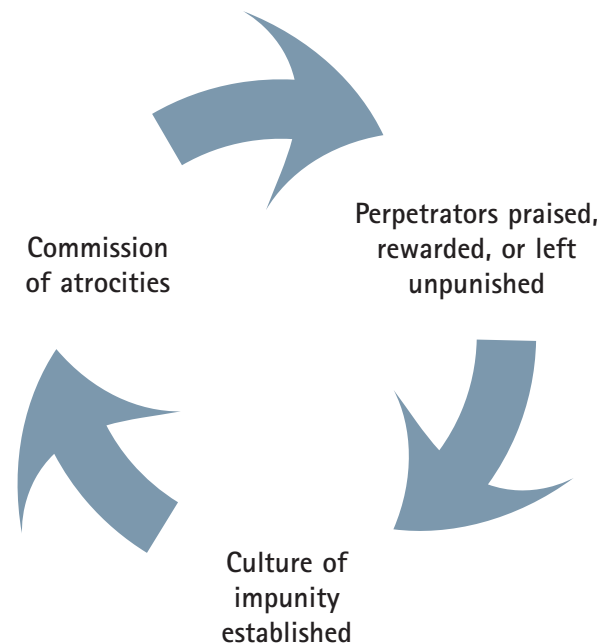
Another rule of thumb that policymakers ought to be aware of is that the greater the instability, the bigger are the opportunities for armed groups to target large numbers of civilians and whole groups—and to hide this beneath the generalized chaos.[33] For these reasons, understanding the nature of early violence is absolutely crucial in terms of identifying the risk of imminent mass atrocities.

This brief framework identifies a series of factors associated with the risk of mass atrocities and a number of red flags that might give warning of the potential for mass atrocities in the midst of

major political crises. Of course, actual crises are complex and multifaceted. It is likely to be very difficult to distinguish the warning signs of armed conflict from the signs of mass atrocities until a relatively late stage when the early patterns of violence provide a clear indication of what is to come. Likewise, regimes that suffer a political crisis in a context rife with atrocity preconditions may not resort to an atrocity-based strategy. Frameworks such as this should be used only as general guides and as aids to—not replacements for—detailed country assessments. Moreover, when put into practice, any framework of analysis should be subjected to regular review and revision.

Implementing Prevention: Coordinating Structural, Direct, and Escalation–Focused Efforts

Preventing genocide and mass atrocities does not require a new repertoire of measures, but rather the appropriately tailored, carefully targeted, and properly coordinated application of existing capacities. It is important, first of all, to identify the risk of imminent genocide and mass atrocities, and the previous section has identified a number of red flags that analysts might use to identify heightened risk. The strengthening of the early-warning capacity within the OSAPG/R2P, supported by a mechanism for convening discussion about policy options within the UN Secretariat, is an important and appropriate first step.[34] Ongoing needs assessments, of the kind envisaged earlier, would play an important role in providing the knowledge base necessary to facilitate the rapid development of direct prevention policy options.

Auditing Global Prevention Capacity

Although the United Nations has primary responsibility for international peace and security and is appropriately thought to be the principal vehicle through which to implement R2P and prevent genocide and mass atrocities, there are important roles for regional arrangements and national governments. The first step in identifying these roles and maximizing their contribution is to strengthen understanding of global preventive capacities and to pinpoint areas where there might be important gaps.

Since 2001, the United Nations has mainstreamed conflict prevention. Most departments and agencies recognize that their work has a preventive dimen-

sion and use a prevention lens in their programming. Many regional arrangements, individual states, and nongovernmental organizations have also consciously developed conflict prevention programs and others conduct prevention-relevant work, though without labeling it as such.

While there is plenty of prevention-related activity, there is relatively little coordination and no clear picture of global preventive capacities. To know where the capacity gaps are, we need a comprehensive audit of global preventive capacity covering structural, direct, and escalation prevention and including assessment of (a) the capacities of global institutions, regional arrangements, individual states, and global civil society; (b) how those capacities are currently used and how they might be employed to prevent atrocities; (c) the level of commitment to employing these capacities for preventive purposes; and (d) the extent of coordination and coherence.

In addition to identifying capacity gaps, mapping existing and potential global preventive capacity would itself go some way toward enabling coordination by informing prevention actors about the activities of their peers.

At the United Nations. It is important that when crises emerge, an atrocity-focused perspective is provided to guide every stage of decision making. Within the United Nations, an atrocity-specific office such as the OSAPG/R2P is well placed to assess the risk of mass atrocities and recommend strategies for addressing the risks within existing programs or through new modes of engagement. The OSAPG/R2P would participate in United Nations' decision making about conflict prevention and engage in dialogue with relevant member states and regional arrangements. Through this dialogue, the OSAPG/R2P would provide specific advice about the likely risks of mass atrocities and the policies and strategies that ought to be adopted. This would include advice about the potential for conflict prevention measures (such as blind impartiality) to inadvertently encourage or reward the perpetration of mass atrocities.

Where the risk of mass atrocities is thought to be high and its realization imminent, the OSAPG/R2P might argue for the prioritization of atrocity prevention. In high-risk situations where time is limited, this would be the most effective way of developing coordinated atrocity-specific responses

that avoid the common pitfalls associated with the misapplication of tools identified earlier. In such circumstances, it might be appropriate for the OSAPG/R2P to assume responsibility for developing a coordinated plan for a unified response, making use of all UN capacities in line with the "narrow but deep" ethos established by the secretary-general. This would occur at the request of the secretary-general and on the basis of advice from the OSAPG/R2P and elsewhere. Of course, the office's long-term credibility would depend on a cautious approach that invoked this mechanism only when the risk was high and imminent.

In addition, direct prevention strategies should be calibrated with the longer-term structural strategies discussed earlier, where appropriate and feasible.[35] In the long run, the problem of incoherence between short- and long-term measures might be reduced by making the same UN office responsible for coordinating both sets of activities.

Matters are complicated somewhat when atrocities are threatened within the context of an armed conflict. It should be understood that the risk of atrocities is heightened by the onset of armed conflict and that the path from threat to commission might be very short indeed, sometimes taking only hours. We need to know more about the measures and strategies that might be employed to prevent armed conflicts degenerating into atrocities. Greater clarity is also required regarding the relationships between prevention and reaction, humanitarian aid, and the civilian protection agenda.

In addition, it is vital that (1) UN staff on the ground are trained to detect the warning signs of atrocities; (2) UN headquarters has the capacity to monitor information coming from the field in as close to real time as possible in order to assess the risk of mass atrocities; and (3) there is a process for fast-tracking early warning, assessment, advice, and decision making. This might require strengthening OSAPG/R2P with the capacity to receive and assess real-time information from the field.

When atrocities are imminent, time is usually short and the chances of success mixed because, to return to the Swiss cheese analogy, there are very few layers of cheese left. Because the stakes are so high and it is so difficult to know how best to utilize preventive measures, it is important to learn lessons from past cases and desktop exercises. On the basis of this analysis, the OSAPG/R2P could develop and share best practice guidance.

Engaging Regional Arrangements. It is important to strengthen collaboration between the United Nations and regional arrangements. Recent cases where prevention succeeded in stemming atrocities in Kenya and Guinea involved collaboration between the United Nations and relevant regional arrangements (AU and AU/ECOWAS respectively), with the latter taking the lead. Thus, as the UN secretary-general argued, "United Nations decision making concerning the responsibility to protect should be informed and enriched, wherever possible, by local knowledge and perspectives, as well as by the input of regional and subregional organizations." He concluded, "This puts a premium on regularizing and facilitating the two-way flow of information, ideas, and insights between the United Nations and its regional and subregional partners."[36]

The Secretary-General's Special Adviser on R2P, Edward Luck, identified three areas where relations between the region and the United Nations might be productively strengthened: (1) two-way provision of R2P relevant information and assessment; (2) cooperation in responding to imminent emergencies; (3) facilitating cooperation between the region and the United Nations in supporting operations authorized by the UN Security Council.[37]

Regional arrangements should also be fully incorporated into the development of strategic plans for structural prevention. This partnership might be strengthened through direct cooperation between OSAPG/R2P and regional leaders/officials, and by developing the role of the United Nations regional offices such as the UN Office for West Africa (UNOWA) and UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP).

National Governments. National governments are pivotal to the implementation of R2P and prevention of genocide and mass atrocities. Besides fulfilling their own, internal responsibility to protect, ensuring that the United Nations and regional arrangements have the political support and resources they need to implement their atrocity prevention plans, and making resources available to preventive efforts when international action is needed, national governments should also give

effect to their international commitments by mainstreaming R2P into national policy.

A useful starting point is the Global Centre for R2P's proposal, adopted by the Group of Friends of R2P, for governments to appoint a national focal point for R2P/mass atrocity prevention. Among other things, national R2P focal points would:

• Provide early analysis of emerging situations.

• Provide advice directly to the executive about matters relating to the prevention of genocide and mass atrocities.

• Coordinate national responses to mass atrocities—thereby providing an atrocity lens to national decision making.

• Spearhead cooperation with the OSAPG/R2P and other relevant agencies and offices.

• Help foster international consensus on the results of early analysis.

• Make it possible for governments to respond to mass atrocities in a timely and decisive fashion.

• Collaborate with other focal points.[38]

The US administration has already taken the lead in this area by appointing David Pressman as Director for War Crimes, Atrocities, and Civilian Protection within the Office of the National Security Advisor. Denmark has nominated its Human Rights Ambassador, Arnold Skibsted, as R2P focal point.

It is imperative that focal points be located within the national government, have sufficient standing to deliver inputs directly into executive decision making—including early-warning advice that the executive might not wish to hear—and have the capacity to coordinate policy across a number of relevant government departments and agencies. In some situations, the national focal point may be called upon to direct whole-of-government responses to the threat of mass atrocities and the appointment should have the seniority and capacity to fulfill this role. Assigning the role of focal point to a diplomat housed in a country's permanent mission to the United Nations would limit the position's capacity to advise executive decision making and coordi-

nate national responses, thereby undermining the role and priority of the atrocity lens in national decision making.

Although a modest first step, the appointment of national focal points creates the potential for an atrocity prevention lens to inform national-level decision making. Over time, this would strengthen national and regional approaches to preventing mass atrocities, as well as facilitate the United Nations activities in this area.

Conclusion and Recommendations

General

1. Significant overlap between the tools needed to prevent armed conflict and those required to prevent genocide and mass atrocities suggests no need for a fundamental redevelopment of preventive measures. Instead, the prevention of mass atrocities requires application of an atrocity prevention lens to wider prevention efforts, including detailed analysis of specific situations and the careful tailoring of commonly acknowledged preventive tools to suit their particular context and purpose.

2. Armed conflict dramatically increases the risk of mass atrocities. Preventing atrocities therefore constitutes a call to deliver on past commitments in the field of conflict prevention. However, it also demands focus on the prevention of peacetime atrocities and atrocities within armed conflict. An atrocity prevention lens would ensure that concerns and analysis specific to the prevention of mass atrocities is incorporated throughout the international community's engagement with conflict prevention and management.

3. The principal purposes of an atrocity prevention lens are to (1) identify the risk of mass atrocities; and (2) advise policymakers and political leaders on the most appropriate courses of action. This may involve tailoring ongoing prevention work to address specific risk factors in individual countries or, when risk is high and imminent, prioritizing atrocity prevention and directing international engagement entirely toward this goal.

4. Although existing prevention tools are well suited to the prevention of peacetime atrocities, we know much less about preventing genocide

and mass atrocities within a context of preexisting armed conflict. There are several complex questions to resolve, not least relating to viable strategies, the role of humanitarian actors, the relationship between prevention and the protection of civilians, and the relationship between atrocity prevention and conflict resolution. More research and dialogue are urgently needed on this subject.

5. The path to strengthening global capacity for preventing genocide and mass atrocities and making full use of available capacity begins with a comprehensive assessment of existing preventive capacities. This assessment should cover structural and direct prevention and include the capacities of international institutions, regional arrangements, member states, and civil society. A useful place to begin would be an audit of direct prevention capacities housed within international institutions and regional arrangements.

For the United Nations

6. As the body with primary responsibility for international peace and security and the organization specifically charged with implementing R2P, the United Nations ought to strengthen its capacity to bring an atrocity prevention lens to its work. The OSAPG/R2P is the most appropriate vehicle for achieving this goal. Its actualization requires:

- A strengthened capacity to provide early warning of genocide and mass atrocities, as agreed by member states in 2005. Early warning should not only alert the United Nations to imminent dangers of atrocities, but should also highlight areas of risk where longer-term preventive strategies are urgently needed.

- The capacity to conduct detailed assessment of individual country risks and needs and, on that basis, provide advice about appropriate programming, priorities, and risks to UN agencies, funds, and programmes, as a basis for developing coordinated programming targeted at reducing the risk of mass atrocities. A methodology for assessing risks and needs should be developed and used by the OSAPG/R2P and shared with regional and national partners to bring an R2P lens to existing programs and activities within and outside the UN System.

- The capacity to contribute to UN conflict prevention policymaking, especially country-specific policy development, to identify emerging and ongoing crises that contain the risk of mass atrocities, and to ensure that decision making across the UN System is informed by the atrocity prevention lens.

- In the event of a crisis likely to produce mass atrocities, the capacity to take the lead in coordinating the United Nations mass atrocity prevention activities, as recommended by the secretary-general, and to bring an R2P lens to the way that the UN System responds to crises and armed conflicts.

- A growing capacity to assess lessons learned and develop guidance on how direct measures are best employed to prevent genocide and mass atrocities, particularly thorough past case analysis and desktop exercises.

For Regional Organizations

7. More attention should be paid to the role of regional arrangements in preventing atrocities and the strengthening of UN/regional partnerships. It is therefore appropriate that the General Assembly has agreed to address this issue in its 2011 informal interactive dialogue. This dialogue should be used as a catalyst for strengthening the partnership between the United Nations and regional arrangements, particularly in reference to information sharing, coordinating crisis response, and supporting Security Council-authorized operations.

For National Governments

8. Individually, member states have an important role to play in translating the promise of R2P into practice. In addition to supporting the UN secretary-general's proposals for strengthening the organization, member states should appoint national focal points for R2P. The R2P focal point would bring an atrocity prevention perspective to national policymaking and ensure that foreign, defense, and aid policies are carefully calibrated and coordinated to achieve the maximum preventive effect and minimize the potential pitfalls. To achieve this goal, the national focal point should have direct access to executive decision making and the capacity and authority to coordinate—and sometimes direct—relevant policy across a range of government departments and agencies.

Appendices

Appendix I

This statistical chart catalogues mass atrocity campaigns between 1945 and 2010, indicating whether they occurred in contexts of war or minor armed conflict. All included campaigns resulted in an excess of 5,000 civilian deaths and demonstrated evidence of deliberate civilian-targeting.

Appendix II:

This chart cross-compares the policy instruments associated with systemic, structural, and direct prevention with existing prevention agendas articulated for conflict, the Responsibility to Protect (R2P), and genocide.

Appendix III:

This chart relates elements of the common prevention agenda to the specific indicators of genocide risk identified by the United Nations Office of the Special Adviser for the Prevention of Genocide.

These appendices are found at *www.stanleyfoundation.org/resources*.

Endnotes

[1] See Eli Stamnes, "Speaking R2P and the Prevention of Mass Atrocities," *Global Responsibility to Protect*, 1 (1) 2009, p. 71.

[2] International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty (ICISS), *The Responsibility to Protect* (Ottawa: IDRC, 2001).

[3] Notable exceptions are Lawrence Woocher, "The Responsibility to Prevent: Towards a Strategy" in Andy Knight and Frazer Egerton (eds.), *Routledge Handbook on the Responsibility to Protect* (London: Routledge, 2011) and Stamnes, "Speaking R2P." Woocher also notes this problem.

[4] A point made by Woocher, "Responsibility to Prevent." See ICISS, *Responsibility to Protect*; Gareth Evans, *The Responsibility to Protect: Ending Mass Atrocity Crimes Once and For All* (Washington, DC: The Brookings Institution, 2009), pp. 80-81 and Kofi Annan, *In Larger Freedom: Towards Development, Security and Human Rights for All* (New York: United Nations).

[5] International Peace Institute, "Conflict Prevention and the Responsibility to Protect," IPI Blue Papers, No. 7, 2009, and Report of the Secretary-General on *Early Warning, Assessment and the Responsibility to Protect*, A/64/864, 14 July 2010, p. 4.

[6] Report of the Secretary-General, *Progress Report on the Prevention of Armed Conflict*, A/60/891, 18 July 2006, para. 42.

[7] As suggested by IPI's "Blue Paper."

[8] Daniel Chirot and Clark McCauley, *Why Not Kill Them All? The Logic and Prevention of Mass Political Murder* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2006).

[9] Lawrence Woocher, "Developing a Strategy, Methods and Tools for Genocide Early Warning," report for the Office of the Special Adviser to the UN Secretary-General on the Prevention of Genocide," September 26, 2006.

[10] See Alexander B. Downes, *Targeting Civilians in War* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2008), Jeremy M. Weinstein, *Inside Rebellion: The Politics of Insurgent Violence* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007) and Lisa Hultman, *Targeting the Unarmed: Strategic Rebel Violence in Civil War*, Report, Uppsala University, Department of Peace and Conflict Research, 2008.

[11] The Political Instability Task Force identified "transitions" and "adverse regime changes" as periods of elevated risk. See *http://globalpolicy.gmu.edu/pitf*.

[12] James Reason, *Human Error* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990).

[13] Bracketed measures were identified by only two agendas, but these were found in the UN secretary-general's reports on the prevention of armed conflict and R2P and therefore warrant inclusion.

[14] See Frances Stewart (ed.), *Horizontal Inequalities and Conflict: Understanding Group Violence in Multiethnic Societies* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008).

[15] Woocher, "Responsibility to Prevent," p. 17.

[16] Ban Ki-moon, *Implementing the Responsibility to Protect: Report of the Secretary-General*, A/63/677, January 12, 2009, p. 2.

[17] Woocher, "The Responsibility to Prevent."

[18] See Paul D. Williams, "Enhancing Civilian Protection in Peace Operations: Insights from Africa," Africa Centre for Strategic Studies Research Paper, September 2010.

19 This is entirely consistent with the "narrow but deep" approach to R2P articulated by the UN secretary-general.

20 Woocher, "Responsibility to Prevent," p. 17.

21 Woocher, "Responsibility to Prevent."

22 See Lisa Hultman, *Targeting the Unarmed: Strategic Rebel Violence in Civil War*, Report, Uppsala University, Department of Peace and Conflict Research, 2008.

23 Lisa Hultman, "Keeping the Peace or Spurring Violence? Unintended Effects of Peace Operations on Violence against Civilians," *Civil Wars*, 12 (1&2), 2010, pp. 29-46.

24 This discussion is based on research on early warning funded by the Australian Research Council and conducted with Sara E. Davies and Stephen McLoughlin.

25 The government's role in the 1990s famine is widely considered a crime against humanity.

26 Edward Luck, for example, maintained that, "early warning should not be the beginning of the United Nations engagement in a situation of concern." See Statement by Edward C. Luck, Special Adviser to the United Nations Secretary-General at the Informal Interactive Dialogue on Early Warning, Assessment and the Responsibility to Protect, United Nations General Assembly, August 9, 2010, p. 1.

27 Statement by Edward C. Luck, p. 3.

28 See Javier Fabra Mata and Sebastian Ziaja, *User's Guide on Measuring Fragility*, German Development Institute/UNDP, 2009 and Jenna Slotin, Vanessa Wyeth and Paul Romita, "Power, Politics, and Change: How International Actors Assess Local Context," International Peace Institute, June 2010.

29 There is a relatively large literature which holds that mass atrocities appear rational from the point of view of the perpetrator. See for example, Peter du Preez, *Genocide: The Psychology of Mass Murder* (London: Boyars/Bowerdean, 1994); Frank Chalk and Kurt Jonassohn, *The History and Sociology of Genocide: Analyses and Case Studies*, pp. 29-40; Barbara Harff and Ted Robert Gurr, "Toward Empirical Theory of Genocides and Politicides: Identification and Measurement of Cases since 1945," p. 363.

30 Gregory H. Stanton, "Could the Rwandan Genocide have been Prevented?," p. 215.

31 Stanton, "Could the Rwandan Genocide have been Prevented?," p. 216.

32 Manus Midlarsky, *The Killing Trap: Genocide in the Twentieth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), pp. 43, 62.

33 Barbara Harff, "No Lessons Learned from the Holocaust? Assessing Risks of Genocide and Political Mass Murder since 1955," p. 62.

34 Ban Ki-moon, *Early Warning, Assessment and the Responsibility to Protect*, report of the Secretary-General, A/64/864, 14 July 2010, especially para. 18.

35 The problem of incoherence between direct and structural measures was identified by Serena K. Sharma, "Blueprint or Bandage? Assessing the Role of Preventive Action in Kenya's Post-electoral Crisis," 2010.

36 Report of the Secretary-General, *Early Warning, Assessment and the Responsibility to Protect*, A/64/864, 14 July 2010, para. 11.

37 Council for Security Cooperation in the Asia Pacific Study Group on the Responsibility to Protect, report in its first meeting, Jakarta 2010.

38 Global Centre for the Responsibility to Protect, "Fulfilling the Responsibility to Protect: Strengthening Our Capacities to Prevent and Halt Mass Atrocities," meeting summary, September 24, 2010.

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