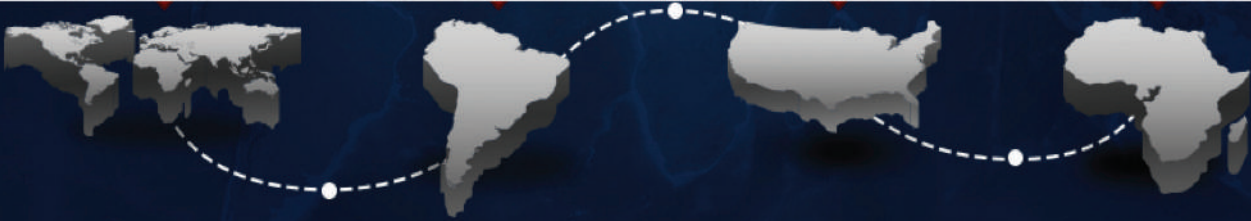


the auschwitz institute
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National Mechanisms for the Prevention of Genocide and other Atrocity Crimes: Effective and Sustainable Prevention Begins at Home

Through education and technical assistance, the **Auschwitz Institute for Peace and Reconciliation (AIPR)** supports States to develop or strengthen National Mechanisms for the prevention of genocide and other atrocity crimes. In this booklet, AIPR outlines the structures, mandates, and activities of National Mechanisms from across the globe.



Part I: Background

What is a National Mechanism for the prevention of genocide and other atrocity crimes?

National Mechanisms are officially established bodies that include representatives from different areas of government relevant to the prevention of atrocity crimes. The term “atrocity crimes” refers to three legally defined crimes: war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide. National Mechanisms lead the development of a coordinated national strategy for the prevention of such crimes. The inclusion of representatives from all relevant areas of government—including legislative, judicial and executive officials—enables National Mechanisms to first carry out a system-wide assessment of strengths and weaknesses from the perspective of atrocity prevention. Following this assessment, it is the role of the National Mechanism to coordinate the development and implementation of the necessary preventive policies to bolster the State's resilience to atrocity crimes.

The formation of National Mechanisms represents a new trend in the prevention of atrocity crimes. While even the most robust National Mechanisms discussed in this booklet have yet to carry out their mandate in full, they all aim to develop a unified State policy towards prevention and to systematize prevention within the government.

What responsibilities does the establishment of a National Mechanism fulfill for UN Member States?

National Mechanisms are vehicles for a State to exercise its responsibility to prevent genocide under its obligation as a party to the UN Convention for the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, as well as its responsibility to prevent other atrocity crimes under obligations as party to relevant international treaties. National Mechanisms are also vital tools UN Member States can employ to carry out responsibilities under regional and national protocols and policies on the protection of human rights and atrocity crime prevention. Moreover, through the establishment of a National Mechanism, States can fulfill their obligations under the international security and human rights norm of the Responsibility to Protect (R2P), as agreed upon in the 2005 UN World Summit Outcome Document.

What is the structure of a National Mechanism?

There is no one prescribed method for the official establishment of a National Mechanism. AIPR has observed in multiple countries the establishment of new bodies or structures to take on the prevention agenda through a constitutional process. These newly established National Mechanisms started to appear in

various UN Member States beginning in 2010. In other countries, we have also seen governments look to already existing institutions to incorporate this agenda. Unfortunately, a majority of States still do not have a National Mechanism for the prevention of genocide, be it newly created or incorporated in an already existing institution.

Regardless of whether it is a new institution or an existing structure, National Mechanisms are inter-ministerial and/or inter-departmental in nature. They have representation from multiple areas of the government responsible for atrocity prevention, such as human rights, rule of law, and anti-discrimination offices, to list some examples. According to representatives from governments with active National Mechanisms, cross sectional representation drives effective and unified preventive policy development. The expertise and full cooperation of the entire relevant governmental structure is critical to the development, implementation and monitoring of preventive policies. Regular communication among the represented offices is also of utmost importance to a functional Mechanism.

More specifically, AIPR has seen that ministries of foreign affairs, justice, defense—and where they exist, national human rights institutions—are regularly represented through their relevant departments on established Mechanisms. Additionally, national security forces and ministries of education are sometimes represented within these bodies. In Latin America, Africa, and in the United States, national and international civil society organizations play an advisory and support role by providing technical assistance, capacity building, and output monitoring. Finally, AIPR has observed civil society engagement with National Mechanisms in East Africa where representatives of NGOs actually work within the Mechanism alongside government actors.

What are the mandates of National Mechanisms?

National Mechanisms differ from State to State,

but four major themes emerge in their mandates and activities:

1. Risk assessment and early warning, including data gathering and analysis of this information through an atrocity prevention lens in order to detect patterns of group vulnerabilities and to alert the appropriate authorities in order to take recommended early action;
2. Development of training programs for civil servants and other relevant actors in society offering preventive approaches and practical tools to employ at the local and national levels;
3. Recommendation and development of policies geared towards the protection of vulnerable populations from risks of genocide and other atrocity crimes; and,
4. Communication with regional and international organizations on issues surrounding the prevention of genocide and other atrocity crimes.

Once a National Mechanism is established—including cases where these mandates have been given to existing institutions—AIPR has observed that its first action is to build capacity to conduct an initial assessment of the areas of risk from a genocide prevention perspective, and determine what policies and programs are already in place to effectively combat processes that could lead to atrocity crimes. Across the globe, the majority of active National Mechanisms are at their early stages of development and capacity building to conduct these initial assessments.

Now that we have identified the broad themes emerging around National Mechanisms for the prevention of genocide and other atrocity crimes, this booklet will highlight a cross section of States that have officially established their Mechanisms and States where Mechanisms are in initial stages of development.



Part II: Case Studies

Established National Mechanisms

Africa

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Uganda

North America

Mexico

United States

Emerging National Mechanisms

Africa

Central African Republic

Democratic Republic of the Congo

South America

Argentina

Paraguay



Established National Mechanisms

Kenya

The Kenyan National Committee for the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, War Crimes, Crimes Against Humanity and All Forms of Discrimination

History

The Kenyan National Committee was officially launched on March 22, 2012, under the authority of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The Committee was established and is in compliance with the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR) Protocol for the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, War Crimes, Crimes Against Humanity and All Forms of Discrimination, which all founding ICGLR Member States ratified on November 29, 2006. This Protocol reaffirms the responsibility of Member States to domesticate and operationalize their duties under international law to combat atrocity crimes, and one of the measures to carry out this responsibility under the document is the establishment of a Regional Committee for the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, War Crimes, Crimes Against Humanity and All Forms of Discrimination. The ICGLR Regional Committee then required all ICGLR Member States to establish their own National Committees to operationalize these duties under international law and the Protocol.

The launch of the National Committee was followed by two days of training on Early Warning Systems (EWS) facilitated by the UN Office of the Special Advisers on the Prevention of Genocide and the Responsibility to Protect.

Mandate

The Kenyan National Committee seeks to prevent the crime of genocide, war crimes, crimes against humanity and all forms of discrimination through:

- 1) Regularly reviewing situations at the national level for the purpose of preventing the above crimes, and provide early warning advice to all the relevant arms of government and the ICGLR Executive Secretariat through the ICGLR Regional Committee;
- 2) Collecting and analyzing information related to the above crimes at the national level;
- 3) Alerting the government in a timely fashion in order to take urgent measures to prevent the above crimes;
- 4) Contributing to raising awareness and education on peace and reconciliation through regional and national programs;
- 5) Suggesting specific measures to effectively fight impunity for the above crimes;
- 6) Recommending policies and measures to guarantee the rights of victims of the above crimes to truth, justice and compensation, as well as their rehabilitation, taking into account gender specific issues and ensuring that gender sensitive measures are implemented;
- 7) Monitoring, where applicable, national and/or regional programs on disarmament, demobilization, rehabilitation, repatriation and reinstallation (DDRRR) for former child soldiers and ex-combatants; and
- 8) Carrying out any other tasks that the government and the ICGLR Regional Committee may entrust to the National Committee.

Structure

The National Committee operates under the guidance of the National Chairperson who works in consultation with the Regional Committee, the National Coordinator of the Great Lakes Region, and other arms of the Kenyan government. The membership of the National Committee is drawn from governmental departments and non-governmental/civil society organizations. Membership is currently comprised of: the Ministry of Provincial Administration and Internal Security; the Ministry of Justice, National Cohesion and Constitutional Affairs; the State Law Office; the Director of Public Prosecutions; the Kenya Police; the National Cohesion and Integration Commission; the Kenya National Commission on Human Rights; the Truth, Justice and Reconciliation Commission; the Law Society of Kenya; the International Commission of Jurists; the Federation of Women's Lawyers – Kenya; Peace Net Kenya, the Kenya Red Cross; and, the National Coordinator of the Great Lakes Region (the Committee's Coordinator).

Outputs

The National Committee convened in October and November of 2014, having not met for a number of months prior. During this hiatus, a several members who represented organizations on the Committee vacated those positions. Accordingly, in the Fall 2014 meetings, the Committee deliberated on the issue of membership and began to chart the way forward to enable the Committee to carry out its mandate, including the scheduling of basic training for new members. AIPR is engaged with the Committee to hold a capacity building seminar in July 2015 to provide further training to members in order to assist the Committee to effectively carry out its mandate, with a particular focus on memorialization of past violence surrounding the 2008 electoral process and response tools for land and resource-based conflict.



***Jamila Mohammed, Chairperson,
Kenyan National Committee***



***Alice Nderitu, Former
Commissioner, National Cohesion
and Integration Commission of
Kenya; Member, Kenyan National
Committee***



Tanzania

The Tanzanian National Committee for the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, War Crimes, Crimes Against Humanity and All Forms of Discrimination

History

The Tanzanian National Committee was established under the auspices of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region Protocol for the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, War Crimes, Crimes Against Humanity and All Forms of Discrimination. Tanzania established their National Committee in February 2012—the first ICGLR Member State to do so.

The government prioritized the establishment of the National Committee given its history of religious tensions and internal land disputes—both recognized as potential flashpoints for future violence. Another potential spark for conflict stems from the presence within the country of refugees and groups of foreign citizens who oppose foreign governments. For decades, Tanzania has been a recipient of refugees from neighboring countries such as Rwanda, and has mediated peace talks in Burundi and Rwanda in the recent past. Moreover, the country has hosted foreign opposition groups from many countries in the southern part of Africa. According to the Chair of the Committee, Ms. Felistas Mushi, these risk factors are a by-product of Tanzania's inclusive culture. As told by Ms. Mushi, Tanzanians strive to help fellow citizens and their neighbors build peaceful and tolerant societies. The requirements undertaken in the Protocol, she said, are therefore complementary to Tanzania's inherent commitments in this regard.

Mandate

The Tanzanian National Committee seeks to prevent the crime of genocide, war crimes, crimes against humanity and all forms of discrimination through:

1. Regular monitoring of situations and processes that could lead to the above crimes;
2. The collection and analysis of information related to the above crimes;
3. Alerting the government and proper authorities in a timely fashion to undertake immediate measures to prevent the commission of the above crimes;
4. Recommending measures to effectively prevent the above crimes;
5. Fighting against impunity for the above crimes;
6. Raising awareness of the processes of these crimes and educating others about prevention to further peace and reconciliation programs;
7. Recommending policies and measures to guarantee the rights of victims of such crimes to truth, justice, compensation and rehabilitation; and
8. Carrying out any further task the Minister of Justice may entrust to the Committee under its mandate.

Structure

The National Committee is comprised of members of the central government, human rights institutions, civil society, religious institutions and academia. Government officials from the following institutions are represented:

the Ministry of Constitutional and Legal Affairs (holding the Chair); the Presidency; the Prime Minister's Office; the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation; the Ministry of Defense and National Service; the Ministry of Home Affairs; the Ministry of Community Development, Gender and Children; the Attorney Generals Chambers; the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training; the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions; the State Police Force; the Ministry of Information, Youth, Culture and Sports; the Ministry of East African Cooperation; and, the Commission for Human Rights and Good Governance. From civil society there is representation from the Centre for Foreign Relations, the Mwalimu Nyerere Foundation, and the Legal and Human Rights Center. Catholic and Muslim communities also have representation on the Committee through the Inter-religious Council. Lastly, the University of Dar es Salaam and the Legal Aid Committee of the University of Dar es Salaam School of Law are members of the National Committee.

Selection of the members was based upon the model provided for in the Rules of Procedure of the Regional Committee, but localized according to the Tanzanian administrative system. The main goal was to draw membership from all key ministries and sectors dealing with peace and security, either directly or indirectly. The Committee invites a broad spectrum of institutions to assist in implementing its operational strategy. For example, capacity building seminars for its members are organized in



Ms. Felistas Mushi, Chairperson of the Tanzanian National Committee

collaboration with AIPR. The operational strategy of the Committee also includes the development of a participatory and management capacity to enable it to work with other institutions and individuals. The Committee believes that the broadest participation and inclusiveness of the citizenry in preventive policy formulation and implementation ensures operational effectiveness.

Outputs

The Committee has conducted interfaith peace forums, peace programs involving civil society and political leaders, and tailored training and technical assistance programs to increase the capacity of the Committee to carry out its mandate. These tailored training programs have been supported by international civil society organizations, including AIPR, as well as the United Nations Office of the Special Advisers on the Prevention of Genocide and the Responsibility to Protect. The trainings took place in March and October 2014 and covered such topics as election violence, land conflicts, inter-religious tensions, and natural resource based conflicts. These training programs will continue in 2015.



Tanzania's National Committee for the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, War Crimes, Crimes Against Humanity and All Forms of Discrimination

In an interview with AIPR, Ms. Felistas Mushi highlighted the success of the interfaith peace forums towards building peace and social cohesion in Tanzania. Topics covered at these forums included the role of religious leaders in peacebuilding and strategies to prevent genocide in Tanzania. Some of these strategies involved:

- Fostering inter-religious cooperation, interactions and peaceful coexistence between different religious faiths in peacetime;
- Encouraging the media to work according to their professional ethics with the purpose of building national unity, social cohesion and sustainable development;
- Building political and governance systems on the principles of transparency, accountability and timely justice; and
- Eliminating nepotism, discrimination and injustice in national institutions.

In 2013, Ms. Mushi and the National Committee co-organized peace forum workshops in Morogoro, Tanga, and Arusha. According to Mushi:

In all the regions where we have conducted peace forums, the participants who are religious leaders have been so sensitized that they formed their own peace platforms. Even in areas where it was least expected to have religious leaders of different religions and denominations sit together and agree on anything, we have witnessed a very positive change that brought all of them together in strategizing on preventive measures.



Juliana Laurent Chacha, Principal Investigations Officer, Commission for Human Rights and Good Governance of Tanzania; Member, Tanzanian National Committee



Lucas Kusima, Senior Assistant Commissioner of Police, Ministry of Home Affairs of Tanzania; Member, Tanzanian National Committee



Uganda

The Ugandan National Committee for the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, War Crimes, Crimes Against Humanity and All Forms of Discrimination

History

Like the Tanzanian and Kenyan National Committees, the Ugandan National Committee was established under and in compliance with the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region Protocol for the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, War Crimes, Crimes Against Humanity and All Forms of Discrimination. The Ugandan National Committee was officially launched on October 15, 2012, in Entebbe, Uganda, with support from the UN Office of the Special Advisers on the Prevention of Genocide and the Responsibility to Protect. At this launching event, a preliminary one-day training was held for the members of the Committee and a six-month work plan was developed. The plan addressed unique challenges facing Uganda—a country where atrocity crimes have unfolded in the past and where the risk remains. For example, communities from the Western region were targeted based on their identity during riots in September 2009. And in 2014, there was an uprising in Kasese over land disputes—mass graves were later discovered. Additionally, Uganda is a neighbor to South Sudan, where ethnic divisions are currently erupting into conflict.

Mandate

The Ugandan National Committee seeks to prevent the crime of genocide, war crimes, crimes against humanity and all forms of discrimination through:

1. Regular monitoring of situations and processes that could lead to the above crimes;
2. The collection and analysis of information related to the above crimes;
3. Alerting the government and proper authorities in a timely fashion to undertake immediate measures to prevent the commission of the above crimes;
4. Recommending measures to effectively prevent the above crimes;
5. Fighting against impunity for the above crimes;
6. Raising awareness of the processes of these crimes and educating others about prevention to further peace and reconciliation programs;
7. Recommending policies and measures to guarantee the rights of victims of such crimes to truth, justice, compensation and rehabilitation; and
8. Carrying out any further task the Minister of Justice may entrust to the Committee under its mandate.

Structure

The Committee is comprised of a representative from the Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs who serves as Chair, representatives of civil society who serve as Vice Chair and Secretary, a Treasurer representing academia

and the legal community, and a representative of the Human Rights Commission of Uganda as the Communications Director. Additional members include representatives from the Ministry of Gender, the Uganda People's Defense Force, and other civil society organizations.

Outputs

The Committee has adopted terms of reference and a work plan, which is now beginning to be implemented. The Committee has also begun the process of assessing national strengths and weaknesses from a prevention perspective by placing focal point persons at the district (local) levels, particularly in areas considered "hot spots," to gather data to submit to the Committee. With the help of AIPR and the UN Office of the Special Advisers on the Prevention of Genocide and R2P, the Committee is currently working to build its capacity through training and technical assistance programs to carry out its work plan.



***Dismas Nkunda, member
of the Ugandan National
Committee***



***Lina Zedriga Waru Abuku,
Consultant and Senior Advisor
on Issues of Women, Peace &
Security, and Governance;
Secretary, Ugandan National
Committee***



Mexico

The Inter-Departmental Commission on International Humanitarian Law of Mexico (CIDIH)

History

In June 2012, the Mexican government decided to thoroughly follow and engage in the activities of the Latin American Network for Genocide and Mass Atrocity Prevention. Launched in March 2012, the Latin American Network is a regional initiative fostering capacity building and policy development in this field, with the participation of eighteen States from the region. The Network provides a space for the exchange of best practices for public officials and aims to institutionalize a culture of genocide prevention throughout Latin America's governments. The government of Mexico gave a mandate to the Inter-Departmental Commission on International Humanitarian Law of Mexico (CIDIH) to engage with the Latin American Network and take the lead on the implementation of prevention programming and policy development, given the similarities between the objectives of the Commission and those of atrocity prevention. The CIDIH was created by Presidential Agreement in 2009. In this way, Mexico utilized the existing structure of the Commission to facilitate its preventive approach.

Mandate

The CIDIH is a permanent advisory and technical body of the federal government, which aims to disseminate and promote respect for the rules, principles and institutions of International Humanitarian Law, as well as promote national implementation of Mexico's commitments under international treaties.

Structure

Within the federal executive, the Commission is permanently integrated by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of National Defense, the Navy, and the Ministry of the Interior. The Commission has a rotating Chair, which was initially filled by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. It is officially established and is inter-ministerial and inter-departmental, allowing for cross coordination on issues of atrocity prevention, thereby providing a whole-of-government approach. Additionally, the Commission may invite any department or agency of the federal government to participate permanently or temporarily by voting on particular actions when they are within their competence. The CIDIH may also invite other agencies to participate including representatives of the legislative and judicial branches, experts and advisers in International Humanitarian Law, and representatives of the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent branches. The International Committee of the Red Cross and the Mexican Red Cross are frequently invited to the meetings of the Commission and participate in its working groups.

Outputs

CIDIH officials have closely engaged with trainings and activities of the Latin American Network for Genocide and Mass Atrocity Prevention. The structure of the Latin American Network is based on the establishment of national and/or ministry focal points charged with their respective government's or ministry's participation in the Network. Twice per year, the focal points meet and engage in an interactive dialogue. The CIDIH's Technical Assistant, who also serves as Mexico's focal point to the Latin American Network, participated in focal points

meetings held in Argentina and Panama in 2013 and 2014.

CIDIH representatives also attended in 2013 and 2014 the Latin American edition of the Raphael Lemkin Seminar for Genocide Prevention. This weeklong seminar, specifically tailored for Latin American participants, is grounded in the belief that preventing genocide and other mass atrocities is an achievable goal. The seminar fosters an understanding of the responsibility of States to prevent atrocity crimes, while at the same time brings a heightened degree of awareness to the tools officials have at their disposal to prevent such crimes. The 2013-2014 trainings, co-organized by AIPR, took place in Buenos Aires, Argentina, and at the site of the former German Nazi Concentration and Extermination Camps of Auschwitz-Birkenau.

In November 2013, a module titled, “Tools for the Prevention of Genocide and Mass Atrocities,” was added to Mexico’s Specialized Annual Course on International Humanitarian Law at the National Level. This annual course is organized every year by the CIDIH and is taught to more than 200 participants from the executive, legislative and judicial branches on the federal and state level, plus academic institutions and civil society. The module was taught by the Technical Assistant of the CIDIH and its focal point to the Latin American Network. In September 2014, the module was renamed, “Tools for International Crime Prevention and the Responsibility to Protect,” and was taught by Mr. Mario Buil-Merce of the UN Office of Special Advisers on the Prevention of Genocide and the Responsibility to Protect.

Also within the framework of the Latin American Network, a module called, “Prevention of Genocide and Mass Atrocities,” was added in 2013 to the Course of International Criminal Law for military and security forces in Mexico. This implementation was made at the request of the Ministry of Defense and aimed to update military personnel of the Military Justice Service, the Army, the Air Force, and the Navy on international criminal law and human rights.

Furthermore, in April 2014, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, through the CIDIH, organized a training seminar in Mexico City on international

mechanisms for the prevention of atrocity crimes. Approximately 100 participants attended the seminar from the federal executive, legislative and judicial branches of government, human rights organizations, as well as Mexican academic institutions and civil society organizations. The seminar was conducted by international experts from AIPR and the UN Office of the Special Advisers on the Prevention of Genocide and R2P. In recorded remarks delivered at the seminar, UN Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide Mr. Adama Dieng said:

It has barely been two years since the eighteen participating States agreed to establish the [Latin American] Network. This was meant to be an inter-governmental forum for capacity building at the regional level. Since then, a great deal has happened, and we have seen a number of national initiatives coming to fruition. This seminar is one of them.



Mariana Salazar Alborno, Director for International Humanitarian Law in the Legal Advisory Office of Mexico’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs; National Focal Point to the Latin American Network for Genocide and Mass Atrocity Prevention





United States

The U. S. Atrocities Prevention Board

History

The Atrocities Prevention Board (APB) was launched on April 23, 2012, but its origins in the United States can be traced back to key recommendations of the 2008 Genocide Prevention Task Force, chaired by former Secretary of State Madeleine Albright and former Secretary of Defense William Cohen. This task force called for the creation of an “Atrocities Prevention Committee.” In 2010, President Obama created the first position in the White House dedicated to addressing and preventing atrocity crimes. In August 2011, Presidential Study Directive 10 (PSD-10) ordered the creation of the APB and directed the National Security Adviser to assess the U.S. government’s anti-atrocity capabilities, and recommend reforms that would fill gaps in capacity. PSD-10 began with the following statement about the importance of prevention:

Preventing mass atrocities and genocide is a core national security interest and a core moral responsibility of the United States... Unfortunately, history has taught us that our pursuit of a world where States do not systematically slaughter civilians will not come to fruition without concerted and coordinated effort.

Mandate

According to an April 2012 White House Fact sheet, the APB was created to help the U.S. government “identify and address atrocity threats, and oversee institutional changes that will make us more nimble and effective.” A 2013 Fact Sheet outlines additional mandates. According to this document, the

APB addresses threats by “scanning the horizon for critical developments, assessing the risk of mass atrocities in particular situations, and supplementing existing efforts, or catalyzing new efforts, to ensure that atrocity threats receive adequate and timely attention.” In addition to enhancing policy coordination between various government agencies, the APB monitors the National Intelligence Council’s preparation of the National Intelligence Estimate on the global risk of genocide and other mass atrocities, and works with the Director of National Intelligence to include information about such risks in the Director’s annual threat assessment testimony before Congress.

Structure

The APB brings together senior-level representatives from eleven government agencies, including the Departments of State, Defense, Treasury, Justice, and Homeland Security, the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), the U.S. Permanent Mission to the United Nations, the Office of the Director of National Intelligence, the Central Intelligence Agency, and the Office of the Vice President. All APB members are at the Assistant Secretary level or higher and have been appointed by name by their respective Principals. The APB is chaired today by Stephen Pomper, the National Security Staff’s Senior Director for Multilateral Affairs and Human Rights.

The APB meets at least once per month to oversee the development and implementation of atrocity prevention and response policy. They also meet on an *ad hoc* basis to deal with urgent situations as they arise, such as the conflict in the Central Africa Republic in 2014. To ensure senior-level visibility into its work and progress, the APB Deputies meet quarterly for a “deep-dive” analysis meeting, with the assistance of an intelligence community briefing. These quarterly meetings,

according to the Center for American Progress, a U.S. public policy think tank, are designed to drive a policy conversation regarding States of potential concern. Additionally, on a weekly basis, a sub-APB made up of working-level staff from participating agencies meets to discuss structural atrocity prevention issues. State Department and USAID personnel form the bulk of sub-APB membership. Finally, APB Principals meet once a year to review the work of the APB, and the Chair reports on this work annually in a memorandum to the President.

PSD-10 required the APB Chair after six months of operations to prepare a draft Executive Order for consideration by the President detailing the structure, functions, priorities and objectives of the Board. However, as of early 2015 this order has not been publicly issued.

Outputs

According to the 2013 White House Fact Sheet on the APB, the agencies represented on the Board have all taken steps, including through dedicated “alert channels,” to ensure that information related to atrocities and atrocity threats were collected, elevated, and disseminated within the U.S. government. The U.S. Treasury, for example, dedicated staff to focus on sanctions designations based on human rights abuses and atrocities. The Center for American Progress found that as a result of the APB's work, the Department of Treasury placed sanctions on suspected human rights abusers in Zimbabwe, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Iran, and Myanmar, and on 41 entities or individuals in Syria or with ties to the Assad regime.

As with all National Mechanisms, AIPR believes that the long-term viability of the APB depends upon making training on the process of genocide and other atrocity crimes and on the tools and policy options for prevention widely available to its members. PSD-10 devoted attention to the issue of training, but the requirements for training have gone largely unfulfilled. Recently, however, there is progress on the capacity building front.

From April 8 – 10, 2015, the U.S. Institute of Peace (USIP) and AIPR co-organized the first

edition of the U.S. Inter-Agency Course on Atrocity Prevention. The three-day interactive training familiarized participants with the mechanics of atrocity prevention, including U.S. and international institutional prevention frameworks, the identification of early warning signs, and risk assessment. Many of the participants were current or former APB or sub-APB members. Modules included “Halting and Reversing Escalation,” “Crisis Response,” and “Retributive and Restorative Transitional Justice,” among others.

By the end of the three-day course, participants were better equipped to design a holistic strategy of prevention—drawing from the full array of early prevention and crisis management tools—to address the risk or occurrence of atrocity crimes in various conflict contexts. The training showed the commitment of the U.S. government to atrocity prevention, and in particular, the strong engagement of individual representatives to move from atrocity prevention in theory to atrocity prevention in practice. The course was the leading edge of a robust training program that will be offered to all civil servants working in the agencies represented on the APB.



Stephen Pomper,
*Chairman, U.S.
Atrocities
Prevention Board*

Photo Credit: White House

Emerging National Mechanisms



Central African Republic

The government of the Central African Republic has affirmed its intention to establish a National Committee for the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, War Crimes, Crimes Against Humanity and All Forms of Discrimination under the Protocol of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region. The UN Office of the Special Advisers on the Prevention of Genocide and the Responsibility to Protect will support the launching of the Committee, but due to the current crises across the country, as of the date of this publication it has not been possible for the launch to take place.

The representative of CAR to the ICGLR Regional Committee on the Prevention and Punishment of Genocide emphasized to the government the necessity of establishing the Committee and government approval was given. The Mechanism will aim to prevent atrocity crimes, act as an early warning body, and will be called upon to develop and reinforce a culture of peace in the country. It will also be tasked with implementing programs and activities for prevention efforts on an ongoing basis.

The Committee will be made up of governmental departments, civil society organizations and private sector representatives. From within the government, the Ministries of Justice, Foreign Affairs, Land Administration, Public Security, Communication, Education, and Social Affairs will be represented. From the ranks of civil society the Committee will welcome the Human Rights Network, women's rights organizations, religious officials, and representatives from youth organizations. Finally, from the private sector, the Chamber of Commerce, the National Union of Central African Employers, and the Central African Interoccupational Grouping will be represented.

AIPR is currently engaging with the prospective Committee to develop capacity building programs and provide training to members in order to assist the Committee in carrying out its mandate effectively once it has been officially launched.



Democratic Republic of the Congo

The Democratic Republic of the Congo's National Committee for the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, War Crimes, Crimes Against Humanity and All Forms of Discrimination was officially launched in November 2014 with the support of the UN Office of the Special Advisers on the Prevention of Genocide and the Responsibility to Protect. The National Committee has a mandate to support and see implemented within the DRC the Protocol on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, War Crimes, Crimes Against Humanity and All Forms of Discrimination of the ICGLR.

A national action plan for the Committee is currently being developed and will incorporate cooperation and communication with the ICGLR Regional Committee, and on the international level, with the UN Office of the Special Advisers on the Prevention of Genocide and R2P, the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, and other partners such as AIPR. The Committee is made up of representatives from relevant governmental departments, civil society organizations, delegates from the provinces, and representatives from the private sector.



Members of the CAR and DRC National Committees attending a training seminar alongside members of other ICGLR National Committees





Argentina

The government of Argentina is currently in the process of developing its National Mechanism for the Prevention of Genocide. The motivation for the creation of this inter-ministerial Mechanism comes from the national human rights policy that Argentina has been developing since 2003. The establishment of the Mechanism is complementary to a number of fundamental human rights initiatives on the topic of memory, truth, and justice that were launched in response to the civil-military dictatorship of 1976-1983. In this sense, the National Mechanism is a necessary institutional tool to achieve higher levels of efficiency in the prevention of mass atrocities. It is also an initiative in line with Argentina's membership of and support for the Latin American Network for Genocide and Mass Atrocity Prevention. Lastly, motivation for the National Mechanism's establishment is also derived from Argentina's responsibility as a party to the UN Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, as the Mechanism is a tool to domesticate and operationalize international law. The Mechanism will be officially established through a Presidential Decree, which as of the date of this publication is awaiting signature by the President.

The National Mechanism is designed as an inter-ministerial body having an articulated policy framework between governmental and non-governmental actors participating in matters related to the prevention of atrocity crimes. In accordance with the Presidential Decree, the responsibilities of the Mechanism will include:

1. **Risk detection and early warning:** Developing procedures for the circulation and exchange of information within the government and to interested outside parties, including civil society organizations and academic institutions, on various cases and situations posing a possible risk of atrocity. This also includes the development of a standardized evaluation process for the data gathered.
2. **Systemic prevention and awareness:** The implementation of seminars and trainings on topics related to human rights, international humanitarian law, transitional justice and other related topics under the prevention umbrella. It includes the implementation of standardized training curricula on anti-discrimination and atrocity prevention for public and state academic institutions, as well as for civil servants. Lastly, it entails the development of an evaluation process for content distributed via mass communications.
3. **Collaboration and information exchange:** The establishment of procedural mechanisms for data processing and communications with the UN, as well as regional organizations, such as the Latin American Network for Genocide and Mass Atrocity Prevention.

The agencies that will participate in the Mechanism and form its Coordinating Committee are the Ministries of Defense; Foreign Affairs and Worship; Justice and Human Rights; Education; Public Communications; and Institutional Reform and Democracy Building. The Director of the Ministerial Cabinet and the National Institute for

the Prevention of Discrimination, Xenophobia and Racism will also participate. The Mechanism will also include a Committee for Genocide Prevention, which will serve as a space for exchange with civil society organizations accredited by the Committee. Additionally, a Federal Network for Genocide Prevention will be established under the auspices of the National Mechanism, which will assist in developing the capacity of the federal government to coordinate prevention policy with the provinces at the local level.

As of the date of this publication, the nascent National Mechanism has had only preparatory meetings and the development of internal procedures is underway. The next step in the process is the coordination of a national action plan for genocide prevention, which will be approved and put into place once the Presidential Decree has been signed and an assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of the current prevention policy framework has been conducted.





Paraguay

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Paraguay and the Department of Truth, Justice and Reparations of the Office of the Ombudsman—both focal points of the Latin American Network for Genocide and Mass Atrocity Prevention—are developing a bill to create a National Commission on the Prevention of Genocide and Mass Atrocities. The National Commission will facilitate interagency coordination among the various State agencies that have authority with respect to the prevention of genocide and other mass atrocities. The establishment of the Commission is supported by Paraguay's responsibilities derived from international law under the framework of the UN Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide.

The National Commission will be chaired by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Department of Truth, Justice and Reparations of the Ombudsman Office. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs is the focal point for the domestication of the UN Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide. The Commission shall consist of a representative and one alternate from the following institutions: the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Office of the Ombudsman, the Ministry of Interior, the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Education and Culture, the Ministry of National Defense, the Judiciary, the Public Prosecutor, the Departments of the Armed Forces, the Ministry of Defense, Congress, and the State Police. The Commission may call other institutions to join its membership if deemed necessary.

The approval process for the bill creating the National Mechanism is currently underway, and AIPR is engaging with the prospective Commission to develop capacity building programs to provide training to members in order to assist it in carrying out its mandate effectively.



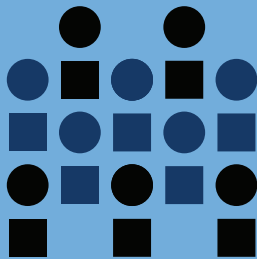
Yudith Rolon, Director of the Department of Truth, Justice and Reparations of Paraguay's Office of the Ombudsman

Photo credit: GAAMAC





The Auschwitz Institute for Peace and Reconciliation will update the information in this booklet annually as the National Mechanisms described continue to develop and new Mechanisms are formed. For any questions or comments about the information contained in this booklet, please contact AIPR's Director of Policy and Planning Samantha Capicotto at samantha.capicotto@auschwitzinstitute.org



**the auschwitz institute
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**We Are Building a World that Prevents
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