

## **The Genocide Prevention Center**

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In an options paper submitted to the Stockholm International Forum on Preventing Genocide in January 2004, I proposed creating two institutions to assist the United Nations in preventing genocide: appointment of a Special Advisor to the U.N. Secretary General on the Prevention of Genocide; and creation of a Genocide Prevention Center to support the work of the Special Advisor and to provide a focal point for contacts between governmental, inter-governmental, international, and non-governmental organizations dedicated to preventing genocide.

At the Stockholm Forum and in his April 2004 speech to the U.N. Commission on Human Rights, Secretary-General Kofi Annan announced his intention to create the position of Special Advisor on the Prevention of Genocide. Mr. Juan Mendez was appointed to this position in July 2004, and now has a staff of two persons to assist him.

The time is now ripe to begin planning for the creation of a Genocide Prevention Center to support the work of the Special Advisor and to provide a focal point for the efforts of many organizations around the world that are working to prevent genocide.

The location of the Genocide Prevention Center should allow daily contact with the Special Advisor and his staff. Theoretically that is possible from nearly anywhere in the U.S. or Europe. Practically, at least part of the Center should be located in New York City near the United Nations.

Financing for the Center should come from governments, foundations, and private donations. The governing Board of Directors for the Center should be composed of persons with considerable political and social recognition who can give it immediate credibility and legitimacy with funders and policy makers. Bill Clinton, George H.W. Bush, Lahktar Brahimi, Elie Weisel, Gareth Evans, Mohamed Sahnoun, and Lee Hamilton are only a few persons who come to mind. Staffing should be of the very highest caliber from the outset. Eventually the Center should build an endowment.

The Center could be founded as part of an existing organization that already has the legitimacy and structure necessary to accomplish its purposes. The International Center for Transitional Justice, the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, the United Nations Association, and the United Nations Foundation are possibilities. On the other hand, there may be advantages to founding a new entity.

This paper takes up several of the initial issues in planning a Genocide Prevention Center. It outlines two of the units necessary for the center, the Early Warning Unit, and the Political Unit. The other two are the Administration and Finance Unit and the Missions and Operations Unit. Proposals for those units will follow in another paper.

## **Early Warning Unit**

**Purpose:** The unit will systematically collect and analyze data on situations at risk of genocide or politicide.

- It will identify high risk situations for violent conflict, genocide, and politicide.
- For situations at greatest risk, it will monitor them continuously for key early warning signs identified by experts (Harff, Gurr, Fein, Krain, Stanton, et al.)
- It will write short analyses of developments that increase or decrease risks of wars or massacres. It will circulate these within the Center.
- It will write proposed options for measures, long-term and short-term, to reduce such risks. It will send these analyses to the Political Unit and Missions and Operations Unit to develop plans of action.
- It will test and refine models for early warning and indicators to be monitored.

**Sources of data:** Most information necessary is available from open sources.

- Daily searches of the world press should be made on Lexis-Nexis, Dow Jones, etc. using algorithms. This work is already being done, and may be purchased from SAIC, Open Source Solutions, and other companies. Summaries of world news are also on websites maintained by IRIN, ReliefWeb, Prevent Genocide International, Public International Law and Policy Group, FEWER, International Crisis Group, etc.
- The analysts should seek reports from field researchers for NGO's, U.N. agencies, the World Bank, and selected governments trained to look for specific early warning signs. Training may be done at intergovernmental conferences, U.N. offices, foreign ministries and their training centers, and NGO training conferences.
- Relationships should be established with existing early warning centers, such as the European Union's Conflict Early Warning Center, the OSCE Conflict Prevention Center in Vienna, the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities in the Hague, the European Platform for Conflict Prevention and Transformation in Utrecht, the African Union's fledgling unit in Addis Ababa, the Network of Ethnological Monitoring on Early Warning of Ethnic Conflict in Moscow, etc.
- Input should be sought from government early warning units such as those in USAID, and the British, Canadian, Swiss (Swiss Peace Foundation), Netherlands (Clingendael Center) and other foreign ministries.
- High resolution satellites may be used to track late warning signs, such as refugee flows, burning of houses, mass graves, etc.

- American intelligence agencies utilize early warning models developed by Harff and Gurr, who have worked with them under contract. Results are made public two years after they are written, too late for early warning. But the models could be independently replicated and applied, without seeking information from those agencies. Dr. Harff has offered to assist the office of Juan Mendez, who is determining how her model could be utilized.

- Automated methods of text analysis are being developed by universities under contracts with intelligence agencies in order to spot early warning indicators in many languages. Such methods might be made available to the Center.

**Methods of analysis:** Two types of data analysis will be utilized.

- Statistical analysis will initially use coded information from news inputs, applying models developed by Gurr, Harff, and the U.S. Political Instability Task Force.

- Processual analysis will use key indicators of developing stages in the processes that lead to war, massacres, or genocide.

**Personnel required:** For each type of analysis, one analyst will be needed. The unit will also require two research assistants.

- Statistical analysis will require a political scientist skilled in using mathematical models and statistics. The person should be a war and genocide specialist. Coding will require at least one full-time research assistant, or may be contracted out.

- Processual analysis will require a cultural anthropologist or sociologist who has specialized in war, conflict, and genocide studies.

**Resources required:** The unit will require the usual resources of a research institute: comfortable, quiet offices around a central area conducive to informal collegial communication, four computers and three laptops with high speed internet, telephones and faxes in each office, four mobile phones with wireless e-mail, and one common institute videoconferencing facility. It would also be highly desirable to provide a common, comfortable dining area for the Center with weekday luncheon service. Meals are vital occasions for communication and development of collegiality.

Center staff must be near first rate university libraries with which the Center has negotiated full privileges, including interlibrary loans. The Center should subscribe to some key journals and have a budget for purchase of books needed by analysts.

In addition, the analysts will require travel budgets that permit them to conduct considerable on-the-ground research in high risk areas of concern. For such travel, the Center should own or be prepared to rent one satellite phone and one small high-resolution video camera.

**Political Unit**

**Purpose:** The unit will develop and communicate the Center's recommendations (early warnings, prevention options, mission and operational plans) as products for policy makers.

·It will take early warning data and propose how to respond. Working with the other units of the Center, it will develop options for long-term and short-term measures to reduce risks of genocide and politicide. Options papers will propose methods of non-violent action developed by Gandhi, King, Sharp and others, as well as political, diplomatic, and military options.

·It will participate in coordination of product development so that products are intelligible and useful to policy makers.

·It will edit writing of products and review presentations.

·It will develop and maintain contacts with key policy makers at the United Nations, in governments, intergovernmental organizations, research institutions, and NGO's.

·It will discretely work with individuals and organizations that could assist the Center, and with them devise plans for influencing policy makers.

·It will carry out those plans and follow-up with policy makers.

·It will feed back questions, requests, and responses from policy makers and coordinate replies and further assistance from the Center.

**Contacts:** The unit will develop contacts with:

·Mid-level and senior personnel in the United Nations working in offices relevant to conflict and genocide early warning, peacekeeping operations, military and political affairs, human rights, refugee and humanitarian assistance.

· Mid-level and senior personnel in foreign ministries, military services and defense departments, national security councils, and refugee and humanitarian assistance agencies of key governments. Contacts will usually deal with specific countries at risk, U.N. political and peacekeeping affairs, human rights, refugees, and foreign aid.

·Mid-level and senior personnel in international financial institutions, especially the World Bank and International Monetary Fund and the regional development banks.

·Leaders of organizations working for prevention of war, conflict, and genocide.

**Methods of communication:** Internal communications will include informal personal and project related meetings, e-mails, telephone conversations and video-conferences with overseas colleagues, lunches, co-editing of products, regular brain-storming sessions, and the full human interaction of an intimate operational institute. The unit will communicate externally using, in order of priority, personal meetings, telephone, e-mail, letters, speeches, and (rarely) conference participation. (Attendance at conferences will mainly be for network building.) It will also

publish occasional articles, op-eds, position papers, and (very rarely) books. Communications with peacekeeping operations on the ground will mostly be done by the Missions and Operations Unit, but where political contacts must be made with governments, the Political Unit may also be involved.

**Long-range political work:** The Political Unit will work with training institutions such as the United Nations training program in Turin, the U.S. Institute of Peace, the Foreign Service Institute, Holocaust memorial museums, Clingendael Institute, European Platform for Conflict Prevention and Transformation, and military training institutes, etc. to develop training programs in early warning detection, non-violent resistance, preventive diplomacy, and peacekeeping operations.

**Personnel:** The Political Unit will require three officers of considerable political ability and experience. They should be both warm and brilliant.

·One should be a senior diplomat who has worked within the United Nations but is not a U.N. bureaucrat. An ideal candidate would be someone like Jan Eliasson, current Swedish Ambassador to the United States, former Undersecretary General at the U.N.

·The second should be a senior politician/diplomat, a person who has both long political experience and superb international contacts. A former Member of Parliament, Foreign Minister, Congressman, Senator or Ambassador should be sought for this position.

·Political analysis will require an international relations specialist with considerable experience in operational work for a government or intergovernmental organization. Area specialists will need to be readily available for consultation on each case.

·To assist the political officers, each will need a highly competent administrative assistant. (If they are located in the same office, the administrative assistants could be shared.)

**Resources required:** The requirements for each officer are comfortable, quiet offices around a central area conducive to informal collegial communication, six computers with high speed internet, telephones and faxes in each office, three laptops, and six mobile phones with wireless e-mail. Access to the Center's videoconferencing facility and lunchroom should also be provided.

In addition, the political officers will require travel budgets that permit them to travel to world capitals and to high risk areas of concern.