



President Obama  
1600 Pennsylvania Ave NW  
Washington DC

March 30, 2015

Dear Mr. President,

We, the undersigned organizations, working in collaboration to support and promote Moving Beyond Witness, a national Genocide Awareness and Prevention Month (GAPM) campaign in April, write to you to express our gratitude and concerns regarding your administration's work on atrocities prevention.

With atrocities being committed in Sudan, South Sudan, Burma, the Central African Republic, Democratic Republic of Congo, Syria and elsewhere, the need for prevention has never been more urgent. The US and the international community expend vast resources to react to crises around the world, many of which likely could have been prevented if early warning signs were recognized and early action was taken. By the time these resources are in place many civilians have lost their lives and many more have been displaced and need international humanitarian aid to survive. Below are some of the key priorities we believe your Administration should focus on in order to "move beyond witness".

**Strengthen and Report on the Atrocities Prevention Board:**

We want to express our thanks for your support of atrocities prevention and for your leadership in creating the Atrocities Prevention Board (APB) through your Presidential Study Directive on Mass Atrocities (PSD-10.) Recognizing that, "Preventing mass atrocities and genocide is a core national security interest and a core moral responsibility of the United States" and prioritizing this issue, was a major step in the right direction.

Given that the APB helps improve the US government's ability to strategically develop prevention planning, assess early warning signs, and foster intergovernmental cooperation, we believe it is crucial that the APB carries on after your time in office ends. As such, we ask that you build upon PSD-10 and work with Congress to strengthen and make permanent the APB by codifying it and appropriating funds to support its work. Recognizing that the APB has had little formal engagement with the public or Congress since the release of the 2013 Fact Sheet we also request that you direct the APB to issue a new report detailing its efforts and to report regularly on its activities.

**Prioritize Prevention:**

We appreciate the continued prioritization of atrocities prevention as was seen in the 2010 Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Review (QDDR) and in both the 2010 and 2015 National Security Strategies. We trust that the issue will remain a priority in the upcoming release of the 2014 QDDR as well. We believe that upstream prevention efforts should be prioritized by both the State Department and USAID in the government's diplomatic and development initiatives throughout the world. Upstream prevention seeks to address the grievances and deep-seated drivers of instability and conflict in order to prevent the outbreak of violence. Upstream efforts generally focus on creating just societies with

stable and equitable institutions that respect human rights and the rule of law. These societies act as a bulwark against violent conflict and mass atrocities and are the most effective means of prevention. By making upstream prevention a policy priority, the United States' efforts will be better placed to reduce risk factors of atrocities in the most vulnerable, fragile, conflict-affected, and failing states. We urge you to continue to support and prioritize prevention efforts to minimize the need for ad hoc crisis response and mitigation.

**Recognize the Armenian Genocide:**

Recognizing and commemorating past genocides is a critical part of preventing future atrocities from occurring, and genocide denial is something that victims and advocates alike seek to confront head-on. That is why we believe it is critical that the United States formally recognize the Armenian genocide. It is our nation's responsibility to stand with Armenians, many of whom call America home, and to put humanity before politics. As such, we ask that you officially recognize the Armenian genocide on its 100th anniversary on April 24, 2015.

**Proclaim April as Genocide Awareness and Prevention Month:**

Throughout the United States, organizations, associations, communities, and museums recognize April as Genocide Awareness and Prevention Month. These groups commemorate past genocides, raise awareness of ongoing atrocities, and come together in their support of the promise, "Never Again." There are already a number of states that recognize April as Genocide Awareness and Prevention Month. As an extension of the United States' commitment to end genocide and mass atrocities, we ask that you declare April this year and every year hereafter as Genocide Awareness and Prevention Month. This proclamation will help raise national and international attention, expand educational opportunities, increase awareness of past genocides and the need for ongoing genocide and atrocities prevention work.

We believe that the above issues will assist the United States in its ability to prevent future and respond to ongoing atrocities. However, the United States cannot prevent atrocities on its own. The United States should be a global leader and work with international partners to strengthen the world's collective ability to prevent and end genocide and mass atrocities. We urge you to take these steps to honor the victims and survivors of past genocides, protect those who are targeted today, and prevent others from becoming victims of mass atrocities in the future.

Sincerely,

Act for Sudan  
USA

Advocates for Human Dignity  
Baltimore, Maryland, USA

All-Armenian Student Association  
Glendale, CA, USA

Alliance for Peacebuilding  
Washington, DC USA

Ambassadors for Change  
Clarkston, GA, USA

American University Student Africa Initiative  
Washington, DC, USA

ANCA- Western Region  
Glendale, CA, USA

Arry Organization for Human Rights  
Kansas City, MO, USA

Cambodian Music Festival  
Long Beach, CA, USA

CANDLES Holocaust Museum and Education  
Center  
Terre Haute, Indiana, USA

Carl Wilkens Fellowship  
Los Angeles, CA USA

Chances and Services for Youth  
Terre Haute Indiana USA

Citizens for Global Solutions  
Washington, DC

Darfur and Beyond  
Phoenix, Arizona, USA

Dear Sudan, Love Marin  
Tiburon, CA USA

Dreams and Forgiveness  
Billings, Montana USA

Enough Project  
Washington DC, USA

Genocide No More--Save Darfur  
Redding, CA, USA

Georgia Coalition to Prevent Genocide  
Atlanta, GA, USA

Harry Potter Alliance  
Providence, RI, USA

Holocaust Memorial Center  
Farmington Hills, Michigan, USA

i-ACT  
Redondo Beach, CA USA

Jewish Council for Public Affairs  
New York NY USA

Jewish World Watch  
Encino, CA, USA

Brooklyn Coalition for Darfur & Marginalized  
Sudan  
Brooklyn, NY, USA

Never Again Coalition  
Portland, OR USA

Never Again International  
Canada

New York Coalition for All Sudan  
New York, NY

Pittsburgh Darfur Emergency Coalition  
Pittsburgh, Pa., USA

Purdue STAND  
West Lafayette, IN, USA

San Francisco Bay Area Darfur Coalition  
San Francisco, CA USA

South Side HS/USHMM  
Fort Wayne, Indiana, USA

STAND  
Washington DC, USA

Stop Genocide Now  
Los Angeles, CA, USA

Sudan Unlimited  
San Francisco, CA, USA

Syrian American Council  
Washington DC USA

Terre Haute South STAND Club  
Terre Haute, IN

The Populace Foundation International  
Lira, Uganda

Unite For Darfur  
Gaithersburg, MD, USA

United to End Genocide  
Washington, DC, USA

Voices for Sudan Inc  
Washington, DC, United States

Watchers of the Sky Initiative  
Brooklyn, NY, USA

Working Towards Never Again  
Portland, Oregon USA

World Without Genocide  
St. Paul, MN, USA

Cc:

Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs Susan Rice

Special Assistant to the President and Senior Director for Multilateral Affairs and Human Rights

Stephen Pomper

Secretary of Defense Ashton Carter

Secretary of State John Kerry

Undersecretary for Civilian Security, Democracy, and Human Rights Sarah Sewall

United States Ambassador to the United Nations Samantha Power

USAID Acting Administrator Alfonso E. Lenhardt

Acting Assistant Administrator for the Bureau of Democracy, Conflict and Humanitarian Assistance

Thomas H. Staal