

Remarks by UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon at the ceremony to commemorate the 19th anniversary of the genocide in Rwanda UN Headquarters

15 April 2013

(...) In commemorating the 19th anniversary of the genocide in Rwanda, we remember the innocent people who were murdered solely because of their identity.

We pay tribute to those who risked their lives to save their fellow citizens. Such heroes stand out for being so few in number. (...)

The United Nations is strongly committed to learning the lessons of Rwanda and helping the international community to prevent future tragedies.

My Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide monitors the world for signs of the crime's known precursors.

The “responsibility to protect” has taken its place as a new global principle.

We are strengthening our capacities for mediation, fact-finding, preventive diplomacy and the peaceful settlement of disputes.

We are focusing on the special procedures and other UN human rights mechanisms, which play a critical early warning role.

And we are promoting tolerance and mutual understanding, including through the Alliance of Civilizations initiative.

We have also made tremendous strides against impunity. Suspected genocidaires and other would-be criminals around the world now know that they will be held accountable before the International Criminal Court, international tribunals or domestic courts.

The International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, with the cooperation of Rwanda and other states, continues to prosecute people for their alleged responsibility in the genocide. I encourage the international community to expedite the arrest and prosecution of the remaining

fugitives who perpetrated the genocide in Rwanda.

International criminal justice is a testament to our collective determination to confront the most heinous crimes.

However, the international community has to do more to prevent atrocities, as the worsening catastrophe in Syria starkly demonstrates. (...)

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