

14th Assembly of States Parties of the International Criminal Court

The International Criminal Court, often referred to as “the legal arm” of the Responsibility to Protect, is holding its 14th Assembly of States Parties (ASP) in The Hague. As stated by the Coalition for the ICC’s Amielle del Rosario, RtoP and the ICC can be viewed as part of a ‘justice continuum’, as both require a spectrum of action, from preventive measures to timely and decisive response to addressing the risks of recurrence. Indeed, accountability for the perpetrators of atrocity crimes serves as a vital element of upholding the Responsibility to Protect, as ending impunity for these crimes functions both as a deterrent for future perpetrators and as a means to rebuild communities in the wake of atrocities.



Amnesty International, in a call that was echoed by the Coalition for the ICC, [advocated](#) for states to strengthen the ICC, rather than accept proposals by the governments of Kenya and South Africa that could undermine the Court’s independence. Such proposals, according to Amnesty, would “hit at the heart of the ability of the ICC to tackle breaches of international law.” The Coalition for the ICC further called for States Parties to the Rome Statute to express their [commitment](#)

to gender justice, including by noting that sexual and gender-based crimes result from pre-existing gender inequalities that target those most vulnerable in society on the basis of their gender. FIDH, the Kenya Human Rights Commission, and ICRtoP member African Centre for Justice and Peace Studies, meanwhile, [encouraged](#)

States Parties to, inter alia, support a strong Trust Fund for Victims, ensure the effective participation of victims in ICC proceedings, and to create a strong field presence to supply outreach to victims and affected communities.

Find more civil society recommendations to the ASP [here](#). The Coalition for the ICC is

providing [daily summaries](#) of proceedings at the ASP. You can also follow #ASP14 on Twitter for live updates.

Catch up on developments in...

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Burma/Myanmar:

The Burmese Army has [increased](#) their attacks in the Shan State, with reports of ground and air offensives from the Kachin Independence Army (KIA), The Ta'ang National Liberation Army (TNLA), and the Shan State Army-North (SSA-N). Last week, the Burmese Army reportedly [attacked](#) a high school housing 1,500 internally displaced civilians (IDPs) in Kesi Township.

The Shan Nationalities League for Democracy (SNLD) and the National League for Democracy (NLD) [accused](#) Dr. Sai Mauk Kham, the current Union Solidarity and Development Party (USDP) Vice President, of rigging votes.

The UN Human Rights Council [completed](#) the second Universal Periodic Review for Burma on 10 November, which outlines 281 recommendations from foreign governments, rights groups and civil society organizations. President Thein Sein has agreed to less than half of the recommendations from the review, breaking a commitment to political reform made at the beginning of his term. Civil society urged the newly elected Aung San Suu Kyi's National League for Democracy (NLD) party to accept the core UPR recommendations that have been

rejected.

A joint statement between Amnesty International and FIDH [called](#) on “all UN member states to recognize the continued need for a resolution on the situation of human rights in Myanmar.”

Burundi: Various UN independent experts [expressed](#) outrage at the deteriorating human rights situation in Burundi after the United Nations Security Council adopted a new resolution condemning the violence. A group of seven Special Rapporteurs urged for the text to be followed by “concrete responses fitting the magnitude of the risks at stake.” Despite additional UN pleas for an end to violence, at least four people have been

[killed](#)

in separate shootings and explosions in Burundi’s capital of Bujumbura on Sunday, including targeted attacks on police and the residence of the mayor of Bujumbura.

UNICEF reported that child rights violations have [multiplied](#) since the beginning of the violent crisis in Burundi. UNICEF also raised attention to the lack of essential medicine and supplies for children and mothers.

The International Organization of Migration [reported](#) that over half of the thousands of displaced people are children, many of whom suffer from malaria and malnutrition. The International Monetary Fund expects the economy of Burundi to shrink by 7.2% this year, consequently reversing a decade of growth experienced by the country.

Central African Republic:

— Suspected former Seleka rebels [attacked](#) two camps for Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs), killing nine individuals, including a UN peacekeeper. Later this week, raids assumed to be orchestrated by the ex-Seleka [killed](#) at least 22 people, with multiple people reported missing from the villages of Ndassima and Mala.

After talks with the Democratic Republic of Congo concerning its future involvement in the UN peacekeeping mission in Central African Republic (MINUSCA), the United Nations has [determined](#) that the DRC troops have not been adequately vetted and therefore do not pass a pre-deployment assessment.

Democratic Republic of the Congo:

The director of the UN’s Joint Human Rights Office for the DRC, Jose Maria Aranaz, [confirmed](#) that government soldiers raped 14 women over a three-day period in September in South Kivu.

Gaza/West Bank:

Israeli military forces [raided](#) Qalandiya refugee camp in the West Bank before dawn on Monday, killing two Palestinian men and wounding several others. Residents said up to 1,000 soldiers entered the camp to destroy the home of the family of Muhammad Abu Shaheen, a resident who is charged with killing an Israeli civilian in June. The military reported three shootings and attacks from hundreds of Palestinians with fire bombs, improvised explosive devices, and rocks during the raids.

Palestinian attackers [killed](#) at least three Israelis in two attacks in Israel and the occupied West Bank, according to police forces. In the first attack, a Palestinian man stabbed two Israelis to death at the entrance of a shop that serves as a synagogue in Tel Aviv. Later on Thursday, attackers opened fire and rammed a car into pedestrians near the Gush Etzion settlement; one person was killed and five others wounded, according to the Israeli police.

Iraq:

The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum [released](#) a report on crimes against humanity committed by ISIL against several minority groups in northern Iraq, as well as on the possible genocide of the Yezidi people.

An ISIL suicide bombing [killed](#) 21 and wounded at least 46 when a bomber targeted a Shia memorial service in the Baghdad suburb of Hay al-Amala. An ISIL roadside bomb detonated at a Shia shrine in Sadr City killed at least five people and wounded 15.

Kurdish forces [discovered](#) a mass grave believed to contain the remains of 70 Iraqi Yazidis in Sinjar after the Kurdish forces retook the town from ISIL. The mayor of Sinjar, Mahma Xelil, said the grave would be left undisturbed so experts could analyze the remains and collect evidence for a case to recognize the atrocities as genocide.

Libya:

A Joint Report of the UN Support Mission in Libya ([UNSMIL](#)) and the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights ([OHCHR](#)) was

[released](#) on 16 November, stating “all parties in Libya appear to be committing violations of international humanitarian law, including those that may amount to war crimes as well as gross violations or abuses of international human rights law.” The International Criminal Court is investigating the claims.

Martin Kobler, who formally took over from Spaniard Bernardino Leon on Tuesday as the U.N. Libya envoy, [announced](#) that he will restart the unity government talks and prioritize

security-related issues.

Mali:

Military sources [announced](#) that its army had arrested Alaye Bocari, a financial supporter of the Islamist radical group Massina Liberation Front (MLF). The MLF has been responsible for many deadly attacks in Mali.

German Defense Minister Ursula von der Leyen [reported](#) that Berlin planned to increase its military presence in Mali; Northern Ireland also expressed its willingness to send more peacekeepers to Mali.

According to the U.N. Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), the progress that has been made at the political level for Mali is not [reflected](#) within communities where fighting continues and people are forced from their homes. Aid efforts have also been affected by attacks on aid workers and their facilities.

Nigeria:

According to Nigerian top officials and international security experts, Boko Haram has [lost](#) much of its ground in northern Nigeria. Nevertheless, on Thursday an explosion believed to be the work of Boko Haram

[killed](#) more than 30 people and injured about 80 in Yola.

Nigerian President Muhammadu Buhari [ordered](#) the arrest of Sambo Dasuki, a key adviser to former President Goodluck in 2011, as well as other former high ranking officials who issued fraudulent arms contracts amounting to \$5.4 billion, denying Nigerian forces weapons needed to fight Boko Haram.

The Institute of Economics and Peace [released](#) the “Global Terrorism Index” which determined Boko Haram to be responsible for more deaths last year than any other terrorist group. Boko Haram is reported to have killed 6,664 people, while the deaths of 6,073 were attributed to ISIL in 2014.

South Sudan:

The European Union [vocalized](#) its support for a continental network of African judiciaries under the African Union to establish a hybrid court. The AU Commission of Inquiry, alongside others, has recommended the establishment of a Truth and Reconciliation Commission to further investigate rights abuses.

Both the South Sudanese rebels and the government have [accused](#) the other of further violating August’s peace deal with increased attacks or raids in Unity State, just ahead of their meeting at a regional peace conference in Juba on Nov. 23.

South Sudanese president Salva Kiir [stated](#) that his country has struggled to resettle thousands of refugees and IDPs during the last two years of war, emphasizing that low world oil prices have depleted government coffers.

Sri Lanka:

The main Tamil party (TNA) and civil society organizations [organized](#) the complete shutdown in Sri Lanka's North and Eastern provinces of public transportation, schools, offices, and businesses over the government's failure to uphold its pledge to release all political prisoners by November 7 and repeal the terrorism law.

UN working group experts, Bernard Duhaime, Tae-Ung Baik, and Ariel Dulitzky, said they had "[found](#) a secret underground detention center at a Sri Lankan navy base where many post-civil war detainees were believed to have been interrogated and tortured." However, the Sri Lankan navy denies these allegations.

Sudan/Darfur:

OCHA [released](#) a statement on Monday that as many as 166,000 people have been forced to flee the country this year, in addition to 286,000 people last year. The head of OCHA's Sudan office also raised his concerns over the 2.5 million IDPs in the region.

The Sudanese government chief negotiator [expressed](#) the readiness of his government to sign a humanitarian agreement with the Sudan's People's Liberation Movement - North (SPLM-N) ahead of a new round of dialogue on Thursday.

The UK-based charity Sudan Social Development Organisation (SUDO) [released](#) a report by its network of human rights monitors, which verified 71 incidents of human rights abuses throughout four of the five states of Darfur. The Government of Sudan is deemed responsible for 32 of the incidents, with militias such as Janjaweed responsible for 34. Meanwhile, the SPLM-N has reportedly committed two of the abuses, with the remaining four conducted by unknown assailants. The abuses documented include targeted murder of civilians, destruction of villages, rape of women and minors, barrel bombing of civilian targets and situations of torture.

Syria:

Foreign ministers of nearly 20 nations [devised](#) an "ambitious yet incomplete plan" on ending the conflict in Syria in the wake of terrorist attacks in Paris last Friday. The plan sets a 1 January deadline to start the negotiations between the Syrian government and opposition groups. The Syrian government has reportedly already nominated representatives, and UN special envoy for Syria Staffan de Mistura will begin immediate work to determine who will represent the opposition.

The UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon [released](#) a statement instructing the United Nations Secretariat to accelerate planning on "modalities" to support the implementation of a political process in Syria and a nationwide ceasefire for further exploration with relevant parties. The statement also expressed the Secretary-General's hope that this Saturday's meeting in Vienna will make progress in ensuring humanitarian access throughout Syria, in accordance with relevant Security Council resolutions.

France [bombed](#) the ISIL stronghold of Raqqa on Sunday night, following the terrorist attacks in Paris. American forces [launched](#) attacks on 116 ISIL trucks carrying oil near Deir al-Zour in eastern Syria. The group has been selling oil as one of its main revenue sources and the US has increased strikes against infrastructure that allows ISIL to pump oil in Syria. Until Monday's strikes, the US has refrained from striking the fleet of oil tankers out of concerns for causing civilian casualties. Following Monday's strikes, an American official reported that there were no immediate reports of civilian casualties.

Yemen:

A bomb explosion on Friday during midday prayers at a Houthi-frequented mosque in Shibam [killed](#) several worshippers and wounded others.

Yemeni and Saudi-led coalition forces [attacked](#) Houthi rebels in Taz province on Monday in an attempt to retake the territory.

The UNHCR [reported](#) that thousands of Yemenis are fleeing to Djibouti across the Gulf of Aden.

Following the US state department's announcement on Monday to sell \$1.3bn worth of bombs to Saudi Arabia, Amnesty International [reported](#) that three types of bombs that the US proposes selling have previously been used in unlawful strikes in Yemen, which violated international humanitarian law. The US Congress now has 30 days in which to block the sale.

Human Rights Watch (HRW) [released](#) evidence of the use of banned antipersonnel landmines by Houthis in Yemen, which have caused multiple new civilian casualties. HRW advocated for the UN Human Rights Council to create an independent international Commission of Inquiry to investigate serious violations of international humanitarian law by all warring parties in Yemen.

UN Humanitarian Coordinator Johannes Van der Klaauw [announced](#) that the ongoing war has caused over 32,000 casualties and 5,700 deaths, including 830 women and children. He also reported a dramatic rise in human rights violations, with an average of 43 violations occurring every day.

What else is new?

Jennifer Trahan, an Associate Clinical Professor at NYU's Center for Global Affairs, [published](#) an op/ed on the proposed "Code of Conduct" for Security Council action in the face of mass atrocities, calling on the United States to join.

During Geneva Peace Week, the Permanent Missions of Australia, Ghana, Hungary, Nigeria, Rwanda and Uruguay, with the support of the United Nations Office at Geneva, the Global Centre for the Responsibility to Protect and the Graduate Institute, held an event entitled "10th anniversary of Responsibility to Protect: A Focus on Prevention." The UN High Commissioner for Human Rights delivered a statement on the implementation of RtoP, concluding with the notion that no discussion in the world today is more important than "our common responsibility, as human beings, to protect other people" - a strong affirmation of the core values behind RtoP.