

WHY THIS REPORT

LETTER ON BEHALF OF THE CONVENING BODY

Two generations—that is how much time it takes for countries to restore the rule of law after extreme violence such as civil war, mass atrocities or genocide, according to the World Bank.

In the spring of 2016, the Prevention and Protection Working Group (PPWG), which is coordinated by the Friends Committee on National Legislation (FCNL) Education Fund, convened the Experts Committee on Preventing Mass Violence to ensure that our next president has a detailed and compelling roadmap to make the prevention of genocide and mass atrocities a cornerstone of U.S. foreign policy.

This effort comes at a critical time. The outbreak of violent conflict around the world has resulted in the highest number of displaced people in human history. The dire humanitarian consequences and the broader security challenges stemming from recent global violence are unprecedented.

Over the past decade, there has been an emerging bipartisan consensus that preventing atrocities should be “a core national security interest and a core moral responsibility of the United States,” as both a recent executive order and congressional legislation have stated. There is also a growing recognition that early prevention is the most effective course of action not only to save lives, but also to save money, limit military interventions, and promote U.S. national interests.

We asked the experts who prepared this report to articulate a clear, bipartisan agenda for policymakers in 2017 and beyond. We believe the report outlines a set of tangible recommendations that demonstrate that preventing mass atrocities is an achievable goal.

We are grateful to all of the experts for making time to share their insights and develop the recommendations found in this report, which were drawn from their experience both inside and outside of the U.S. government. Special thanks and appreciation to Charles Brown who skillfully managed the Experts Committee process—without Charlie’s thoughtfulness and deep commitment to these issues, this report would not have come together.

In addition to all those highlighted in the acknowledgements section of this report, we would like to say a big thank you to Humanity United for their financial support for the PPWG and related projects, including the convening of the Experts Committee. I would also like to thank the members of the Prevention and Protection Working Group who identified the need for this report and who will be important advocates for its recommendations. Finally, I want to thank FCNL staff, particularly Allyson Neville who coordinates the PPWG, Theo Sittler who directs the Peacebuilding Policy program, and Julia Watson who is FCNL's Herbert Scoville Jr. Peace Fellow, without whom this report would not have been possible.

A final word of deepest appreciation and thanks to all those doing the hard work of building peace and preventing violent conflict around the world, including those who serve in the U.S. government, international nongovernmental organizations and their staff, local civil society leaders who make a difference in their communities every day, and all the advocates around the U.S. who support these efforts.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Diane Randall". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Diane Randall
Executive Secretary
Friends Committee on National Legislation Education Fund
on behalf of the Prevention and Protection Working Group