



# Genocide

Genocide was first recognised as a crime under international law in 1946 by the United Nations General Assembly ([A/RES/96-I](#)). It was codified as an independent crime in the [1948 Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide](#) (the Genocide Convention). The Convention has been ratified by 149 States (as of January 2018). The International Court of Justice (ICJ) has repeatedly stated that the Convention embodies principles that are part of general customary international law. This means that whether or not States have ratified the Genocide Convention, they are all bound as a matter of law by the principle that genocide is a crime prohibited under international law. The ICJ has also stated that the prohibition of genocide is a peremptory norm of international law (*or ius cogens*) and consequently, no derogation from it is allowed.

The definition of the crime of genocide as contained in Article II of the [Genocide Convention](#) was the result of a negotiating process and reflects the compromise reached among United Nations Member States in 1948 at the time of drafting the Convention. Genocide is defined in the same terms as in the Genocide Convention in the [Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court](#) (Article 6), as well as in the statutes of other international and hybrid jurisdictions. Many States have also criminalized genocide in their domestic law; others have yet to do so.

Source: <http://www.un.org/en/genocideprevention/genocide.html>

## UN Entities

- United Nations Office on Genocide Prevention and the Responsibility to Protect: <http://www.un.org/en/genocideprevention/>

## UN Treaties and Declarations

- Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide: <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/CrimeOfGenocide.aspx>
- Convention on the Non-Applicability of Statutory Limitations to War Crimes and Crimes against Humanity: <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/WarCrimes.aspx>
- Principles of international co-operation in the detection, arrest, extradition and punishment of persons guilty of war crimes and crimes against humanity: <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/PersonsGuilty.aspx>
- Statute of the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia: <http://www.icty.org/en/documents/statute-tribunal>
- Statute of the International Tribunal for Rwanda: <http://unict.rw/unict.org/en/documents/statute-and-creation>
- Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court: <https://www.icc-cpi.int/resource-library/Documents/RS-Eng.pdf>

## Selected UN Documents

- **A/70/621-S/2015/978** (14 December 2015): Letter dated 14 December 2015 from the Permanent Representative of Liechtenstein to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary General: <http://undocs.org/A/70/621>  
Transmits "Code of conduct regarding Security Council action against genocide, crimes against humanity or war crimes".
- **S/RES/2150 (2014)** [on prevention and fight against genocide and other serious crimes under international law]: [http://undocs.org/S/RES/2150\(2014\)](http://undocs.org/S/RES/2150(2014))
- **S/2014/262** (11 April 2014): Letter dated 10 April 2014 from the Permanent Representative of Belgium to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council: <http://undocs.org/S/2014/262>  
Transmits the conclusions of the International Conference on Genocide Prevention, which was held in Brussels on 31 March and 1 April 2014 in the presence of the Secretary-General
- **S/2014/265** (14 April 2014): Letter dated 11 April 2014 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General: <http://undocs.org/S/2014/265>  
Concept note prepared by the delegation of Rwanda: Threat to international peace and security: prevention of and fight against genocide
- **A/63/958** (9 September 2009): Concept note on the responsibility to protect populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity: note / by the President of the General Assembly: <http://undocs.org/A/63/958>
- **A/HRC/10/30** (18 February 2009): Efforts of the United Nations System to prevent genocide and the activities of the Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on the Prevention of Genocide : report of the Secretary-General: <http://undocs.org/A/HRC/10/30> and <http://undocs.org/A/HRC/10/30/Corr.1>
- **A/HRC/10/25** (9 March 2009): Prevention of genocide : report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights: <http://undocs.org/A/HRC/10/25>
- **A/HRC/7/37** (18 March 2008): Report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the Five Point Action Plan and the activities of the Special Adviser of the Secretary-General on the Prevention of Genocide: <http://undocs.org/A/HRC/7/37>
- **A/60/863** (8. June 2006): Information and outreach programme entitled "The Rwanda Genocide and the United Nations": Report of the Secretary-General: <http://undocs.org/A/60/863>
- *Further documents:* <https://un4.me/2nlxby>

## Selected Statements and Speeches by UN Officials

- *Statements by the Special Advisers:*  
<http://www.un.org/en/genocideprevention/public-statements.html>
- Genocide does not happen by accident, Secretary-General says in Observance Message, urging greater efforts to shelter those fleeing persecution (SG/SM/18815-OBV/1761, 7 December 2017): <http://www.un.org/press/en/2017/sqsm18815.doc.htm>
- Secretary-General denounces 'poisonous' intolerance, nationalism as breeding ground for evil acts, in remarks for Day of Reflection on Genocide in Rwanda (SG/SM/18490-OBV/1721, 7 April 2017): <http://www.un.org/press/en/2017/sqsm18490.doc.htm>
- Common humanity demands equality, dignity for all, Deputy Secretary-General says on observance of Genocide Prevention Day (DSG/SM/1033-HR/5340-OBV/1702, 9 December 2016): <http://www.un.org/press/en/2016/dsgsm1033.doc.htm>
- States must work harder to fight hatred, intolerance, Secretary-General says in Message for International Day to Honour Genocide Victims (SG/SM/18342-OBV/1700, 8 December 2016): <http://www.un.org/press/en/2016/sqsm18342.doc.htm>
- At General Assembly Event marking World Day of Reflection on Rwanda Genocide, Secretary-General urges unity to establish peaceful, just societies (SG/SM/17662-GA/11771-OBV/1604, 11 April 2016): <http://www.un.org/press/en/2016/sqsm17662.doc.htm>
- Secretary-General, marking Day of Reflection on Rwanda Genocide, says healing, reconstruction essential amid threats to peace, security in Great Lakes Region (SG/SM/17653-AFR/3357-OBV/1602, 6 April 2016): <http://www.un.org/press/en/2016/sqsm17653.doc.htm>

- Deputy Secretary-General, on Genocide Prevention Day, says 'never again' promise must translate into serious action to end hate crimes, human rights violations (DSG/SM/922-HR/5281-OBV/1568, 9 December 2015):  
<http://www.un.org/press/en/2015/dsgsm922.doc.htm>
- Marking first-ever international day commemorating dignity of genocide victims, Secretary-General stresses working together to 'uphold our common humanity' (SG/SM/17397-HR/5280-OBV/1565, 7 December 2015):  
<http://www.un.org/press/en/2015/sqsm17397.doc.htm>
- UN 'failed to protect' people of Srebrenica, Deputy Secretary-General says at genocide commemoration, 'there will be justice for crimes committed' (DSG/SM/887, 11 July 2015):  
<http://www.un.org/press/en/2015/dsgsm887.doc.htm>
- Among United Nations' most important missions is preventing genocide, Deputy Secretary-General tells Security Council (DSG/SM/886-SC/11692, 8 July 2015):  
<http://www.un.org/press/en/2015/dsgsm886.doc.htm>
- Unite behind peace, dignity, equality, Secretary-General urges at commemoration of Rwanda Genocide (SG/SM/16647-AFR/3107, 7 April 2015):  
<http://www.un.org/press/en/2015/sqsm16647.doc.htm>
- Secretary-General, in message for Rwanda Genocide Observance, urges prevention of 'cruelty taking place before our eyes' (SG/SM/16646-OBV/1456, 6 April 2015):  
<http://www.un.org/press/en/2015/sqsm16646.doc.htm>
- We must 'build societies where tolerance trumps hatred', Deputy Secretary-General stresses in remarks to event on prevention of Genocide (DSG/SM/839, 21 January 2015):  
<http://www.un.org/press/en/2015/dsgsm839.doc.htm>
- Deputy Secretary-General recalls, in Security Council Meeting, collective failure to 'recognize and act' on warnings of Rwanda Genocide (DSG/SM/768-SC/11357-AFR/2863, 16 April 2014): <http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2014/dsgsm768.doc.htm>
- At Genocide Commemoration Event, Secretary-general pays tribute to victims, praises remarkable resolve of Rwanda's people (SG/SM/15782-AFR/2865, 16 April 2014):  
<http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2014/sqsm15782.doc.htm>
- Secretary-General, commemorating Rwanda Victims, urges collective resolve in consigning genocide to history (SG/SM/15763-AFR/2855-L/3230, 10 April 2014):  
<http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2014/sqsm15763.doc.htm>
- Secretary-General, at ceremony to honour United Nations Genocide victims, pledges never to abandon staff with lives under threat (SG/SM/15756-AFR/2852, 7 April 2014):  
<http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs//2014/sqsm15756.doc.htm>
- Secretary-General, at Genocide Commemoration Ceremony, hails resilience of survivors, saying Rwanda has shown 'transformation is possible' (SG/SM/15755-AFR/2851, 7 April 2014): <http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs//2014/sqsm15755.doc.htm>
- UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Navi Pillay on the International Day of Reflection on the 1994 Genocide in Rwanda 7 April 2014:  
<http://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/Media.aspx>
- Citing atrocities, 'total impunity' in Central African Republic, Secretary-General warns against repeat of Rwanda 20 years later (SG/SM/15751-AFR/2850, 5 April 2014):  
<http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs//2014/sqsm15751.doc.htm>
- No part of world immune to risk of genocide, Secretary-General tells conference, urging greater focus on preventing atrocity crimes (SG/SM/15740, 1 April 2014):  
<http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs//2014/sqsm15740.doc.htm>
- Secretary-General, in Twentieth Genocide Commemoration Message, hails Rwanda people's capacity for reconciliation after 'monumental tragedy' (SG/SM/15739-AFR/2846-OBV/1322, 1 April 2014): <http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs//2014/sqsm15739.doc.htm>
- Repeating 'never again' after atrocity 'a sign of continued failure', Deputy Secretary-General says at event on Rwanda Genocide (DSG/SM/736-AFR/2794, 15 January 2014):  
<http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2014/dsgsm736.doc.htm>

## UN Events and Observances

- 9 December - International Day of Commemoration and Dignity of the Victims of the Crime of Genocide and of the Prevention of this Crime:  
<http://www.un.org/en/events/genocidepreventionday/>
- 7 April - International Day of Reflection on the 1994 Genocide against Tutsi in Rwanda:  
<http://www.un.org/en/preventgenocide/rwanda/commemoration/annualcommemoration.shtml>
- Security Council Briefing on 16 April 2014: "Threats to international peace and security: Prevention and fight against genocide":  
<http://www.un.org/en/sc/meetings/records/2014.shtml>
- Prevention and punishment are key — 60th anniversary of the Genocide Convention:  
<http://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/GenocideConvention.aspx>

## Further information

- The Outreach Programme on the Rwanda Genocide and the United Nations:  
<http://www.un.org/en/preventgenocide/rwanda/>
    - UN News Centre Feature: After two decades, genocide survivor opens up about her anger and forgiveness (1 July 2016):  
<http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=54384>
  - Audiovisual Library of International Law
    - Historic Archives: Convention for the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, Paris, 9 December 1948 / by William A. Schabas:  
<http://legal.un.org/avl/ha/cppcg/cppcg.html>
    - Lecture Series: Genocide and International Law / by William A. Schabas:  
[http://legal.un.org/avl/ls/Schabas\\_CLP.html](http://legal.un.org/avl/ls/Schabas_CLP.html)
  - Education about the Holocaust and preventing genocide: A policy guide (UNESCO, April 2017): <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0024/002480/248071e.pdf>
  - CLASSIC PODCAST: The man who defined genocide (UN News Centre, 6 April 2017):  
<http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=56515>
  - UNRIC Library Backgrounder – Responsibility to Protect:  
<http://www.unric.org/en/unric-library/26580>
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## UN Entities

- The Holocaust and the United Nations Outreach Programme:  
<http://www.un.org/en/holocaustremembrance/>
  - Educational material available at the UNRIC Info Point & Library:  
<http://www.unric.org/en/the-holocaust-and-the-un-outreach-programme>
- United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) -  
Education about the Holocaust: <http://en.unesco.org/holocaust-remembrance/resources>

## UN Events and Observances

- 27 January - International Day of Commemoration in Memory of the Victims of the Holocaust: <http://www.un.org/en/holocaustremembrance/2018/calendar2018.html>
- Roundtable Discussions: <http://www.un.org/en/holocaustremembrance/briefings.shtml>
- Other events: <http://www.un.org/en/holocaustremembrance/other%20events.shtml>

## Selected Statements and Speeches by UN Officials

- 'We are all at risk' when humanity's values are abandoned, Secretary-General says in Message for International Day Commemorating Holocaust Victims (SG/SM/18866-HR/5381-OBV/1766, 22 January 2018): <http://www.un.org/press/en/2018/sqsm18866.doc.htm>
- World must stand up to hate, stay vigilant of persistent anti-semitism, Secretary-General says in Remarks for Holocaust Remembrance Day (SG/SM/18861-HR/5380-OBV/1765, 20 January 2018): <http://www.un.org/press/en/2018/sqsm18861.doc.htm>
- Social cohesion must be strengthened to make diversity 'a plus, not a threat', Secretary-General says, at ceremony honouring Holocaust Victims (SG/SM/18418-OBV/1707, 27 January 2017): <http://www.un.org/press/en/2017/sqsm18418.doc.htm>
- We can never remain silent amid people's suffering, Secretary-General says in Message for International Day to Commemorate Victims of Holocaust (SG/SM/18417-OBV/1706, 27 January 2017): <http://www.un.org/press/en/2017/sqsm18417.doc.htm>
- Secretary-General deeply saddened at passing of Messenger of Peace Elie Wiesel, powerful voice for Holocaust victims, global equality, tolerance (SG/SM/17905, 2 July 2016): <http://www.un.org/press/en/2016/sqsm17905.doc.htm>
- Secretary-General, at Holocaust Commemoration, says human dignity must triumph amid growing global fear, atrocities in Syria, South Sudan (SG/SM/17515, 6 February 2016): <http://www.un.org/press/en/2016/sqsm17515.doc.htm>
- Secretary-General, marking International Day, says educating young generations on horrors of holocaust can help prevent new genocides (SG/SM/17494-OBV/1575, 27 January 2016): <http://www.un.org/press/en/2016/sqsm17494.doc.htm>
- Denounce divisive political, religious ideologies, Secretary-General urges in Message for International Day to Commemorate Victims of Holocaust (SG/SM/17478-OBV/1574, 21 January 2016): <http://www.un.org/press/en/2016/sqsm17478.doc.htm>
- Recalling horrors of Holocaust, Secretary-General affirms pledge at exhibition opening to do even more 'to build a world of dignity for all' (SG/SM/16494, 28 January 2015): <http://www.un.org/press/en/2015/sqsm16494.doc.htm>

- Marking International Day commemorating Holocaust Victims, Secretary-General calls for responses to terrorism, provocation, that resolve, not multiply, intolerance (SG/SM/16493-OBV/1424, 28 January 2015): <http://www.un.org/press/en/2015/sqsm16493.doc.htm>
- Secretary-General urges redoubling efforts to eradicate 'deep roots' of hatred, intolerance, in Message for World Commemoration of Holocaust Victims (SG/SM/16489-OBV/1423, 26 January 2015): <http://www.un.org/press/en/2015/sqsm16489.doc.htm>
- Governments' failure to deliver gives rise to 'dangerous polarization', Deputy Secretary-General says at Holocaust Memorial Service (DSG/SM/838, 17 January 2015): <http://www.un.org/press/en/2015/dsqsm838.doc.htm>
- Latter-day tragedies show 'poison of genocide' still flows, says Secretary-General in Message for International Day to Commemorate Holocaust Victims (SG/SM/15616-OBV/1298, 27 January 2014): <http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2014/sqsm15616.doc.htm>
- Secretary-General stresses need to be ever vigilant against bigotry, extremism, in Message for World Commemoration of Holocaust Victims (SG/SM/15599-OBV/1297, 21 January 2014): <http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2014/sqsm15599.doc.htm>
- Horror at Auschwitz formative in defining United Nations, Secretary-General says at Memorial Service, expressing determination to prevent similar catastrophes (SG/SM/15588-OBV/1295, 18 January 2014): <http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2014/sqsm15588.doc.htm>