

Fact Sheet: The Obama Administration's Comprehensive Efforts to Prevent Mass Atrocities Over the Past Year

The White House 1 May 2013 One year ago, President Obama announced a comprehensive Administration strategy to prevent atrocities. He underscored that "preventing mass atrocities and genocide is a core national security interest and a core moral responsibility of the United States of America," and he approved the recommendations of a comprehensive interagency review of the U.S. Government's capabilities, under Presidential Study Directive-10, including the establishment of the Atrocities Prevention Board.

In the intervening year, the United States has invested in prevention efforts all around the world — from central Africa, where a multipronged regional strategy has seriously degraded the capability of the Lord's Resistance Army; to Burma, where the U.S. Government is playing an important ongoing role in supporting efforts to address violence and protect vulnerable communities to Kenya, where long-term U.S. investments in constitutional reform, peace-building, and civic education helped the Kenyan people conduct peaceful and credible elections and avoid the violence that marred the 2007 polls. Tragically, there are also situations where in the past year civilians have suffered a marked increase in violence — such as in Syria, where the regime's brutality has led to more than 70,000 deaths and displaced upwards of five and a half million people. These situations underscore the critical importance of acting preventatively before violence is at full blaze. (...)

(...) We will build upon the efforts of the past year, which include:

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Establishing the Atrocities Prevention Board to coordinate and prioritize atrocity prevention.

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Strengthening early warning to ensure timely attention by policymakers.

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Employing financial sanctions, export controls and travel bans to isolate, inhibit and weaken those who enable or perpetrate atrocities.

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Surging specialized skills and expertise to assess and respond to atrocity threats and situations.

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Denying impunity to those who commit atrocities, at home (...) and abroad.

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Investing in innovation to develop new approaches to atrocity prevention.

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Sharing the global burden, by strengthening multilateral institutions (...) and bolstering international peacekeeping capabilities.

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Strengthening military planning to ensure military readiness when the need arises.

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Promoting training and learning to ensure the U.S. Government is effectively using all the tools at its disposal.

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