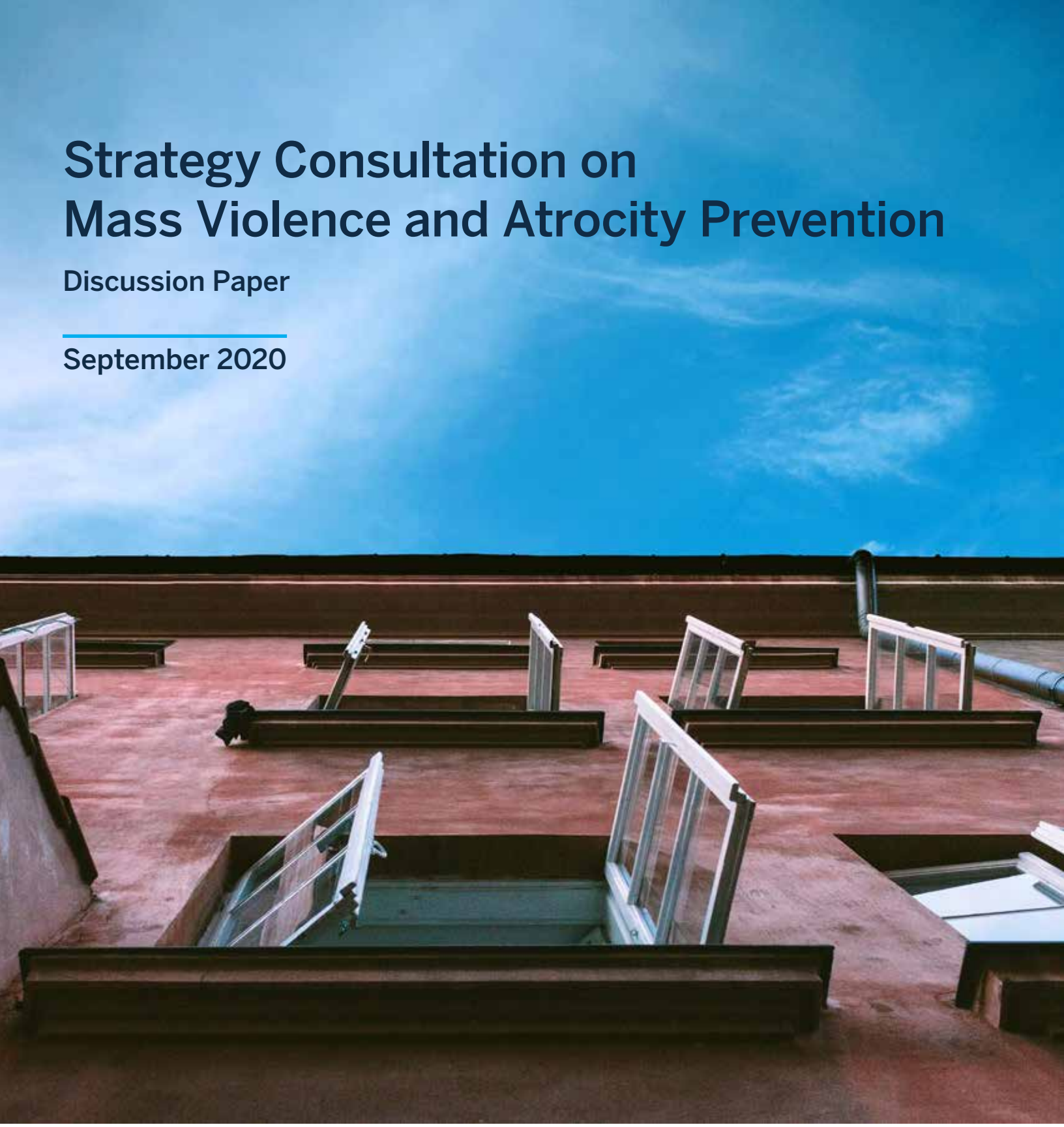
Strategy Consultation on Mass Violence and Atrocity Prevention

Discussion Paper

September 2020



Stanley Center
FOR PEACE AND SECURITY

Informing policy and action that builds resilience to mass violence and atrocities by working across the globe with governments, civil society, and the private sector—for the last three years, this has been the focus of the Stanley Center for Peace and Security's programming efforts to address global conflict and violence.

As part of the development of its programming strategies, the center has, in past years, held in-person consultations with a diverse group of trusted partners and key thought leaders to reflect on the policy gaps and opportunities in the field. The consultation is part of a larger process in which the center assesses its past programming and scopes future opportunities with the goal of increasing its impact with future programming. This year, because of COVID-19 travel restrictions on in-person meetings, the center is looking to engage with experts and stakeholders virtually for its strategy consultation.

This discussion paper serves as the starting point for the strategy consultation—a conversation on the mass violence and atrocity prevention field, specifically designed to focus on **early or upstream prevention and building societal resilience**. The paper's content is divided into two parts:

1. **Background**, which includes a brief overview of the state of the field from the center's vantage point, the evolution of the center's work on mass violence and atrocity prevention, and the center's working definitions.

2. **Nine headline assumptions** that we have extracted from our work, surveys, and various other mappings and analyses.

I. BACKGROUND

State of the Field

Although interstate conflict has diminished, violent conflict is at a 30-year high, with the increasing proliferation of nonstate armed actors, rebel groups, and criminal gangs, as well as state-sponsored violence against civilians. Proxy wars between regional and global powers have drawn new battlegrounds in third-party countries, resulting in unimaginable suffering of the most innocent and vulnerable. The retreat by governments and nonstate groups from adhering to international humanitarian law, combined with a breakdown in respect for human rights law, has resulted in the alarming proliferation of atrocity crimes. Conflict, persecution, and mass violence have led to a staggering 79.5 million people forcibly displaced in every region of the world. And there are signs that the long-term effects of COVID-19 will result in growing economic inequality, increased movement of peoples, rising hate speech, and more violence against women and girls—all of which are risk factors and accelerators of mass violence and atrocities.

Additionally, there has been a backtracking of support for and a growing distrust of multilateralism (both the endeavor and the institutions) over the past decade. The paralysis of the UN Security Council to act in a meaningful way to respond to ongoing atrocities in so many parts of the world has only increased frustrations toward international institutions. This is coupled with the parallel rise in nationalist and populist movements that are bolstered by demagogic leaders that use incendiary, xenophobic language against the most vulnerable groups. Many of these governments are cracking down on civic space, enforcing restrictions on civil society, peaceful protest movements, and press freedom.

This paints a bleak picture, not just for the prospects of greater peace and resilience but also for multilateral cooperation and global governance. It is difficult to understate the enormity of these challenges. However, there is reason to be optimistic, and there are opportunities for progress. Calls for greater inclusion and equity from the movements for racial justice, aid decolonization, and gender equality (#Metoo, #Aidtoo) are pushing for the dismantlement of social and economic structures that have long benefited those with power and privilege. These challenging and uncomfortable realities also feature within the broader peace and security field—whether civil society, academia, the funding community, or international institutions—and are forcing internal discussions on the role each actor plays in furthering and entrenching unequal power dynamics.

At the same time, political leaders and global institutions have recognized the need to move away from crisis prevention and reactive response and toward prioritizing upstream prevention and earlier action. Apart from the moral, human case for prevention, the economic costs of conflict and violence are staggering. As 2018 figures from the Institute for Economics and Peace show, violent conflict costs the global economy $14.7 billion a year. Conflict and instability stunts economic development: business and enterprise cannot flourish, investments in conflict countries and their neighbors are fewer, and governments can make little progress toward building their economy and institutions. The 2018 flagship joint UN-World Bank *Pathways for Peace* study concludes that instead of late-stage response to crises, investing in prevention would save between "$5 billion and $70 billion per year." The calls are getting louder: invest, collaborate, and act earlier to prevent mass violence and save lives.

The Center's Mass Violence and Atrocities Programming

For many years, the center has focused its programmatic work to address global conflict and violence on areas where it is best placed to further policy progress and collective action. Through a series of consultations and lessons-learned processes, the center made the strategic decision three years ago to refine and adjust its work in the following ways:

- **Broadening its scope to include the prevention of mass violence**, rather than just the prevention of genocide and mass atrocities (widespread and systematic war crimes, crimes against humanity, and ethnic cleansing).

- **Incorporating a resilience framing**, which recognizes that all societies have the ability to withstand triggers for mass violence and atrocities through their policies, mechanisms, and institutions.

- **Pushing for greater coordination and cooperation** among actors, across fields, and between governance levels, with recognition that no one group of stakeholders can (nor should) define and determine policy development or action.

- **Drawing on the experience and effectiveness of efforts at the regional, national, and local levels** to inform joint strategies for the prevention of mass violence and atrocities while also recognizing the specific context in any given situation.

In addition, the center continues to retain the following aspects in its programming strategy:

- While violence prevention is important in every stage of the conflict cycle, when considering the full continuum of mass violence and atrocity prevention strategies—including preventing them from ever occurring (upstream prevention), preventing further acceleration in the midst of violence (midstream or proximate prevention), and preventing future mass violence following its occurrence (downstream prevention)—the center chooses to focus on **upstream prevention** efforts.

- The center focuses on building the capacities of **regional mechanisms and institutions** (both formal and informal, as well as government or civil-society-led), and **cross-national networks** rather than on national implementation or exclusively United Nations-related processes or efforts.

The center has worked to advance three medium-term policy goals since mid-2017:

Goal 1: Prevention-focused **regional networks** support effective policy action at the national, regional, and international levels to build resilience.

This work has included cofacilitating the government-led Latin America Network for Genocide and Mass Atrocities Prevention with the Auschwitz Institute for the Prevention of Genocide and Mass Atrocities, the Latin America and Caribbean Civil Society Forum for the Prevention of Mass Violence and Atrocities with Coordinadora Regional de Investigaciones Economicas y Sociales (CRIES), and collaborative efforts to bridge the two groups.

Goal 2: Different policy sectors work effectively together to develop and promote a resilience agenda.

Some examples of this work include the "Peace in Our Cities" initiative, which engages cities and their leaders on reducing urban violence and bridging violence and atrocity prevention techniques; partnering with Peace Direct on a series of events that brought together practitioners in the fields of mass atrocity prevention and peacebuilding; efforts on the role of the private sector and atrocity prevention, including understanding the business case for building resilience and pursuing peace with the Institute for Economics and Peace, as well as the comparative regional view of the private sector and prevention agenda with the Auschwitz Institute and the Social Science Research Council; and, with Protection Approaches, identifying gaps and opportunities for coordinated and systematized integration of prevention, drawing on the knowledge and capacity of local, national, and international stakeholders.

Goal 3: Evidence of "what works" in building societal resilience at the regional, national, and local levels is fed into policy processes.

Following on the center's October 2017 Strategy for Peace Conference, where experts considered the state of research on prevention, the center colaunched Impact:Peace, an initiative based at the Joan B. Kroc Institute for Peace and Justice at the University of San Diego. The center has also worked to bolster research and recommendations on how prevention can be applied within local contexts, including through the policy briefs that shape and inform the Latin American civil society forum with CRIES.

To further advance the three medium-term policy goals, the **center's journalism and media programming** team organized events, discussions, and workshops focused on the role of media in strengthening societal resilience and preventing mass violence and atrocities. Work from 2017–2020 included a journalist-led discussion at the 2017 Positive Peace Conference on the role of free and independent media in peaceful societies; the War Stories Peace Stories Symposium attended by more than 300 journalists and peacebuilders exploring peace, conflict, and the media; peace and conflict journalism workshops as part of the Pulitzer Center's Beyond War Conference; and inviting journalists to participate in the center's policy discussions.

Working Definitions

In 2017, the center set out the following working definitions for use in programming efforts under the three medium-term policy goals.

Mass violence
Large-scale and systematic violence used against civilians by those with power for their own strategic objectives.

Atrocities
Three legally defined international crimes: genocide, war crimes, and crimes against humanity. The definition of atrocity crimes is generally understood to include ethnic cleansing, even though this class of crimes does not have legal standing under international law.

Upstream prevention or building societal resilience for mass violence and atrocities
The measures, systems, and actions that a society, its neighbors, and the global community can take to lower the risks for mass violence and atrocities. It is an incremental and generational endeavor.

In a 2016 policy analysis brief published by the center, Professor Alex Bellamy outlines five dimensions for structural or upstream prevention: supporting the resilience of states and societies in the constructive management of diversity; legitimate and capable authority; security of livelihoods; vibrant civil society and active private sectors; and guarantees of nonrecurrence. Please see the Annex for risks related to each of the five dimensions and correlating resiliencies.

The United Nations' *Framework of Analysis for Atrocity Crimes: A Tool for Prevention* identifies relevant risk factors for atrocity crimes and the measures necessary to build national resilience, noting "prevention is an ongoing process that requires sustained efforts to build the resilience of societies to atrocity crimes by ensuring" that they:

- Respect the rule of law and protect human rights, without discrimination.
- Establish legitimate and accountable national institutions.
- Eliminate corruption.
- Manage diversity constructively.
- Support a strong and diverse civil society and a pluralistic media.[1]

II. ASSUMPTIONS

Over the past three years, nearly a dozen mappings, participatory consultations, and strategic analyses have looked at civil society partnerships and capacities and identified gaps in action, partnership, and funding. These include several developed or coorganized by the center itself.

In October 2018, the center partnered with Protection Approaches and Wilton Park, of the UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office, for a workshop on "Preventing Mass Violence and Atrocities." In November 2019, the center partnered with the Auschwitz Institute and the George and Irina Schaeffer Center for the Study of Genocide to bring together international, regional, and local leaders from academia and civil society with government leaders in prevention to discuss integrative mass violence prevention initiatives and the associated challenges, gaps, and opportunities for further progress. Also in 2019, the center surveyed 300 practitioners and experts to assess real-world progress toward its medium-term policy goals and get feedback on the opportunities for future action.

In terms of other processes, FAS Research's report *Mapping Change Agents and Influencers in the Field of Peacebuilding* (December 2019) assessed the global peacebuilding sector, with recommendations for the broader field, including for funders on steps they could take over the next twelve months. Earlier this year, the Alliance for Peacebuilding launched its Eirene Peacebuilding Database, which provides a comprehensive list of what organizations are doing to seek specific peacebuilding outcomes and measure progress. Recent initiatives such as Conducive Space for Peace and Impact:Peace are attempting to address long-time systemic gaps in the field, including the need to strengthen local approaches and solutions to, and funding for, peacebuilding and the need to leverage and build an evidence base for prevention to influence change processes.

Global and regional networks such as Global Action Against Mass Atrocity Crimes (GAAMAC), the European Peacebuilding Liaison Office (EPLO), and the newly launched +Peace coalition have convened their partners to map the field, share lessons learned, and explore collective action. Finally, individual nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) such as the Life and Peace Institute have looked across the field to assess outstanding gaps and challenges, including the structural inequalities within the localization agenda and the connections between the global policy space and local peacebuilders.

From all of these efforts, we've identified within the findings and recommendations some common themes—or assumptions—for the purposes of our consultation. The following analysis is not intended to be exhaustive; the goal is to identify outstanding gaps and opportunities for policy progress and action, and serve as a starting point for discussion during the consultation.

ASSUMPTION 1: Recognize That Labels Are Not as Important as the Work Itself.

The strategies, activities, and initiatives undertaken to prevent mass violence and atrocities are similar to those in other fields—including preventing violent conflict, peacebuilding, and human rights—as well as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Across these policy sectors, actors use a range of tactics to build societies where governance structures uphold global norms; include diverse voices, identities, and interests; support civil society and an open media; and promote respect for human rights and the rule of law.

Although labels may affect how and what public and private donors decide to fund or how governments orient their bureaucracies, for populations living in fragile and conflict-affected societies, they matter little as long as the actual work gets done. As Peace Direct's 2018 report *Atrocity Prevention and Peacebuilding* notes, "local peacebuilders have worked to prevent genocide, war crimes, crimes against humanity and ethnic cleansing long before these terminologies existed."

ASSUMPTION 2: Improve Communication and Collaboration across Policy Sectors and Stakeholder Groups.

The evolving mosaic of views on the best way to build strong, inclusive societies has enriched and strengthened policy and advocacy, expanded understanding of how mass violence and atrocities prevention are linked to other global agendas, and increased opportunities for diversifying policy solutions.[2] There is a growing recognition of and adaptation by international actors to the full cycle of violence, and how interconnected development, human rights, and peace and security (and now climate impacts) are when seeking a comprehensive response to addressing violent conflict.

Effective responses also require a whole-of-society approach, which means engaging a range of stakeholders, including global and regional intergovernmental institutions; the private sector; executive-level government officials; parliamentarians; civil society organizations, community groups, and networks at all levels; media and journalists; grassroots organizations; social movements; and funders. We need to engage and include youth, women, LGBTQ individuals, and other marginalized or minority groups, who are key stakeholders and agents of change. Finally, we know the importance of supporting grassroots action and connecting the prevention and peacebuilding communities to other movements that are tackling structural power dynamics, such as women's rights, climate disruption, social justice, and antiracism.

Each of these actors has a role to play, whether working with communities in conflict-affected countries to bridge division, mediate conflict, and maintain social cohesion; sharing information and building rapport; influencing, crafting, and implementing policy; lobbying or advocating at every level; holding decision makers accountable through coercive pressure, like boycotts and strikes; or developing research and expert academic analysis to inform action.

Finally, effective collaborative communication strategies for policy outcomes require sustained global, national, and subnational political attention; a public-facing central metanarrative; a media strategy that includes local voices; evidence gathering (data, research/analysis, and storytelling) that informs policy; and stronger, wider-ranging financial support.

ASSUMPTION 3: Recognize and Embrace Local Approaches, Ownership, and Leadership.

There is growing recognition that local communities and their leaders must participate in and lead program design, decision making, and policy development and implementation. Top-down interventions have repeatedly failed to acknowledge or incorporate local realities; when there is no input or buy-in from those most affected, the chance of a particular initiative's success diminishes exponentially.

Local communities better predict and more quickly respond to mass violence and atrocity risks because they possess context-specific knowledge and are well connected to community-protection networks. Policy solutions need to be relevant and responsive to local realities. These solutions are more effective when local leaders are engaged, survivors and victims of violence are included, and participation is expanded beyond the local elite.

Another factor is recognizing that international NGOs, funders, and other actors can further entrench long-held power inequalities and hinder local solutions. As reflected in the Life and Peace Institute's July 2020 report *Global Peacebuilding Policy: Analyzing Local to Global Engagement*, advocates should consider how they can better challenge and change existing power dynamics by ensuring meaningful and equitable local participation; preventing overreliance on global frameworks and metrics that fail to integrate local realities; reducing language that upholds colonial legacies or exclusionary jargon; legitimizing lived experience as evidence and promoting locally generated evidence; and encouraging flexible funding mechanisms that support local leadership and engagement.

ASSUMPTION 4: Prioritize Prevention and Build Political Will for Early Action.

In recent years, global institutions and national political leaders—particularly in North America and Western Europe—have recognized the shortcomings of reactive crisis response and the need to incorporate effective upstream prevention of conflict and mass violence, as well as early action.

The United Nations has made numerous commitments to conflict prevention over the years, though its performance has been spotty at best. Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali's 1991 *Agenda for Peace* sought to elevate the UN prevention and peacebuilding tools, emphasizing the importance of preventive diplomacy, peacemaking, and peacekeeping. Though welcome, these tools were often employed after a crisis had already broken out. The establishment of the UN Peacebuilding Commission after the 2005 World Summit sought to prevent the recurrence of conflict with the aim of achieving sustainable peace. World leaders also agreed at the 2005 World Summit to recognize the Responsibility to Protect (R2P), a commitment to prevent and respond to the worst crimes—genocide, war crimes, crimes against humanity, and ethnic cleansing. While R2P is often misconceptualized as justifying late-stage, primarily militarized, international responses, pillars 1, 2, and 3 outline peaceful opportunities for states to fulfill their responsibility to prevent these crimes through upstream prevention, early warning, and early response.

In 2015, high-level UN reviews of peacekeeping reform, peacebuilding architecture, and women, peace, and security reprioritized upstream prevention. Inspired by the 2030 agenda and the SDGs, UN member states supported the call for greater collaboration among the three pillars of development, humanitarianism, and peace. In 2016, the UN General

Assembly and the Security Council adopted twin resolutions on "Sustaining Peace," which were described as "a goal and a process to build a common vision of a society, ensuring that the needs of all segments of the population are taken into account, which encompasses activities aimed at preventing the outbreak, escalation, continuation and recurrence of conflict, addressing root causes, assisting parties to conflict to end hostilities, ensuring national reconciliation, and moving towards recovery, reconstruction and development." Current Secretary-General Antonio Guterres later called for a comprehensive reform of the UN peace and security architecture and development system so as to fully harness the capabilities and resources of the UN system for prevention and peace.

For over a decade, civil society networks such as the Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict have called for a global shift from reacting to violent conflict to preventing it. Their members have influenced regional organizations such as the Economic Community of West African States, the Organization of American States, and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations to build early prevention tools and measures. EPLO, a platform of NGOs, networks, and think tanks, has worked to push the European Union to strengthen its policies, capacities, and funding for prevention, peacebuilding, and sustainable development. Individual organizations, such as the Auschwitz Institute and its national partners, have worked with regional entities and governments in the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region to prioritize the identification of risks, root causes, and other factors that can lead to mass violence.

ASSUMPTION 5: Develop Rigorous Evidence to Inform Decision- and Policymaking.

Although it is widely accepted that preventing violence and building resilient societies must be rooted in robust evidence gathering, real challenges and gaps in collection and analysis remain.

A wide range of research demonstrates that when governments allocate greater resources to their military and security sectors, it leads to greater violence toward and repression of nonviolent action. The nature of available, immediate policy responses to signals of violence reinforces a focus on short-term, reactionary action that neglects more-structural issues included in positive peace. Moreover, negative peace indicators (e.g., absence of violence, reduced oppression) often take precedence in policymaking because of available and measurable data. And while many peacebuilding and prevention efforts may develop out of a rich analysis of data as these projects continue, data is not always further analyzed through project implementation and evaluation steps.

In response to these realities, several organizations and academic institutions have sought to develop evidence-generating and collating platforms to show what does and does not work in prevention and peacebuilding. Alliance for Peacebuilding's Eirene Peacebuilding Database compiles more than 3,000 key peacebuilding indicators from thousands of publicly available peacebuilding resources to better assess the work of peacebuilding groups to measure impact. Design, Monitoring & Evaluation for Peace convenes a "global community of practitioners, evaluators, and academics that share best and emerging practices on how to design, monitor and evaluate peacebuilding programs," thereby increasing peacebuilding effectiveness and improving collaboration and transparency.

The need to improve evidence gathering has also been the focus of convenings of stakeholders. When the center partnered with the Kroc Institute for Peace and Justice to help launch Impact:Peace, the expert working group identified three types of evidence to drive change: (1) evidence about approaches, including specific interventions, comparing interventions, and articulating a specific strategy, (2) evidence to fight apathy, showing an outcome is possible and highlighting potential benefits/consequences, and (3) evidence to create engagement, which evokes empathy and removes barriers for engagement.

Integrative research studies and analyses also have sought to connect major indicators to evidence for transformation in prevention and peacebuilding policy. In 2018, a UN-World Bank report, *Pathways for Peace*, compiled an analysis of different countries' and institutions' approaches to examine what works in contributing to peace. Since 2017, Pathfinders for Peaceful, Just and Inclusive Societies has maintained a regularly updated *Roadmap for Peaceful, Just and Inclusive Societies* in order to promote the accelerated implementation of the SDG targets for peace, justice, and inclusion (SDG16+). The *SDG16+ Progress Report* from the Institute for Economics and Peace regularly updates and analyzes evidence on indicators for progress in achieving SDG16. And, most recently, One Earth Future and the Alliance for Peacebuilding have undertaken an extensive look at understanding perceptions of what "evidence-based practice" is in peacebuilding, including what evidence is defined as and the level of rigorous evidence that exists for nuanced elements of peacebuilding.

Donors both influence—through the projects they fund—and consume—through monitoring and evaluation of those projects—evidence-based approaches. As a result, there is frequently an emphasis on the value of collecting/collating evidence to guide and inform donor funding. The Better Evidence Project, launched in early 2020 at George Mason University, has sought to "improve the evidence available to donors, policy makers, practitioners, and scholars in the peacebuilding community," recognizing clear audience identification as an important first step.

Finally, policymakers are also key consumers of evidence. Success stories, including case studies of effective prevention, can compel policymakers to support upstream prevention. Interpeace's "resilience for peace" research is one example of this: three case studies (Liberia, Guatemala, and Timor Leste) show what building societal resilience in the context of peacebuilding and conflict actually means.

ASSUMPTION 6: Every Country Can Be at Risk of Mass Violence and Atrocities.

No society is immune to the risk and occurrence of mass violence and atrocities; every country should treat prevention as a top priority at home as well as abroad. As noted in a 2019 Protection Approaches report, "The world faces a prevention crisis. ... The rise in deliberate, systematic, and widespread violence against civilians, the globalization of hate-based networks, and the growing polarization in democratic politics have upended the belief that the prevention of identity-based violence is only required in some parts of the world but not others."

Some governments are now reflecting and acting on the potential risks of atrocities domestically, as well as within their region and subregion. The Global Network of R2P Focal Points, a coalition of more than 60 government officials, has recognized the importance of domestic prevention policy. Similarly, the Latin America Network for Genocide and Atrocity Prevention, which brings together governmental focal points from Central and South America, has identified national and regional opportunities to strengthen atrocity prevention. Some countries have also developed national mechanisms focused on preventing genocide and mass atrocities.[3]

The Black Lives Matter and decolonizing aid movements have prompted advocates to more closely examine dysfunctional systems and institutions that perpetuate extreme economic inequality, injustice, human rights violations, and mass violence. The global spread and growth of identity-based violence also has prompted a recognition that what all too often was seen as a problem "over there" is in fact one "here" as well.

There is also a growing recognition of the interconnectedness of war and other forms of violence—as well as the fact that violence does not respect borders. This is apparent most vividly as a consequence of violence and atrocities that have driven millions from their homes in Syria, Yemen, Myanmar, Venezuela, and throughout Central America. Too often, we find governments that are unprepared, ill-equipped, or disinterested in protecting vulnerable populations seeking protection and support.

Simultaneously, climate impacts, resource scarcity, inequality, urbanization, technology, and global pandemics are exposing existing vulnerabilities and changing the risks for violence in ways that are not yet fully understood. These pressures are also not responsive to national borders, further proving the need to see the prevention of mass violence as a global issue, and a priority at the national level for every country.

ASSUMPTION 7: Hate Speech That Can Incite Mass Violence Is on the Rise.

While there is no international legal definition for hate speech, it is commonly understood as language that targets individuals or groups because of their ethnicity, religion, race, gender, nationality, economic status, sexual orientation, or other identity factors.[4] Hate speech is designed to demonize and dehumanize targeted groups as outsiders or "others," inflaming latent tensions and inciting violence. As noted in the UN *Framework of Analysis for Atrocity Crimes*, it can contribute to creating an "environment conducive to the perpetration of mass atrocities."[5]

Violence incited by hate speech can happen within a country's borders, such as in the former Yugoslavia, Rwanda, or Myanmar, or across boundaries. State and nonstate actors can perpetrate hate speech, transmitting it via every available communication platform, including traditional print and broadcast (television and radio) media; advertisements; political rallies; and social media and video sharing. Extremist groups and online trolls increasingly are using sites such as Reddit, Facebook, and Twitter to exploit existing differences, build distrust, stoke fear, and incite violence.

Hate speech can spread in democratic societies, putting them at risk of mass violence. A growing number of world leaders are using nationalist, xenophobic, and identity-focused language to fuel discontent and divide societies. These tensions increase with growing economic, health, and social insecurity and inequality. With ever-growing hostility toward and restrictions on the media, some elected officials are regularly branding media reports as dishonest or fake, reinforcing an "us verus them" mentality. They are also using allied media to amplify that mentality.

In 2019, Secretary-General Guterres tasked the UN Office on Genocide Prevention and the Responsibility to Protect with developing a new global strategy to combat hate speech. The UN *Strategy and Plan of Action on Hate Speech* provides guidance for national governments and international leadership, as well as for UN field presences—crucial actors who have a role in addressing the "root causes and drivers of hate speech, as well as its impact on victims and societies more broadly."

The private sector also has an important role to play. Social media companies, while initially slow to acknowledge the role of their platforms in spreading hate online, have begun to engage with governments and civil society to design and implement responses to hate speech online, including engaging with fact-checking initiatives and sponsoring research on how to search for and remove terms in real time.

Civil society organizations such as Over Zero are conducting innovative research and training local organizations, digital citizens, and educators about online hate speech. PeaceTech Lab, a project begun under the US Institute for Peace, has produced hate speech lexicons, which identify the contextual information that makes speech inflammatory and offer alternative words and phrases to stop the spread of online hate speech in over ten countries. The Dangerous Speech Project conducts and sponsors research about speech that catalyzes intergroup violence—"dangerous speech"—and helps develop "counter speech" narratives and programming to combat hate speech online.

Finally, there is a continued need for the media to call out and counter this type of speech. Media companies, networks, and journalism-support organizations are employing a variety of strategies

to combat and effectively report hate speech. Examples include training initiatives for journalists, such as the Ethical Journalism Network's Turning the Page of Hate campaign, which offers newsrooms a five-point test for journalists to identify and ethically cover hate speech. Other examples include campaigns such as the European Federation of Journalists' #MediaAgainstHate effort and the United Nations Association of Civilization's #SpreadNoHate initiative, which bring together coalitions of media and civil society organizations to counter hate speech and discrimination in the media, both on and offline, while maintaining respect for freedom of expression and the free flow of information.

ASSUMPTION 8: There is a Growing Loss of Respect for and Trust in Multilateral Approaches.

We know there is an increasing global deterioration of respect for and trust in international cooperative approaches to prevent and halt mass violence and atrocities, in large part because global and regional institutions, mechanisms, and processes have repeatedly fallen short during recent crises. The UN Security Council, the principal intergovernmental body for maintaining peace and security, has consistently failed to act when countries face mass violence and atrocities, in large part because it is paralyzed by geopolitics, proxy conflicts, and underlying disputes.).

We also know that nationalism and populism are on the rise globally and that respect for and adherence to democratic values is declining. A growing number of governments are calling for a "my country first" foreign policy, unwilling to yield sovereignty to multilateral institutions, regional groupings of states, or international treaty mechanisms and other cooperative arrangements. The lack of cooperation at the global level has produced a profound gap in accountability and justice.

There are growing calls for leadership to come from every level of governance (global to local) and every part of society (individual to government). As Rachel Kleinfeld and Robert Muggah argue, to fight state violence and crime, "the role of international actors must always be focused on empowering active citizens (and citizenship), while incentivizing states to listen to their own people." Unfortunately, as participants at a November 2019 Stanley Center convening concluded, there is a distinct lack of political will to create links and alliances: national governments need to be persuaded to take more-active roles and cooperate more with civil society actors to work across sectors, networks, agendas, and locations. In addition, the formal systems of the United Nations and other multilateral institutions continue to be inaccessible to and unrepresentative of the needs of communities in conflict-affected countries.

In response, alternative global and regional multilateral frameworks to promote and secure greater cooperation on violence reduction have been established. Examples include global, regional, national, and city-based governmental and nongovernmental networks for mass violence and genocide prevention, all of which have sought to diversify and expand those stakeholders who are working on prevention and the policies they seek to implement. This approach resonates with conclusions by Conducive Space for Peace, which found that even with widespread agreement on what a future peacebuilding system should look like, there remains a wide range of opinions on how change should happen: should it come from within existing international institutions, outside of these systems, or through hybrid spaces for collaboration between actors at the country level and/or global level?

Finally, there are several initiatives—with a growing number of civil society and government champions—to reform the United Nations' capacity to prevent and respond to mass violence and atrocities. Whether older ideas about restraint of the Security Council veto in situations of mass atrocities, or more recent ones under the UN@75 umbrella (such as establishing a Peacebuilding Council or a UN-Civil Society focal point), there is growing momentum for transforming the UN system.[6]

ASSUMPTION 9: Funders Need to Do More to Foster Collaboration, Not Competition.

We know that the effective funding of prevention is directly or indirectly tied to the other assumptions identified above. There is growing demand for the donor community, governments, foundations, and high-net-worth individuals to recognize their role as a driver of unhelpful trends and as a key stakeholder in reversing them. Some of these trends include:

- Siloed sectors, stakeholder groups, conversations, and policy solutions.
- A lack of trust in local actors' capacity to identify priorities, take action, and manage financial resources (see, for example, the Peace Direct report *Atrocity Prevention and Peacebuilding*).
- Overly cumbersome reporting requirements or demand for evidence of success.
- Resource competition that undermines collaboration and pushes grantees to bend their missions to "feed into a cycle of 'trends' and 'hot topics' in international financing" (see the Pathfinders report *A Review of the Evidence and a Global Strategy for Violence Prevention*).
- The politicization of funding.
- A lack of coordination among donors.

There is also growing recognition of how to improve funding, including:

- By providing direct, flexible funding—rapid response and sustainable—of local efforts (see the Peace Direct report *Radical Flexibility: Strategic Funding for the Age of Local Activism*).
- By considering how to better encourage collaboration and shared learning across sectors and among stakeholders.
- Through better coordination among funders as a stakeholder group to create context-specific funding responses.

Endnotes

[1] Certainly many, if not all, of the above measures to build societal resilience are included under Sustainable Development Goals, namely Goal 16 on "Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions", which were agreed to in 2015 by all UN member states as part of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda and now have constituencies of civil society, national policymakers, and international leaders working to translate the goals into action:

- Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development.
- Provide access to justice for all.
- Build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels

See also Interpeace's 2016 *Assessing Resilience for Peace: A Guidance Note* for a comprehensive overview of the distinctions between the resilience for conflict and "Resilience for Peace" framing, as well as guidance for conducting context-specific analysis that identifies key conflict risks and stressors: social cohesion; legacy of the past; economic resources; information and communication; safety and justice; and leadership, governance, and politics.

[2] Such as peacebuilding and sustaining peace; women, peace, and security; human rights and good governance; youth peace and security; climate and conflict; small arms and light weapons; rule of law; and the SDGs.

[3] The United States, for instance, developed the Atrocity Prevention Board (APB) in 2011 to establish an interagency process focused on identifying countries with high risk for atrocities and orienting US government policy around preventing their onset. The APB recognizes atrocity prevention as a core national security issue, however its focus remains entirely outward looking.

[4] Various states define such speech in statute.

[5] Through Article 20 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) signatories agree that "Any advocacy of national, racial or religious hatred that constitutes incitement to discrimination, hostility or violence shall be prohibited by law."

[6] As noted above, the center has directed its programmatic work on mass violence and atrocities in areas where it is best placed to contribute to policy progress: regional mechanisms and institutions (both formal and informal, as well as government or civil-society led), and cross-national networks, rather than exclusively United Nations-related processes or efforts.

Annex

Constructive Management of Diversity	
Risk	**Resilience**
– Discrimination against groups – Exclusionary ideologies – Horizontal inequalities	– Inclusive ideologies – Equality across groups in wealth, employment, health – Consensual modes of governance – Legislative (including constitutional) protections for human and group rights – Independent judiciaries – Strong and independent national human rights institutions/ombudsman's office – Capacities for peaceful resolution and management of conflicts – Vibrant and free civil society

Legitimate and Capable Authority	
Risk	**Resilience**
– Unaccountable government – Weak rule of law – Impunity for the perpetrators of past/present atrocity crimes (government and nongovernment) – Weak protections for human rights – Unaccountable security sector – Physical capacity to commit atrocity crimes	– Legal equality – Independent judiciaries – Legislative protection of human rights and their enforcement – Institutional accountability to law – Separation of powers – Accountable, transparent, and inclusive government decision making – Government income through taxation – Professional security forces – Civilian control and management of the security forces – Equal access to justice – Monopoly of means of organized violence in the hands of the state – Effective and equitable service delivery – Absence of/limited corruption

Security of Livelihoods	
Risk	**Resilience**
– Low/average wealth – Horizontal inequalities – Elites that stand to benefit economically from atrocity crimes	– Economic growth and wealth accumulation – Antidiscrimination laws and their enforcement – Balanced regional investment – Equality in public sector employment and contracts – Secure asset bases at the community level – Legitimate, transparent, and well-managed land laws – Vibrant and politically engaged private sector – Public-private partnerships – Legitimate and accountable management of natural resources – Limited corruption

Vibrant Civil Society and Active Private Sectors	
Risk	**Resilience**
– Conditions of armed conflict/ recent history of atrocities and armed conflict – Practices of discrimination against a defined group/patterns of human rights abuse – Exclusionary ideologies – Unaccountable government – Weak rule of law – Unaccountable security sector – Restricted civil society – Average/low wealth – Horizontal economic inequalities – Elites that stand to benefit economically from atrocity crimes – Physical capacity to commit atrocity crimes	– Civil society organizations that hold the justice system and security forces to account through monitoring and advocacy – Nonstate groups/private sector actors that challenge discrimination in policies and actions – Promotion of inclusive ideologies and practices – Civil society and free press that report crimes and abuses to the international community – Organizations that help survivors cope with trauma – Capacity for early warning of atrocity crimes – Nonstate capacities for the resolution, mediation, and management of conflict – Nonstate assistance/pro bono legal aid to ensure improved access to justice – Advocacy for preventive action – Advocacy of R2P and related norms – Capacity to provide education for peace and conflict resolution – Capacity to understand and learn the lessons of history – Equitable investment practices that reduce horizontal inequalities – Fostering of innovation that leads to economic growth/wealth creation – Logistical support for atrocity prevention

Guarantees of Nonrecurrence	
Risk	**Resilience**
– Conditions of armed conflict/ recent history of atrocities and armed conflict	– Legal accountability for past perpetrators – Truth and recognition of past crimes – Physical security and stability – Recognition and implementation of human rights – Legal disincentives for perpetration of atrocity crimes – Judicial competence and independence – Constitutional guarantees of nondiscrimination – Regulation of security sector – Vibrant civil society – Legal empowerment of marginalized groups, including women – Education for peace, tolerance, critical thinking, and conflict resolution – Truthful and sensitive teaching of history – Memorialization of past crimes through culture to build understanding and empathy – Psychological support for victims and survivors

About Us

The Stanley Center for Peace and Security partners with people, organizations, and the greater global community to drive policy progress in three issue areas—mitigating climate change, avoiding the use of nuclear weapons, and preventing mass violence and atrocities. The center was created in 1956 and maintains its independence while developing forums for diverse perspectives and ideas. To learn more about our recent publications and upcoming events, please visit stanleycenter.org.

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9/20