

Developing a Strategy, Methods and Tools for Genocide Early Warning

Prepared for:

Office of the Special Adviser to the UN Secretary-General on the Prevention of Genocide

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# Developing a Strategy, Methods and Tools for Genocide Early Warning

## Executive Summary

### ***Background***

Secretary-General Kofi Annan has made strengthening the UN's ability to provide early warning a major part of his proposals and initiatives regarding the prevention of genocide. He identified "early and clear warning" as one of the five headings of his Action Plan to Prevent Genocide and, in turn, made early warning a central part of the mandate of his Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide. The Special Adviser is instructed to "act as a mechanism of early warning to the Secretary-General, and through him to the Security Council, by bringing to their attention potential situations that could result in genocide."

In the context of a comprehensive, high-level review of the Special Adviser's mandate and broader UN efforts to prevent genocide being carried out by the Secretary-General's Advisory Committee on Genocide Prevention, the Special Adviser's office determined that a focused study on methods, systems and tools for genocide early warning would be useful.

### ***Defining early warning***

Based on his mandate and definitions from other contexts, the Special Adviser should define his early warning function as the collection, analysis and communication of information about escalatory developments in situations that could potentially lead to genocide, crimes against humanity or massive and serious war crimes, far enough in advance for relevant UN organs to take timely and effective preventive measures.

### ***Early warning of what?***

The Special Adviser's early warning mandate refers generally to "potential situations that could result in genocide." Other parts of the mandate and related statements suggest the focus was intended to be limited to extreme cases, but broader than genocide per se. This dovetails with the parameters most suitable for early warning analysis. Thus, the focus of the Special Adviser's early warning function should be expanded slightly to include genocide, crimes against humanity, and massive and serious war crimes—corresponding with the 2005 World Summit's pronouncement of the principles of responsibility to protect.

### ***How early should warning be?***

The origin and terms of the Special Adviser's mandate strongly suggest the office was intended to concentrate on early warning for immediate and medium-term operational prevention rather than long-term structural prevention. This is the timeframe when the Special Adviser's warning is likely to have the greatest impact on the actions of his principal audiences: the Secretary-General and the Security Council.

The Special Adviser's early warning function entails three main components:

- ***Periodic global risk assessment (to generate a watch list):*** Given the Special Adviser's global mandate but limited capacity, his early warning function requires some procedure for identifying a manageable number of situations of concern to track closely. Global risk assessment also provides important context for subsequent analysis of ongoing events. The

Special Adviser does not currently have a regular mechanism for identifying high-risk situations, but rather has assessed longer-term risk implicitly based on his expert judgment.

There are two broad alternative approaches: a consultative process to compile expert judgment and systematic/statistical risk assessment methods. Analysis indicates that a significant gap remains between statistical models' power in explaining past events and their utility in a policy setting like the Special Adviser's office. In addition, there is little enthusiasm among key audiences for heavy reliance on a formal modeling approach. Since perceived legitimacy is extremely important, absent strong evidence that formal methods would enhance accuracy, the Special Adviser should heed the reluctance of UN officials and member states.

- *The Special Adviser's office should engage in global risk assessment annually. This should include a review of results from existing risk assessments as the basis for a consultative process with a group of advisers—possibly the Secretary-General's Advisory Committee—to identify situations at highest risk of genocide and related crimes over the next year.* Building a consultative process on results of relevant risk assessments should take advantage of empirical knowledge of long-term risk factors, thereby tending to increase accuracy without sacrificing perceived legitimacy.
  - *Resource implications:* Compiling the results of existing risk assessments could be undertaken by a staff person at the P-2/P-3 level, by external NGOs or scholars, or in collaboration with other offices in the UN. A very rough estimate of the effort required for this task is two weeks of dedicated time from a single staff person or researcher. The consultative process would require some time from the Special Adviser's staff and its collaborators, but would not seem prohibitively costly—particularly if conducted with the Secretary-General's Advisory Committee.
- ***Ongoing situation monitoring (to generate warnings):*** Detailed monitoring and analysis of selected situations of concern is necessary for the Special Adviser to judge when he should alert the Secretary-General, the Security Council and/or others to evidence of escalation. More often than not, the major contribution from the Special Adviser's early warning function will be in his framing, constructing scenarios, and identifying options for preventive action, rather than introducing new information or predicting a specific series of events.

The Special Adviser's office currently tracks events by collecting and analyzing information from a wide variety of sources, looking first and foremost for a population at imminent risk of severe and massive human rights violations based on its identification by ethnicity, race, religion or national origin. Beyond this, the office looks for additional "warnings signs" including concentration of power, existence of armed militias, hate speech, and denial of past and/or current abuses.

Traditionally, political analysts and country desk officers monitor events without reference to a specific set of indicators. The major alternative approach is to analyze ongoing events by looking for specific kinds of events—often referred to as accelerators or triggers—hypothesized to presage genocide or related crimes in the near term.

- *The Special Adviser's office should refine its preliminary list of warning signs for more effective use as a framework for situation monitoring.* This should include reviewing the utility of the list to date, reducing the number of indicators, and separating structural indicators from event categories.
  - *The office should engage partners to obtain information specifically targeted to early warning of genocide and related crimes.* Given the Secretary-General's instruction to collect "existing information," the Special Adviser should seek to partner with others in and outside of the UN system who are already collecting relevant information—e.g., the Early Warning Unit of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights.
  - *The office should continue to build a network of experts for consultation on specific regions and aspects of genocide and related crimes.* As a small office, the ability to draw on broader expertise in and outside the UN is critical to the Special Adviser's success, particularly for detailed situation analysis that relies on deep knowledge of particular conflicts and political movements. The UN's Interdepartmental Framework for Coordination on Early Warning and Preventive Action, in its emerging configuration, should facilitate the Special Adviser's access to expertise.
  - *Resource implications:* Additional staff time should be dedicated to building partnerships and some financial resources should be earmarked in the Special Adviser's budget for expert consultants; the office is better positioned to estimate an appropriate amount.
- ***Communication of early warning information (to promote preventive action):*** Early warning requires a strategy for communicating policy relevant information to actors with the ability to take preventive measures. This is the essence of the Special Adviser's early warning function; weaknesses at this stage can largely negate excellent data collection and analysis. This element of the Special Adviser's early warning function is in most need of strengthening.

The Special Adviser has communicated his early warning via notes to the Secretary-General and the Security Council, briefed the Security Council once, and has participated in various formal and informal discussions in the UN Secretariat. Yet, the Special Adviser does not appear to have found a firm place in relevant policy deliberations in the Secretariat or in debates among and surrounding UN Security Council members—or generally a level of visibility in the system that would facilitate his early warning activities.

Representatives of a number of member states expressed support for the idea that the Special Adviser should brief the Security Council regularly on country and/or thematic issues to complement occasional briefings on emergency situations. (If the Secretary-General and/or Security Council decide to pursue this, the specific procedural mechanism and format would need to be clarified.) In addition, the Special Adviser's office could expand its less formal outreach to members of the Security Council and the broader UN membership.

Regarding communication within the Secretariat, some have proposed institutional solutions such as incorporating the Special Adviser's office into the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights or the Executive Office of the Secretary-General. Others suggested that

what is most crucially needed is for the Secretary-General to make a strong statement that genocide prevention lies at the core of the Organization's work and that the Special Adviser's opinion should be sought on all potentially relevant policy matters.

- *The Special Adviser should actively seek to become a consistent part of relevant policy discussions in the UN Secretariat.* The surest way to facilitate the Special Adviser's integration into these discussions would be through specific action by the Secretary-General. Short of this, however, there appears to be room for the Special Adviser to become more active in policy decision making on his own initiative.
- *To be an effective mechanism for early warning, the Special Adviser must be able to communicate directly with the Secretary-General.* Because delaying the Special Adviser's communications for even short periods of time can render them moot, a direct link to the Secretary-General is vital.
- *With consent of the Secretary-General, the office should conduct regular outreach to UN Security Council members and other influential member states.* For his early warning function to reach its potential, the Special Adviser's interaction with UN Security Council and other member states must be more frequent and dynamic.
- *The Special Adviser should forge a strong relationship with the new Human Rights Council.* The Human Rights Council could be made another principal audience for the Special Adviser's early warning function. In the short term, attending sessions of the new Council is one important way to for the Special Adviser to raise his profile and explore with delegations the particulars of the best formal relationship.
- *Resource implications:* The Special Adviser's part-time status poses a particular challenge to enhancing the office's participation in high-level Secretariat policy discussions and interaction with member states. Making the Special Adviser a full-time position could be expected to have an immediate and significant impact. In addition, increasing the office's professional staff by at least one person would be desirable—for delicate interactions with member states and Secretariat officials, new staff should be either at a relatively high level or selected so that the time of current staff could be freer to engage in more of these activities. Folding the office into an existing UN department could also contribute significantly to freeing time for communication with early warning audiences.

Three cross cutting issues related to the Special Adviser's early warning mandate also deserve attention:

- Whether or not the office decides to use formal analytic models for risk assessment or early warning, the office should take steps to better organize, store and manage information for its early warning function.
- Providing outside supporters with a framework for the way the Special Adviser approaches his early warning mandate should increase the benefit of external input to the office and the likelihood that additional outsiders will see a way they can help the office.
- The Special Adviser should institute plans for regular evaluation of his early warning function (along with the rest of his mandate) so the office can learn from experience and continue to improve its practices.

## I. Introduction

1. Secretary-General Kofi Annan has made strengthening the UN's ability to provide early warning (EW) a major part of his proposals and initiatives regarding the prevention of genocide. In January 2004, he observed in his keynote speech at the Stockholm International Forum on Preventing Genocide: Threats and Responsibilities, "At the United Nations there are still conspicuous gaps in our capacity to give early warning of genocide or comparable crimes, and to analyse or manage the information that we do receive." He later identified "early and clear warning" as one of the five headings of his Action Plan to Prevent Genocide, which he described in a speech to the Commission on Human Rights in April 2004. The Secretary-General, in turn, made EW a central part of the mandate of his new Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide. The Special Adviser's mandate, as described in a letter from the Secretary-General to the president of the UN Security Council, calls on him to "act as a mechanism of early warning to the Secretary-General, and through him to the Security Council, by bringing to their attention potential situations that could result in genocide."<sup>1</sup>

2. EW is far from a new concept at the UN. According to the Secretary-General's office, there are 34 distinct, active mandates from the General Assembly, Security Council and Economic and Social Council related to early warning.<sup>2</sup> One of these is the origin of the Special Adviser's mandate, Security Council Resolution 1366 (2001), in which the Council "expresses its willingness to give prompt consideration to early warning or prevention cases brought to its attention by the Secretary-General and in this regard, encourages the Secretary-General to convey to the Security Council his assessment of potential threats to international peace and security."

3. The multiplicity of EW mandates reflects, in part, the difficulty the UN has experienced in effectively fulfilling this function. Several attempts to strengthen the UN's capacity for preventive oriented analysis and EW over the years have failed to meet aspirations.<sup>3</sup> For example, the Office for Research and the Collection of Information was created in 1987 for "analysis and monitoring of potential threats to international peace and security"<sup>4</sup> and early warning, but was disbanded after just a few years that were marked by resistance from member states, inadequate resources, and minimal impact.<sup>5</sup> More recently, the Brahimi report's recommendation to create an Information and Strategic Analysis Secretariat has not been implemented.<sup>6</sup> Several scholars have concluded that the politics at the UN—internal

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<sup>1</sup> S/2004/567 Annex.

<sup>2</sup> Based on query to the on-line registry connected to the Secretary-General's report, *Mandating and Delivering: Analysis and Recommendations to Facilitate the Review of Mandates (A/60/733)*. See <<http://webapps01.un.org/mandatereview/searchStart.do>>.

<sup>3</sup> International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty, *The Responsibility to Protect*, p. 21. Available on-line at: <<http://www.iciss.ca/pdf/Commission-Report.pdf>>.

<sup>4</sup> B.G. Ramcharan, Early-Warning at the United Nations: the First Experiment. *International Journal of Refugee Law* (1989), 1(3): 379-386.

<sup>5</sup> A. Walter Dorn, Intelligence at UN Headquarters? *Intelligence and National Security* (2005), 20(3): 440-465. See also Thant Myint-U & Sofia Busch, *Knowledge Needs at the UN Secretariat in the Field of Peace and Security: Reflections from 'The Knowledge Project'* (2004).

<sup>6</sup> William J. Durch, Victoria K. Holt, Caroline R. Earle & Moira K. Shanahan, *The Brahimi Report and the Future of UN Peace Operations* (Washington, DC: Henry L. Stimson Center, 2003), pp. 38-40. Available on-line at: <<http://www.stimson.org/fopo/pdf/BR-CompleteVersion-Dec03.pdf>>.

bureaucratic rivalries as well as resistance by UN member states—have made creation and maintenance of a significant analytic/EW capacity nearly impossible.<sup>7</sup>

4. In his July 2006 report to the GA on the prevention of armed conflict, Secretary-General Annan acknowledged the difficulty the UN has had in this arena with admirable frankness:

In its resolution 57/337, annex, paragraph 35, the General Assembly recognized the need to strengthen the capacity of the United Nations for early warning, collection of information and analysis. I regret to report that no significant progress has been made in this area. In fact, unlike some regional organizations, the United Nations still lacks the capability to analyse and integrate data from different parts of the system into comprehensive early warning reports and strategies on conflict prevention.<sup>8</sup>

5. Despite the historical record and the structural problems, however, calls for the UN to strengthen its capacity for EW continue—including EW focused on genocide and other heinous crimes. The most noteworthy among recent political statements on EW was in the Outcome Document of the 2005 World Summit. It declared, “The international community should...support the United Nations in establishing an early warning capability” in connection with the landmark pronouncement of individual and collective “responsibility to protect...populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity.”<sup>9</sup> In the same section of the document, heads of state and government declared, “We fully support the mission of the Special Adviser of the Secretary-General on the Prevention of Genocide.”<sup>10</sup>

#### *The Special Adviser’s EW mandate and general approach to date*

6. The outline of the mandate of the Special Adviser provides only general guidance for how he should carry out his EW function:

- The mandate calls on the Special Adviser to collect “existing information, in particular from within the United Nations system.” This implies that in acting as a mechanism of EW, the Special Adviser should not engage in a major new data collection exercise. The Special Adviser is not prohibited from using information from sources beyond the UN, but the Secretary-General clearly instructs him to be firmly rooted in the UN system’s existing information. This sense is further reinforced by the Special Adviser’s concurrent charge to work “to enhance the UN capacity to analyze and manage information relating to genocide and related crimes.”

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<sup>7</sup> Andrew Mack & Kathryn Furlong, “When Aspiration Exceeds Capability: the UN and Conflict Prevention,” in Richard Price & Mark Zacker (Eds.) *The United Nations and Global Security* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004); Philip A. Schrodt & Deborah J. Gerner, “The Impact of Early Warning on Institutional Responses to Complex Humanitarian Crises.” Presented at the Third Pan European Conference of the Standing Group for International Relations (ECPR) in cooperation with International Studies Association, Vienna, Austria (1998). Available on-line at: <<http://www.ku.edu/~keds/papers.dir/wien98.pdf>>. This view was also voiced in multiple interviews conducted for this report.

<sup>8</sup> *Progress Report on the Prevention of Armed Conflict: Report of the Secretary-General* (A/60/891), para. 94.

<sup>9</sup> A/RES/60/1, para. 138.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 140.



- The principal audiences of the Special Adviser's EW are the Secretary-General and "through him," the UN Security Council. By citing UN Security Council Resolution 1366 as the origin of the appointment, the Secretary-General emphasized that the UN Security Council is intended to be a major focus of the Special Adviser's EW function, even absent a direct reporting mechanism to the Council.<sup>11</sup>
- The Special Adviser is instructed to provide EW of "potential situations that could result in genocide." Based on this description alone, the focus of the Special Adviser's EW function could be interpreted very broadly. However, the scope of the Special Adviser's information collection—"massive and serious violations of human rights and international humanitarian law of ethnic and racial origin that, if not prevented or halted, might lead to genocide"—implies that his EW function should also be limited to these extreme cases.<sup>12</sup>

7. On several occasions the Special Adviser has described his EW activities to member state representatives, other UN officials, NGOs, scholars, and public audiences. Beyond reiteration of the specific terms of his mandate, Mr. Méndez has articulated a number of themes in the way he has approached his EW function:

- The Special Adviser has said his office is not designed as a universal early warning and early action mechanism for the prevention of genocide worldwide. Rather, he acts as a focal point for early warning information coming from sources inside and outside the UN system.
- The Special Adviser has said the starting point for his EW function is the legal definition of the crime of genocide and other punishable acts according to the 1948 Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide. Accordingly, the office looks for information that may point toward the existence of a national, ethnic, racial or religious group at risk.
- Mr. Méndez has interpreted his mandate for prevention as calling on him to attend to situations that are at risk of degenerating into genocide well before they meet the internationally accepted definition of the crime. In so doing, he aims to avert typically sterile, unproductive debates about whether a particular set of circumstances qualifies as genocide under the Convention.
- The Special Adviser has stated that EW requires the selection and use of indicators. He has not found that an exclusive checklist exists to guide efforts to recognize warning signs of a trend towards genocide. Nonetheless, in 2005 the Special Adviser's office prepared a "preliminary list of warning signs" as a guide for the kinds of information that would be relevant to the office.<sup>13</sup> The list was drawn from "the developing international

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<sup>11</sup> The Secretary-General's original description of the new post on genocide prevention in his speech in Stockholm was of a Special Rapporteur that would report directly to the UN Security Council. See SG/SM/9126/Rev.1, available on-line at: <<http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2004/sgsm9126Rev1.doc.htm>>.

<sup>12</sup> A fuller discussion of the focus of the Special Adviser's EW can be found in paras. 18-22.

<sup>13</sup> In March 2006, this list was appended to the *Report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the Five Point Action Plan and the activities of the Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide* (E/CN.4/2006/84), which was submitted to the Commission on Human Rights.

case law on genocide and the findings of academic research.”<sup>14</sup> It is quite broad, including factors that vary widely from basic characteristics about a state (e.g., concentration of political power, history of genocide) to details of ongoing events (e.g., instances of discrimination, forced relocation).

### *Need for and goals of the current study*

8. This study aims to help the Special Adviser strengthen implementation of his EW function. It was stimulated, in part, by findings and recommendations of a report on the work of the office, commissioned by the Special Adviser and completed by Dr. Payam Akhavan in November 2005. Akhavan characterized the Special Adviser’s EW function as “the most central, and most misunderstood, aspect of the Special Adviser’s mandate.”<sup>15</sup> In relevant parts, the report found:

In order for the Special Adviser to develop a genuine early warning capacity that can engage in global risk assessment of situations that may lead to genocide, an ad hoc approach towards the gathering and analysis of information may be insufficient. Several respondents pointed to the importance of developing an analytical data-base that allows for a constant monitoring of situations at risk. It was suggested for instance, that the Special Adviser develop a ‘genocide alert’ scale that ranks relevant situations in terms of risk based on multiple indicia, and to engage in fact verification where a situation has escalated beyond a certain threshold. There are various risk assessment schemes that have been developed by experts on which the Special Adviser could draw as he deems appropriate. It was understood that the prediction of genocide is not an exact science, but that a systematic approach could enhance the process of prioritizing situations that require further investigation, early warning, and particular recommendations for action.<sup>16</sup>

9. Akhavan recommended:

The Special Adviser should develop a systematic early warning capability including in particular the establishment of an analytical data-base for global monitoring of situations that may lead to genocide or similar crimes. The data-base should take into account indicators of potential genocide – e.g. the rise of extremist political movements, incitement to ethnic hatred and violence, etc. – and a ranking of situations based on a hierarchical assessment of risk – e.g. ranging from situations of general concern to those of imminent threat.<sup>17</sup>

10. In the context of a comprehensive, high-level review of the Special Adviser’s mandate and broader UN efforts to prevent genocide being carried out by the Secretary-General’s Advisory Committee on Genocide Prevention, the Special Adviser’s office determined that a focused study on methods, systems and tools for genocide EW would be useful. The current study has two objectives:

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<sup>14</sup> Specific warning signs are not cited to their source(s).

<sup>15</sup> Payam Akhavan, *Report on the Work of the Office of the Special Adviser of the United Nations Secretary-General on the Prevention of Genocide* (2005), para. 4.1.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 9.4.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 11.1.

- To review and analyze genocide early warning needs, methods and tools provided for by governments, NGOs, regional organizations and the United Nations;
- To generate and discuss options and practical proposals for the establishment of an early-warning system within the Office of the Special Adviser.<sup>18</sup>

11. This report is based on two types of research: interviews and literature/document review. Interviews were conducted with scholars of EW and genocide; officials from the UN Secretariat, member states, and other multilateral organizations who have been involved in EW; and representatives of governments with an emphasis on Security Council members. The literature review included official UN documents, technical reports and publications in scholarly journals.

12. Following this introduction, the report sketches a conceptual framework for the Special Adviser's EW mandate that identifies three principal components: periodic global risk assessment (to generate a watch list), ongoing situation monitoring (to generate warnings), and communication of early warning information (to promote preventive action). The report reviews the Special Adviser's current practice, analyzes alternative options and makes recommendations for strengthening each of these elements. It includes some additional observations, a summary of recommendations, and appendices including a review of existing systems, methods, tools and ongoing efforts for risk assessment and EW with potential relevance to the Special Adviser's office.

## II. A conceptual framework for early warning

13. As discussed above, the Special Adviser's mandate supplies only general guidance on what it means to "serve as an early warning function."<sup>19</sup> The mandate's lack of detailed guidance can be viewed positively, creating space for creativity and innovation by the Special Adviser and his staff. Productive creativity, however, requires at least a minimal framework that can guide choices about specific operational details. This section, therefore, identifies key challenges to the Special Adviser's EW function and sketches a conceptual framework, including a working definition of EW, identification of three central components, and discussion of its main parameters.

### *Key challenges to the Special Adviser's EW function*

14. Research revealed several major challenges facing the Special Adviser in relation to his EW function:<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> The original project formulation also foresaw the development and evaluation of a pilot EW system. This proved overly ambitious.

<sup>19</sup> This is typical of discussions of EW in international organizations. See: Netherlands Institute of International Relations (Clingendael). *Conflict Prevention and Early Warning in the Political Practice of International Organizations* (1996). Available on-line at: <[http://www.clingendael.nl/publications/1996/19960000\\_cru\\_paper.pdf](http://www.clingendael.nl/publications/1996/19960000_cru_paper.pdf)>; Susanne Schmeidl & Howard Adelman (Eds.) *Early Warning and Early Response*. (Columbia International Affairs Online, 1998). Available on-line at: <<http://www.ciaonet.org/book/schmeidl/>>.

<sup>20</sup> For discussions of more generally applicable challenges to EW, see: Howard Adelman & Astri Surhke, *Early Warning and Conflict Management: Genocide in Rwanda* (Study II of the Evaluation of Emergency Assistance to Rwanda, 1996). Available on-line at: <[129.194.252.80/catfiles/2050.pdf](http://129.194.252.80/catfiles/2050.pdf)>; Shrodt & Gerner, *op. cit.*

- *Skepticism about the need for, or likely benefit of, strengthening EW capabilities:* Interviews conducted for this study reveal a fairly common view, particularly among government officials, that “early warning is not the problem.” A number of persons cited warnings prior to the genocide in Rwanda and elsewhere as evidence that early warning information is always “out there,” and that the eruption of genocidal or near-genocidal violence rarely if ever surprises the international community. One respondent suggested, furthermore, that the Special Adviser will become heavily involved in just a couple of cases each year, “and they’re well known.” Likewise, many consider EW, even at its best, unlikely to contribute significantly toward effective prevention as long as obstacles related to capacity and willingness to act preventively remain.
- *Reluctance to accept a strong EW function because anticipation of genocide and related phenomena will never be perfect:* In the UN context, early warning suffers simultaneously from critiques that it is already sufficient and that predictions will never be reliable enough to justify costly, risky or politically unpalatable preventive action. The Special Adviser’s office has found its expressions of concern about country situations are frequently met with resistance from others in the UN system, whether because of differences in judgment about the likely course of events, defensiveness about possibly having missed warning signs, or a sense that acknowledging the risk of genocide would complicate political or operational tasks. No one can deny that even in the best of circumstances, genocide will defy perfectly reliable anticipation. In his study, Akhavan described the Special Adviser’s “central challenge” as “persuading decision-makers that while predicting genocide is not an exact science, the risks associated with its actual occurrence greatly outweigh those associated with inordinate enthusiasm in its early prevention.”<sup>21</sup> This recognition appears to remain wanting in significant parts of the UN community.
- *Multiple audiences for the Special Adviser’s EW with very different needs and interests:* The Special Adviser’s task is complicated by his mandate to provide EW both to the Secretary-General and the UN Security Council. Respondents indicated that the Secretary-General has fairly substantial needs and desire for analysis about potential crises, as his priorities lie with the broad interests of the Organization and with the security of potential victims. Meanwhile, the Security Council—arguably the Special Adviser’s more important audience—is typically driven by the particular political priorities of its most powerful member states. Moreover, the UN Security Council can hardly be considered a single audience, as the capacity, priorities and interests of each member differ greatly. For most Security Council members, the capacity for information collection and analysis far surpasses that of the Special Adviser’s office.<sup>22</sup> And since most situations of potential genocide can be expected to affect the political interests of one or more member states, the Special Adviser’s EW communications will frequently be unwelcome to at least part of his audience.

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<sup>21</sup> Akhavan, *op. cit.*, para. 4.6.

<sup>22</sup> Walter Dorn made this point discussing the Secretary-General’s role in providing warning to the UN Security Council. See Walter Dorn, *Early and Late Warning by the UN Secretary-General of Threats to the Peace: Article 99 Revisited*. In Albrecht Schnable & David Carment (Eds.), *Conflict Prevention from Rhetoric to Reality*, (Latham, MD: Lexington Books, 2004), pp. 305-344.

- *Constraints due to capacity and institutional context:* The current resources allocated to the Special Adviser's office—a part-time Special Adviser and two professional staff members—limit the options for implementing its EW function. Virtually every person interviewed referred to the Special Adviser's capacity constraints, suggesting that beyond the practical challenges associated with its limited resources, the office's small size has created a problem of image—e.g., that the office cannot be more than a “PR operation.” It was also suggested that the Special Adviser's dual reporting lines—to the Under Secretary General for Political Affairs and the High Commissioner for Human Rights—complicates his ability to provide timely and effective warning. Lack of full integration into any UN department leaves the Special Adviser's office needing to forge cooperation with sometimes-resistant UN partners on a case-by-case basis.

### *Defining EW and its principal elements*

15. Drawing on the outline of the Special Adviser's mandate and definitions of EW from other contexts, the Special Adviser's EW function can be defined as:

The collection, analysis and communication of information about escalatory developments in situations that could potentially lead to genocide, crimes against humanity or massive and serious war crimes, far enough in advance for relevant UN organs to take timely and effective preventive measures.

16. This definition identifies not only information collection and analysis, but also communication of information as a core EW activity.<sup>23</sup> It also suggests that the Special Adviser's EW communications should concern situations that show signs of escalation toward genocide or other massive and similarly grave crimes. Lastly, it indicates that EW communications must be early enough to facilitate effective prevention, not just mitigation.<sup>24</sup> Each of these aspects is discussed further below.

17. To accomplish this demanding set of tasks, the Special Adviser must engage in three distinct but interrelated activities:<sup>25</sup>

<sup>23</sup> This follows Adelman & Suhrke's definition of EW as “the collection, analysis and communication of the relevant evidence and conclusions to policy-makers to enable them to make strategic choices.” See *Early Warning and Conflict Management: Genocide in Rwanda*, p. 2.

<sup>24</sup> This follows the definition used by the UN Staff College's program on “Early Warning and Preventive Measures:” “The process of collecting and analyzing information for the purpose of identifying and recommending strategic options for preventive measures.” (Fabrizio Bilucaglia, personal communication.) A similar emphasis on the timing of EW is found in Max van der Stoep's “working definition” of early warning when he served as OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities, which specified that EW communication should be “far enough in advance in order for [OSCE bodies] to react timely and effectively, if possible still leaving them time to employ preventive diplomacy and other non-coercive and non-military preventive measures.” (Quoted in *Conflict Prevention and Early Warning in the Political Practice of International Organizations* (Clingendaal), p. 10.)

<sup>25</sup> This categorization basically follows those of Barnett R. Rubin, *Blood on the Doorstep: The Politics of Preventive Action* (New York: Century Foundation, 2002), pp. 138-150; and Barbara Harff & Ted Robert Gurr, Systematic Early Warning of Humanitarian Emergencies. *Journal of Peace Research* (1998), 35(5): 551-579. Harff and Gurr do not consider risk assessment part of EW as such, whereas Rubin considers both risk assessment and events monitoring different categories of warning.

- *Periodic global risk assessment (to generate a watch list)*: Given the Special Adviser's global mandate but limited capacity, his EW function requires some procedure for identifying a manageable number of situations of concern to track closely.
- *Ongoing situation monitoring (to generate warnings)*: Detailed monitoring and analysis of selected situations of concern is necessary for the Special Adviser to judge when he should alert the Secretary-General, the Security Council and/or others to evidence of escalation.
- *Communication of EW information (to promote preventive action)*: EW does not end with the analysis of an escalating situation and production of an alert. It requires a strategy for communicating policy relevant information to actors with the ability to take preventive measures.

### *Focus of the Special Adviser's EW*

18. The most basic question for an EW mechanism is, EW of what? As discussed above, the Special Adviser's EW mandate refers to "potential situations that could result in genocide." The phrase is quite vague—a remarkably wide range of situations has the potential, at some level, of resulting in genocide. Other parts of the mandate and related statements suggest the scope was intended to be limited to extreme cases, but broader than genocide per se. UN Security Council Resolution 1366 (2001), the origin of the Special Adviser's mandate, invites the Secretary-General to forward information and analyses on "cases of serious violations of international law, including international humanitarian law and human rights law and on potential conflict situations." In describing the new mandate to the Commission on Human Rights, Secretary-General Annan said, "This adviser's mandate will refer not only to genocide but also to mass murder and other large-scale human rights violations, such as ethnic cleansing." Indeed, the outline of the mandate sent to the Security Council calls on the Special Adviser to collect information about "massive and serious violations of human rights and international humanitarian law of ethnic and racial origin that, if not prevented or halted, might lead to genocide."<sup>26</sup>

19. In addition, there are unique difficulties using a strict definition of genocide to guide the Special Adviser's EW function. In their evaluation of EW before the 1994 genocide in Rwanda, Howard Adelman and Astri Surhke wrote:

The problem with the term "genocide" as a signal comes in the different implications and illustrations of the two uses of the term. The use of the legal definition of the term in an accusatory sense arguably diminished the impact of the term in its function as a warning signal. If the killing of 300 Tutsis constitutes genocide (in the legal sense), then warnings about a potential genocide signal the potential death of a few hundred more. The linking of the deaths of 300-1N people to the terms "Apocalypse" and "genocide" diminished the impact of these terms as warnings. While significant in and of itself, early warning about a legal

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<sup>26</sup> Since the Secretary-General's comments to the Commission, on 7 April 2004, followed circulation of the outline of the SA's mandate to the UN Security Council, on 24 March 2004, it only makes sense to interpret the focus of the EW mandate broadly to include "mass murder and other large-scale human rights violations, such as ethnic cleansing."

genocide leads to very different thinking about consequences and reaction than would a clear signal of an impending genocide in the popular sense.<sup>27</sup>

20. Governments' acceptance of the principles of responsibility to protect, and its accompanying call for an EW capacity, reinforces the notion that the Special Adviser's EW mandate should not be limited strictly to genocide. The Outcome Document's articulation of responsibility to protect refers to "genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity." The Special Adviser's office is apparently the only existing institutional mechanism explicitly mandated to provide EW of any of the crimes named in the responsibility to protect.<sup>28</sup> Furthermore, the explicit statement of support for the mission of the Special Adviser's office in the Outcome Document, under the heading of responsibility to protect, would seem to suggest that the Special Adviser's office should be strengthened to assume a slightly expanded focus for early warning to fulfill this Summit pledge.<sup>29</sup>

21. Among the group of scholars, UN officials and government representatives interviewed for this report, there was near unanimity that it would be wise to expand the Special Adviser's EW mandate to include warning of situations of massive abuses that might never meet the legal definition of genocide. Most commonly, respondents endorsed the responsibility to protect formulation as the most appropriate focus for the Special Adviser's EW (though few respondents actually recalled the exact set of acts listed in the Outcome Document).<sup>30</sup> There was also near unanimity that the Special Adviser's EW mandate should not be so broad as to include civil war or armed conflict that does not include massive crimes against civilians.<sup>31</sup> One adjustment to the responsibility to protect formulation is, therefore, necessary for the purposes of EW: since the category of "war crimes" can include individual acts that bear little resemblance to genocide (e.g., improper use of the flag of the enemy), it is important to limit the Special Adviser's focus to where war crimes become "massive and serious," as referred to in his terms of reference.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> Adelman & Suhrke, *op. cit.*, p. 65.

<sup>28</sup> The Human Rights Council is mandated, *inter alia*, to "address situations of violations of human rights, including gross and systematic violations," and to "contribute, through dialogue and cooperation, towards the prevention of human rights violations and respond promptly to human rights emergencies" (A/RES/60/251, para. 3 and 5(f) respectively). Likewise, the mandate of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights includes preventing human rights violations. These could be interpreted to entail EW of genocide and related crimes as a part of "address[ing] situations" or as a necessary step toward preventing human rights violations, but this is by no means explicit.

<sup>29</sup> Despite use of the term "establishing," rather than "enhancing," "strengthening" or the like, neither the Secretary-General nor member states have made any specific proposals for a new EW capability since the 2005 Summit.

<sup>30</sup> Two other, largely overlapping categories of acts were suggested: (1) Crimes under jurisdiction by the International Criminal Court as defined in its Rome Statute. These are genocide, crimes against humanity, and war crimes (the crime of aggression is also included in the Rome Statute, but a definition has yet to be adopted). (2) "Atrocity crimes," a concept developed by David Scheffer et al. At the 2004 Stockholm International Forum, Scheffer defined atrocity crimes to include "genocide, crimes against humanity, and serious war crimes when committed on a scale and with the kind of planning that prosecutors and judges in the international criminal tribunals and often in the hybrid international/domestic courts require to establish jurisdiction."

<sup>31</sup> This question relates also to the etiology of genocide and related crimes. If the causal processes that lead to genocide, massive war crimes, and crimes against humanity diverge sharply, it would be unwise to attempt to craft a uniform EW system. Experts surveyed generally did not express concern that this was the case, as long as the focus was not extended to include all armed conflict.

<sup>32</sup> Note also that genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity all have specific definitions in international legal documents. Ethnic cleansing is less well developed as a legal concept. A UN Commission of Experts established

22. One key implication of expanding the Special Adviser's scope for EW as suggested above would be to clearly include cases threatening to develop into mass killing of persons identified by characteristics outside of the classes granted protection in the Genocide Convention—most importantly, political groups. Mass killings of civilians based on their political identity—sometimes called “politicide”—would clearly represent crimes against humanity, though not genocide. The Special Adviser has indicated that he could not ignore a situation, as in Cambodia under the Khmer Rouge, which threatened to lead to politicide, if not genocide as such. But an explicit expansion of his EW mandate to include such cases, in line with the responsibility to protect, would help relieve resistance to the Special Adviser's involvement that will exist in many cases. It would also ease the analytic challenge for the Special Adviser's office since understanding the nature of violence—e.g., whether it is along political or ethnic lines—is frequently difficult to discern.

### *Timing of the Special Adviser's EW*

23. All warning mechanisms must also ask, How early should the warning be? A framework of warning used by at least one Security Council member state distinguishes warning that is early enough to help policymakers shape strategic outcomes from warning that permits policymakers only to prepare for events that can no longer be prevented, to mitigate consequences, or even later, only to take internal actions (e.g., to minimize political damage). The Special Adviser's preventive mandate makes clear that his EW must aim for the first type—i.e., warning early enough to enable policymakers to shape strategic outcomes—even while it may sometimes include warning for mitigation (e.g., as currently in Darfur). Within this first category, an EW system could, theoretically, span the entire range of opportunities for preventive action, from early structural prevention to late preventive diplomacy in crisis situations. Walter Dorn, for example, suggests “long-range or ‘strategic’ early warning can be done years in advance.”<sup>33</sup> More typically, EW is understood to entail alerts to urgent risks that demand immediate, operational preventive actions.

24. It is tempting to assume that earlier warnings are always better than later ones. Options for preventive action in very early stages of escalation are generally less coercive, risky and costly than those available at later stages. But anticipation of actual escalation is less certain at such an early stage: a larger number of situations will appear to be at risk, including many of which would ultimately never escalate toward genocide. The appropriate timing of warning also relates to the audience of warnings and the type of preventive measures at their disposal. Choosing the desired timeframe of an EW mechanism is first and foremost a strategic decision. Within a strategic framework, timing for EW in specific cases should be made by assessing the evidence of escalation, opportunities for preventive action, and other relevant factors.

25. The origin and terms of the Special Adviser's mandate strongly suggest the Special Adviser was intended to focus on EW for immediate and medium-term operational prevention rather than

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pursuant to Security Council Resolution 780 (1992) defined ethnic cleansing as “a purposeful policy designed by one ethnic or religious group to remove by violent and terror-inspiring means the civilian population of another ethnic or religious group from certain geographic areas.” (S/1994/674, para. 130) In its examination of ethnic cleansing in the former Yugoslavia, the Commission found that its practices “constitute crimes against humanity and can be assimilated to specific war crimes. Furthermore, such acts could also fall within the meaning of the Genocide Convention.” (S/25274, para. 56).

<sup>33</sup> Dorn, 2004, *op. cit.*



long-term structural prevention.<sup>34</sup> First, the UN Security Council, which represents both the origin and a key audience of the Special Adviser's EW function, is not a body designed for long-term, root cause preventive action, even while it has accepted the need to address root causes rhetorically.<sup>35</sup> Second, if the Special Adviser were intended to provide EW for long-term prevention, one would expect institutional connections to the main development bodies of the UN—the Economic and Social Council, the General Assembly and/or the UN Development Programme.<sup>36</sup> Third, as discussed above, the Special Adviser is instructed to collect information on “massive and serious violations of human rights and international humanitarian law”—situations that demand immediate action. Fourth, a focus on long-term structural prevention would appear to duplicate efforts by other parts of the UN system—e.g., the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, the Peacebuilding Commission and Peacebuilding Support Office, the Democracy Fund, etc.—and would burden an already stretched office. These factors all point toward a focus on EW for operational, rather than structural prevention.<sup>37</sup>

### III. Periodic global risk assessment (to generate a watch list)

26. Global risk assessment is the first key component of the Special Adviser's EW function. Sometimes referred to as long-term or structural risk assessment, these methods aim to estimate the relative risk of states (or other polities) based on slowly changing attributes.<sup>38</sup> It serves two main purposes for the SA: (1) Identifying high-risk situations for intensive monitoring, and (2) Providing context for subsequent analysis of ongoing events.<sup>39</sup>

27. For a small office with a global mandate like the Special Adviser's, it is extremely important to adopt a strategy to narrow the range of situations to be closely monitored. Whether or not an explicit strategy based on risk factors is used, this kind of narrowing or adopting of a “watch list” amounts to risk assessment. Because risk assessment screens some situations into more detailed monitoring and many more situations out, it is the key stage in directing the bulk of the office's analytic resources. It is thus extremely important to strive for the most accurate ways of estimating risk of genocide.<sup>40</sup>

28. Long-term risk assessments hold value, as well, by helping the Special Adviser's office interpret ongoing events in a particular situation. Research to date instills more confidence in estimates of long-term risk based on structural risk factors than short-term risk based on

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<sup>34</sup> The distinction between structural and operational prevention was made by the Carnegie Commission on Preventing Deadly Conflict. The Secretary-General's 2001 report on the prevention of armed conflict adopted this categorization as well.

<sup>35</sup> Mack & Furlong, *op. cit.*

<sup>36</sup> Interestingly, the UNDP Administrator recently said, “We are moving away from what has been called ‘early warning,’ which suggests responses to the imminent start of violence, to developing longer-term interventions that build capacities for dialogue and negotiation.” From speech of Kemal Dervis at the DPA-UNDP workshop on building national capacities for conflict prevention and transformation, Istanbul, 6-8 March 2006.

<sup>37</sup> The other argument for a focus on operational prevention comes from a contention that “root cause” preventive strategies are likely to be less effective. See Benjamin Valentino, *Final Solutions: Mass Killing and Genocide in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2004).

<sup>38</sup> Rubin, *op. cit.*

<sup>39</sup> Long-term risk assessment can also be useful for setting priorities for structural prevention, but as discussed above this should not be the Special Adviser's main focus.

<sup>40</sup> In finalizing its watch list, the Special Adviser may reasonably take into account factors beyond the risk per se; e.g., the extent to which the UN system is already engaged in a situation.

hypothesized “accelerators” and “triggers.” Thus, even if resources for intensive monitoring were unlimited, the results of structural risk assessments should inform final judgments about early warning—e.g., when there are significant uncertainties about events developing in a state that bears many long-term risk factors, the Special Adviser should err on the side of caution, whereas the same pattern of events in a country with few or no known structural risk factors should cause less concern.

29. In considering what type of risk assessment strategy to employ, the Special Adviser should seek a balance of three attributes: (1) accuracy in estimating risk of genocide and related crimes, (2) efficiency/feasibility of using the methods in question, and (3) perceived legitimacy of the process by key stakeholders. Accuracy is certainly the most important attribute, but the process must not be overly burdensome on the modest staff resources of the office. Lastly, because the resulting watch list is to be used to guide subsequent monitoring by the office, the extent to which it is perceived to result from a fair and accurate process, free of bias and political manipulation, the easier it will be for the Special Adviser to pursue his investigation of each situation.<sup>41</sup>

### *The Special Adviser's practice to date*

30. It appears that the Special Adviser has assessed longer-term risk implicitly and informally based on his expert judgment together with his staff and, in some cases, consultation with experts. The office reported that it does not have a regular mechanism for identifying high-risk situations. The Special Adviser has referred to the existence of several lists of situations at risk produced by different models/organizations, noting that they tend to have substantial congruity.<sup>42</sup> The Special Adviser has also said that his decision about which situations to monitor closely factors in issues related to the ability of the office to affect the situation positively, the extent to which the UN is already engaged, etc.

31. Mr. Méndez has periodically told interested audiences which situations his office is currently tracking, but has not published a watch list in any regular or formal fashion. In February 2006, Mr. Méndez told an interviewer that the office was monitoring situations in Darfur, Sudan; Cote d'Ivoire; Democratic Republic of Congo; Uganda; Myanmar; West Papua, Indonesia; Togo, Guinea Bissau, and Somalia.<sup>43</sup> In an interview the previous month, he also referred to Central Asia and the Caucasus.<sup>44</sup> According to the office, this list had not changed as of August 2006.

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<sup>41</sup> Robert O. Keohane writes that legitimacy “is conferred either through the quality of the processes used to produce the rules—‘inputs’—or the quality of the results achieved—‘outputs.’ Input legitimacy is achieved through following established procedures of authorization and activity that are consistent with standards conforming to prevailing concepts of fairness, even if not of perfect justice. The procedures must include considerable transparency, mechanisms for accountability, and integrity—that is, a pattern of practices consistent with the stated purposes of the institution. Output legitimacy is achieved through a record of accomplishments that can be judged, on the whole, to be good—and, crucially, better than any feasible alternative institutional arrangements would have produced.” (Robert O. Keohane, *Decisiveness and Accountability as Part of a Principled Response to Nonstate Threats*. *Ethics and International Affairs* (2006), 20:2, p. 219.)

<sup>42</sup> *Report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the Five Point Action Plan and the activities of the Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide* (E/CN.4/2006/84), para. 24.

<sup>43</sup> Interview by Jerry Fowler (16 February 2006). Part of Voices on Genocide Prevention podcast series. Available on-line at: <<http://blogs.ushmm.org/index.php/COC2/>>.

<sup>44</sup> Lisa Schlein, UN Expert Says Action Needed to Prevent Genocide in Several African Countries. *VOA News* (27 January 2006). Available on-line at: <<http://www.voanews.com/english/2006-01-27-voa58.cfm>>.

The staff noted, however, that the office does not strictly limit its monitoring to these situations when relevant information from other regions comes to light.

### *Alternative options*

32. A wide range of specific modalities for global risk assessment can be imagined, but they fall mainly into two broad approaches:

- *A consultative process to compile expert judgment:* The Special Adviser could lead a periodic process with a group of internal and/or external advisors to discuss which situations are judged to be at highest risk of leading to genocide and related crimes. Various methodologies, more or less formal, could be used to generate a group judgment of relative risk of genocide.<sup>45</sup> It may be worth exploring methods that aim to minimize common flaws in group decision making (e.g., “group think”), particularly those that relate to estimating risks. Collaborators could include, for example, any combination of the Secretary-General’s Advisory Committee on Genocide Prevention, Division Directors of the Department of Political Affairs (DPA), Field Unit Coordinators of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), and selected scholars of genocide and regional politics/human rights. Depending on the method of consultation, such a process need not require face-to-face meetings.
- *Systematic/statistical risk assessment methods:* Most systematic/formal approaches are based on a set of risk factors, typically identified by testing a theoretical framework on historical data.<sup>46</sup> There have been a number of efforts—most in academia and think tanks—to construct formal risk models for major political and humanitarian crises (e.g., civil war, state failure, famine), but relatively few focused on genocide and/or closely related crimes. Systematic risk assessment for the Special Adviser’s office would marry current data on structural characteristics of states with pre-existing models to identify high-risk situations. The data management and statistical analytic demands would depend on the specific model or method used.

33. To the extent that the major risk factors are known, a systematic, model-based approach could have substantial benefits in terms of accuracy and efficiency.<sup>47</sup> Scholars interviewed for this report generally expressed the view that knowledge of the long-term/structural risk factors for genocide and closely related atrocities is fairly good. Respondents’ evaluation of current ability to discriminate between different types of extreme political violence based on structural indicators was somewhat more mixed.

34. Of existing systematic risk assessment models designed to identify situations at high risk of genocide or closely related crimes, Barbara Harff’s is the most highly developed.<sup>48</sup> Harff found

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<sup>45</sup> For example, the Delphi method was designed to produce a group judgment from multiple expert opinions, in particular for forecasting. See Norman C. Dalkey, *The Delphi Method: An Experimental Study of Group Opinion*. (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 1969). Available on-line at: [http://www.rand.org/pubs/research\\_memoranda/2005/RM5888.pdf](http://www.rand.org/pubs/research_memoranda/2005/RM5888.pdf).

<sup>46</sup> Other formal statistical methods used for risk assessment include cluster analysis, neural networks, etc.

<sup>47</sup> Schrodtt & Gerner, *op. cit.*

<sup>48</sup> Harff sought to identify risk factors for genocide or “politicide,” defined as follows: “Genocides and politicides are the promotion, execution, and/or implied consent of sustained policies by governing elites or their agents—or, in the case of civil war, either of the contending authorities—that are intended to destroy, in whole or part, a

six risk factors that explain with 74 percent accuracy which situations of internal war and regime collapse led to genocide or “politicide” between 1955 and 1997 and which did not.<sup>49</sup> She has suggested that without additional statistical analysis, the Special Adviser’s office could conduct useful risk assessments simply by counting how many of these risk factors are exhibited by each state experiencing a major armed conflict.<sup>50</sup> Appendix A presents a focused analysis of how Harff’s risk assessment model might work in practice by the Special Adviser’s office. The analysis indicates that a significant gap remains between the model’s power in explaining past events and its utility in a policy setting like the Special Adviser’s office because of issues such as time lag of available data, difficulty identifying high-risk situations at a sub-state or regional level, and challenges posed by states in transition. A number of the most troublesome issues appear to be general to systematic risk assessment models, rather than specific to Harff’s. In addition to these issues, there is little enthusiasm among key audiences for heavy reliance on a formal modeling approach. Since perceived legitimacy is extremely important, absent strong evidence that formal methods would enhance accuracy, the Special Adviser should heed the reluctance of UN officials and member states.<sup>51</sup>

35. One approach that could incorporate assets of both approaches is to compile a “watch list of watch lists” as the basis of discussion among experts and/or key partners.<sup>52</sup> Building a consultative process on results of relevant risk assessments should take advantage of empirical knowledge of long-term risk factors, thereby tending to increase accuracy without sacrificing perceived legitimacy. Reviewing the results of multiple risk assessment models should also minimize the importance of any model-specific flaws or idiosyncrasies. The fact that most risk models focus on more general categories of violent conflict rather than genocide or crimes against humanity could be problematic. But as long as there is substantial overlap in the long-term risk factors of these phenomena, and the results of this broader set of analyses is subject to scrutiny by experts in genocide and related crimes, this approach would seem sensible.

### *Recommendations*

36. *The Special Adviser’s office should undertake a global risk assessment annually.* Since the office has not conducted such a process to date, the first instance will be more intensive while

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*communal, political, or politicized ethnic group.* In genocides the victimized groups are defined by their perpetrators primarily in terms of their communal characteristics. In politicides, in contrast, groups are defined primarily in terms of their political opposition to the regime and dominant groups.” (No Lessons Learned from the Holocaust? Assessing Risks of Genocide and Political Mass Murder since 1955. *American Political Science Review* (2003), 97(1), p. 58, emphasis in original).

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>50</sup> Barbara Harff, *Risk Assessment and Early Warning of Genocide: Some Guidelines for the Office of the Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on the Prevention of Genocide.* (New York: United Nations Association of the USA, 2006). Available on-line at: <<http://www.unausa.org/atf/cf/{49C555AC-20C8-4B43-8483-A2D4C1808E4E}/Harff%20January%202006.pdf>>.

<sup>51</sup> Reflecting a common but not unanimous view of the value and limitations of current systematic risk assessment models for genocide, one scholar concluded that they are “probably not more useful than lots of smart people working on this” without systematic methods.

<sup>52</sup> Thomas M. Paris and Marc Levy recommended this type of approach for EW of violent conflict to the US Agency for International Development. The Prevention Consortium recently concluded that there is a lack of regularly updated, indicator-based systematic risk assessments for a formal “watch list of watch lists.” The general approach, however, could be based on less formal or systematic risk assessments and analyses.

subsequent years can be less intensive updates.<sup>53</sup> The outcome of the risk assessment process should be a list of situations that are judged to be at highest risk of leading to genocide or related crimes in the next year. The resulting list of situations of concern should guide the Special Adviser's information collection and analysis until the subsequent risk assessment update, understanding that the Special Adviser must also attend to rapidly escalating crises even if not on the watch list. The watch list should remain private, to be released in whole or in part at the discretion of the Special Adviser. In addition, the Special Adviser should factor results of long-term risk assessment into his analysis and interpretation of ongoing events—e.g., the existence of multiple long-term risk factors should add suspicion to an ambiguous set of events in a particular state.<sup>54</sup>

37. *The Special Adviser's risk assessment strategy should include two main steps:*

- *Review the results of risk assessments for genocide and related crimes, civil war and state failure conducted by other organizations.* Projects or systems whose analyses could contribute to the office's periodic global risk assessment include Harff's risk assessment model, the Political Instability Task Force, the Minorities at Risk project, the Failed States Index developed by the Fund for Peace, the Genocide Alerts from the US Holocaust Memorial Museum Committee on Conscience, the eight stages of genocide by Genocide Watch, in-depth EW reports of the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), the European Commission's watch list, and CrisisWatch of the International Crisis Group. (See Appendix B for a review of these and other risk assessment and EW methods/systems.). As the Special Adviser has observed, there is generally considerable but not perfect overlap in the situations in the top tier of these lists. This review should take special note of situations that may have previously escaped attention by the office. Nearly all of the risk assessment models/systems recommended for the Special Adviser's use are ongoing efforts that are periodically updated. Thus, the staff resources required to compile the results of the various systems should be relatively limited.<sup>55</sup> Since this task does not require significant political judgment or sophisticated analytic skills, it could be undertaken by a competent staff person at the P-2/P-3 level. It also would be suitable for conduct by external NGOs or scholars or in collaboration with other offices in the UN. A very rough estimate of the effort required for this task is two weeks of dedicated time from a single staff person or researcher.
- *Consult with a group of advisers to produce a watch list for the office.* Beginning with the results of the risk assessment review, the Special Adviser and his advisers should seek to agree on a manageable number of situations for the office to monitor closely. Generally, participants in the process should not include individuals with institutional/political interests in the outcome of the discussion. The group should be

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<sup>53</sup> With just over three months until a new Secretary-General takes office, the current Special Adviser could take time to develop detailed proposals for implementing this process in 2007, or could conduct the first global risk assessment before the end of 2006 to provide an illustration of its potential benefit.

<sup>54</sup> Results of the Special Adviser's risk assessment should be shared with other parts of the UN system that are focused on long-term, structural prevention.

<sup>55</sup> With a somewhat greater investment of time/energy, the office could potentially calibrate the various scales for easier side-by-side comparison. One respondent reported having conducted such an analysis previously for a private report. The general procedures for doing it could very likely be shared on request.

diverse, including regional expertise as well as expertise in genocide and related crimes. One attractive option would be to involve the Secretary-General's Advisory Committee on Genocide Prevention in this process. This panel's tremendous experience and high esteem in international political circles together with its specific expertise in the prevention of genocide would make its endorsement uniquely powerful. To a degree, it could also deflect scrutiny away from the Special Adviser for expressing interest in a particular case. This kind of consultative process would require some time from the Special Adviser's staff and its collaborators, but would not seem prohibitively costly—particularly if conducted in conjunction with the Secretary-General's Advisory Committee.

#### IV. Ongoing situation monitoring (to generate warnings)

38. Early warning for effective preventive action requires far more detailed and fine-grained information and analysis than is produced by structural/long-term risk assessments. Judging when a situation is escalating toward genocide or related crimes “requires the systematic, close to real-time monitoring of potential crisis situations identified in risk assessments.”<sup>56</sup> This task is more challenging than is frequently acknowledged. Scholars generally agree that our ability to anticipate impending genocide in a defined, policy-relevant timeframe is more limited than our ability to identify states at elevated risk over a period of years. According to Alex Schmid, “Proximate causal factors are more unique to a particular situation [and] they are more random in nature than the pre-disposing conditions.”<sup>57</sup> While in retrospect, instances of genocide appear to be “over-determined” and warning appears to have been plentiful and precise, one respondent warned that this reflects a natural tendency to incorporate “hindsight bias.”<sup>58</sup> Another respondent illustrated the problem in reference to incitement to genocidal violence and hate speech. It is true, he commented, that hate speech and incitement were found before nearly all historical cases of genocide. But according to the scholar, these signs are also evident in scores of cases that never lead to genocide, even without significant preventive steps being taken.<sup>59</sup>

39. Though significant, these challenges are manageable because EW does not require “point prediction” but rather “reducing the very large set of *possible* future events to a much smaller set of *plausible* events.”<sup>60</sup> More often than not, the major contribution from the Special Adviser's EW function will be in his framing, constructing scenarios, and identifying “possible entry points

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<sup>56</sup> Harff & Gurr, *op. cit.*, p. 556.

<sup>57</sup> Alex P. Schmid, “Indicator Development,” in John L. Davies & Ted Robert Gurr (Eds.) *Preventive Measures* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 1998), p. 47.

<sup>58</sup> See Baruch Fischhoff, “Hindsight ≠ foresight: the effect of outcome knowledge on judgment under uncertainty.” *Journal of Experimental Psychology: Human Perception and Performance*, 1:288-299 (1975); Richard J. Heuer, *Psychology of Intelligence Analysis* (Washington, DC: Center for the Study of Intelligence, 1999). Available on-line at: <<https://www.cia.gov/csi/books/19104/index.html>>.

<sup>59</sup> Neither Henrik Lundin nor Peter Brecke found much research indicating which short-term indicators are reliable and robust warning signs. See Henrik Lundin, *Crisis and conflict prevention with an Internet based early warning system*. (Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, 2004). Available on-line at: <[http://web.sipri.org/contents/it/Henrik\\_Lundin\\_report.pdf/download](http://web.sipri.org/contents/it/Henrik_Lundin_report.pdf/download)>; and Peter Brecke, *Risk Assessment Models and Early Warning Systems*. (Social Science Research Center Berlin, 2000). Available on-line at: <<http://skylla.wz-berlin.de/pdf/2000/p00-302.pdf>>.

<sup>60</sup> Shrodt & Germer, *op. cit.*, p. 3 (emphasis in original).

for action,”<sup>61</sup> rather than introducing new information or predicting a specific series of events. History indicates that one major failure in preventing genocide and related crimes has been mischaracterizing genocidal situations as civil wars or other “normal” phenomena and refusing to contemplate worst-case scenarios—a “failure of imagination,” according to Samantha Power.<sup>62</sup> The Special Adviser’s EW communications should, therefore, describe the catastrophic but hard-to-imagine scenarios that he judges to be plausible or even likely. This does not require precise prediction of future events.

40. The two core challenges of ongoing situation monitoring are: (1) obtaining, filtering and interpreting information on evolving situations, and (2) deciding when to communicate EW information to the Secretary-General, the Security Council and/or other actors.

41. Writing about EW in the UN, Ted Robert Gurr summarized, “International officials are already flooded with more information than they can handle... what they need most are filters to guide them in screening and interpreting this information.”<sup>63</sup> Despite the high volume of information available to the office, however, it sometimes lacks specific information needed for full and accurate analysis. Its challenge, thus, is both to find ways to extract relevant information from extant sources efficiently and to supplement it with additional information to fill critical gaps.

42. The difficulty of deciding in what circumstances to issue any kind of EW is characterized by the twin risks of the Special Adviser neglecting an escalating situation and of being perceived as “crying wolf” by calling attention to a situation that does not escalate toward genocide (without additional preventive actions). This demands astute political judgment, built on intimate knowledge of the specific situation on the ground as well as the positions, interests and capabilities of a host of actors in and outside of the UN system. Nonetheless, a framework for guiding this complex analysis could help make the Special Adviser’s office a true “mechanism” for EW, rather than just another adviser to the Secretary-General.

43. Similar to the risk assessment stage, in choosing a strategy for ongoing situation monitoring the Special Adviser should consider: (1) accuracy in anticipating evolving events, (2) efficiency/feasibility of using the methods, and (3) perceived legitimacy by key stakeholders. In addition, timeliness is a critical factor for this component.

### *The Special Adviser’s practice to date*

44. The Special Adviser’s office currently tracks events by collecting and analyzing information from a wide variety of sources, within and outside of the UN system. The Special Adviser’s staff estimates that roughly 10-15 percent of the information received regularly is relevant. The

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<sup>61</sup> Forum on Early Warning and Early Response, *Generating the Means to an End: Planning Integrated Responses to Early Warning* (2<sup>nd</sup> Edition) (2000), p. 4. Available on-line at: <<http://www.reliefweb.int/library/documents/studplan.pdf>>.

<sup>62</sup> Samantha Power, *A Problem from Hell: America and the Age of Genocide* (New York: Basic Books, 2002).

<sup>63</sup> Ted Robert Gurr in Gavan Duffy et al., *An Early Warning System for the United Nations: Internet of Not? Merston International Studies Review* (1995), 39(2), p. 318. More generally, the amount of information has grown at a staggering rate in recent years and shows no signs of abating. One study estimated that the amount of new information stored on paper, film, magnetic and optical media doubled in the first three years of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. (*How Much Information 2003*; available on-line at: <<http://www.sims.berkeley.edu/research/projects/how-much-info-2003/execsum.htm#summary>>.

Special Adviser looks first and foremost for a population at imminent risk of severe and massive human rights violations based on its identification by ethnicity, race, religion or national origin.<sup>64</sup> In essence, this is the Special Adviser's primary filter. Beyond this, the office looks for additional "warnings signs" including lack of an institutional framework for redress and accountability, concentration of power, existence of armed militias, hate speech, and denial of past and/or current abuses. While the office has been using this list of indicators in some fashion for at least a year, it does not organize its information on specific situations according to these indicators.<sup>65</sup>

45. The Special Adviser communicates an early warning message, apparently, when he judges a situation is deteriorating and an opportunity for preventive action by the UN exists. Beyond these implicit, general criteria, the office does not seem to use an explicit framework for making these decisions.

### *Alternative options*

46. Traditionally, political analysts and country desk officers monitor events without reference to a specific set of indicators.<sup>66</sup> In the UN, country and regional expertise is commonly accepted as the best lens for understanding the likely evolution of complex situations. This type of situation monitoring is exemplified by reports by the International Crisis Group, Human Rights Watch, and Oxford Analytica, among others.

47. The major alternative approach is to analyze ongoing events by looking for specific kinds of events hypothesized to presage genocide or related crimes in the near term. These are often referred to as accelerators or triggers. Some applications also look for "de-accelerators," or events that tend to reduce the near term likelihood of genocidal violence. This approach is variously called sequential, processual or dynamic events modeling. Data for these models are generally drawn from: (1) coding of data on specific indicators from news stories and/or other information sources,<sup>67</sup> and/or (2) surveying local experts or other knowledgeable persons (e.g., country desk officers) to obtain specific information on the situations and/or frequent assessment of emerging trends.<sup>68</sup>

48. Barbara Harff's early warning model of geno-/politicide (not to be confused with Harff's risk assessment model) illustrates the first approach—coding news stories by pre-specified indicators, referred to as accelerators, de-accelerators and triggers.<sup>69</sup> The CEWARN project of IGAD exemplifies a survey-based approach. Surveys collect data on specific kinds of events (e.g., cattle raids) that might forewarn of greater violence, as well as mitigating behavior (e.g., negotiations). Other systems that collect data from local or country experts include FAST by Swisspeace, OCHA's EW system, and the EU Commission's Country Conflict Assessment. A somewhat different approach, which could be accomplished by coding news stories and/or surveying local

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<sup>64</sup> Interview by Jerry Fowler, *op. cit.*

<sup>65</sup> It seems that the list of indicators is used at least as much to communicate to other groups the kinds of information of interest to the office as it is to guide analysis.

<sup>66</sup> Schmeidl & Adelman, *op. cit.*

<sup>67</sup> This can be done manually or by computers using automated procedures. See Kansas Event Data System (KEDS) for an example of an automated coding system: <<http://web.ku.edu/keds/>>.

<sup>68</sup> John L. Davies & Ted Robert Gurr, "Preventive Measures: An Overview." In Davies & Gurr, *op. cit.*, pp. 6-7.

<sup>69</sup> Harff & Gurr, *op. cit.*



experts, is to track the level of violence targeted at an identified group, based on the assumption that escalating violence even at modest levels is a reliable indicator of violence escalating to massive levels. For the Special Adviser's office, this could mean tracking the frequency of individual acts that would qualify as genocide or crimes against humanity if they were undertaken as part of a large scale and systematic pattern.

### **Recommendations**

49. *The Special Adviser's office should refine its preliminary list of warning signs for more effective use as a framework/filter for situation monitoring:* The current list is broken into four major categories and 25 separate factors, many of which are further illustrated by several specific types of events. This may help outsiders understand what information to transmit to the office, but it seems unwieldy as a guide for analysis. The list should, first, separate out structural factors (e.g., history of genocide), which relate more to long-term risk assessments, from indicators at the level of individual events (e.g., hate speech). Second, having used this list of indicators in some fashion for at least a year the office should review its utility: Have certain indicators been more reliable than others? Have others have proven too difficult to find information about? Have factors not included on this list proved helpful in anticipating escalation? Third, to use this list as a useful framework not only for information collection, but also for analysis and decision-making about EW, the office must organize its information better.<sup>70</sup> This issue is discussed further in paragraphs 71-75 below.

50. *Engage partners to obtain information specifically targeted to EW of genocide and related crimes:* Given the Secretary-General's instruction to collect "existing information," the Special Adviser should seek to partner with others in and outside of the UN system who are already collecting relevant information. In some cases, the Special Adviser can lend his expertise to partners, helping to fine-tune the kinds of information that should be collected, and receive the results in return. There appear to be opportunities to obtain useful information from at least the following organizations (A more detailed review of these and other systems for ongoing situation monitoring is included in Appendix B):

- *OCHA's EW Unit:* OCHA's draft EW methodology includes several issues that may be particularly relevant to the SA. For example, its in-depth analysis includes questions about legacy of group grievance (specifically citing the possibility that this could lead to genocide in some circumstances), ethnic make-up of regime leadership, and violations of international humanitarian law. Since OCHA's EW methodology is still in development, the Special Adviser may be able to negotiate the inclusion of questions of special interest and/or ongoing information exchanges.
- *OHCHR:* Through its various technical assistance and treaty monitoring activities, OHCHR collects a wealth of information on situations of potential interest to the SA. There is currently no centralized structure to manage this information, which makes it

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<sup>70</sup> For these purposes, a relatively simple framework is desirable. For example, information on events could be organized into five categories: (1) targeted killings of civilians, (2) other violations of international human rights and international humanitarian law, (3) evidence of organization/preparation/mobilization for large-scale genocidal violence, (4) domestic political behavior, and (5) international political behavior. Increases in any of the first three categories should raise concern, while domestic and international political actions could contribute to escalation or resolution.

much more difficult for the Special Adviser to leverage it. OHCHR is, however, discussing ideas for improving information management as part of its expansion and recalibration to support the new Human Rights Council. The Special Adviser's office would benefit from participation in these discussions to develop mutually acceptable protocols for information sharing.

- *World Bank Conflict Analysis Unit*: The Bank's country teams, in cooperation with the Conflict Analysis Unit, use a Conflict Analysis Framework in selected country situations to inform development of Poverty Reduction Strategies.<sup>71</sup> The framework guides the team to collect information on numerous factors associated with conflict, including some that should be of particular interest to the SA. For example, the framework includes variables related to social and ethnic relations, governance and institutions, and human rights and security.

51. *Continue to build a network of experts on specific countries/regions and specific aspects of genocide and related crimes for consultation on situations of concern*: As a small office, the ability to draw on broader expertise in and outside the UN is critical to the Special Adviser's success. This is particularly true for detailed situation monitoring and analysis because of the importance of deep knowledge of particular conflicts and political movements. For this reason, one respondent urged the Special Adviser to "think network, not database." The Special Adviser's office should begin to identify potential outside advisers as soon as a country situation appears on its watch list because of the potential for rapid escalation and because area experts with previous experience in the UN context tend to provide more useful advice.<sup>72</sup> Developing lasting relationships with a network of outside experts should also promote continuity and institutional memory when there is turnover of staff in the office.

52. The UN's Interdepartmental Framework for Coordination on Early Warning and Preventive Action (known as the Framework Team), in its emerging configuration, could facilitate the Special Adviser's access to expertise. The Framework Team focuses on long-term, "upstream" conflict prevention, so the overlap in situations of interest with the Special Adviser's office is likely to be limited. Nevertheless, the Special Adviser could draw on expertise from the Framework Team's expert reference group, which is currently being organized to include key staff from participating agencies, and interdepartmental working groups on states being discussed by the Framework Team. In addition, the Framework Team intends to assemble a network of outside experts to be called on as necessary. Because these groups will include many of the best country and thematic experts in and outside the UN, and because they should be individuals already committed to prevention, they are natural partners for the Special Adviser's office. The Conflict Prevention and Peace Forum and possibly other supporters outside of the UN can play an extremely helpful role in facilitating consultations between the Special Adviser's office and independent experts. Some financial resources should be dedicated in the Special Adviser's budget for expert consultants; the office is better positioned to estimate an appropriate amount.

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<sup>71</sup> About twelve detailed conflict assessments have been conducted to date. The results of most are not publicly available. For one example of a report based on the Bank's conflict analysis, see: Juana Brachet & Howard Wolpe, "Conflict-Sensitive Development Assistance: The Case of Burundi." World Bank Social Development Paper No. 27 (June 2005). Available on-line at: <[http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTCPR/Resources/WP27\\_Web.pdf](http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTCPR/Resources/WP27_Web.pdf)>.

<sup>72</sup> Myint-U & Busch, *op. cit.*

53. *The Special Adviser should initiate an EW communication if:*

- *there are strong indications of escalation toward genocide or related crimes in a situation over the next three months (this is a very rough guideline based on the timeframe most relevant to the Secretary-General and Security Council); and,*
- *there is a reasonable chance that the Special Adviser's communication of EW would reduce the likelihood of such an escalation and low likelihood that this communication would cause the situation to deteriorate.*

54. Mistakenly warning of a situation that is not actually escalating does carry real costs to both the government in question and the credibility of the Special Adviser. A relatively high degree of confidence in the judgment of escalation, therefore, is appropriate. Yet, because the costs are much greater if the Special Adviser fails to warn of a situation that then rapidly escalates, the Special Adviser should err on the side of caution—i.e., communicating concerns even if there are significant uncertainties. This approach mirrors the “precautionary principle,” an idea that has evolved over the last three or four decades to help frame responses to situations in which scientific certainty is lacking but potentially devastating and irreversible consequences may take place in the future. As endorsed by governments in the 1992 Rio Declaration concerning the environment, the precautionary principle states, “Where there are threats of serious or irreversible damage, lack of full scientific certainty shall not be used as a reason for postponing cost-effective [preventive] measures.”<sup>73</sup> This principle could be useful both in guiding the Special Adviser’s decisions about issuing warnings as well as his advocating for preventive actions by member states or other UN organs.<sup>74</sup>

55. Given the need to communicate concerns despite uncertainty, it is important for the Special Adviser to develop different ways of fulfilling his warning function. For example, he could set a higher standard of confidence for EW communications to be sent to the Security Council than those for the Secretary-General alone. When he perceives significant uncertainties, the Special Adviser might choose to communicate his concerns less formally. In addition, the Special Adviser should be explicit in his warnings about the greatest uncertainties and the implications of different scenarios.

## **V. Communicating EW concerns (to promote preventive action)**

56. The final element of the Special Adviser’s EW function is the communication of information and analyses to the Secretary-General, the Security Council and possibly other political and/or operational bodies. Because communicating his concerns is the essence of the Special Adviser’s EW function, weaknesses at this end can largely negate excellent data collection and analysis. Scholarly literature on EW has consistently stressed the importance of strengthening the linkage

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<sup>73</sup> A/CONF.151/26 (Vol. I)

<sup>74</sup> The precautionary principle has been cited at least once vis-à-vis genocide: The International Association of Genocide Scholars promulgated a resolution stating, “When genocidal intent is openly expressed, and means to commit genocide are being prepared, the Precautionary Principle places the burden of proof on those who deny that genocide will be committed.” See “International Association of Genocide Scholars Resolution Condemning Iranian President Ahmadinejad’s Statements Calling for the Destruction of Israel and Denying the Historical Reality of the Holocaust; and Calling for Prevention of Iranian Development of Nuclear Weapons.” Available on-line at: <<http://www.isg-iags.org/newsletters/isg36/IranFeb2006.html>>.

between EW and policy actors as a means to narrow the “warning-response problem.”<sup>75</sup> One approach recommended by scholars is to conceive of an EW mechanism as a “client-centered decision-support system.”<sup>76</sup> This would entail close communication between warner and decision maker, in both directions.

57. The political and institutional context of the Special Adviser’s office poses unique challenges to effective communication of EW. The Special Adviser’s mandate instructs him to “help the Secretary-General define the steps necessary to prevent the deterioration of existing situations into genocide.” But there are numerous UN organs that will seek to advise the Secretary-General on any given situation, many of which will have competing views, and most of which will have greater internal bureaucratic leverage. Decision making in the UN Secretariat is typically marked by competition and compromise more than deliberation and consensus. Even more challenging is the Special Adviser’s relationship with the Security Council. Despite the Security Council’s express willingness to consider EW communications from the Secretary-General, the Council will never use information and analyses from the Secretary-General and/or his Special Adviser in a way akin to a decision-support role. When policy actors fail to see vital interests in acting on EWs, as will often be the case for the Security Council, “much more importance must be placed on developing the analysis of the information and communicating that analysis to key decision makers.”<sup>77</sup> One-time communications will almost never be adequate.<sup>78</sup>

### *The Special Adviser’s practice to date*

58. The Special Adviser has communicated his EW via notes to the Secretary-General on situations including Darfur, Cote d’Ivoire and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Per the Special Adviser’s request, some of these notes were transmitted to the Security Council, and he briefed the Council once (in September 2004 following a trip to Darfur). The Special Adviser has also communicated concerns quietly, directly to member state representatives (e.g., Colombia), and on occasion to the press and public (e.g., press conference on Cote d’Ivoire, op-ed on Darfur).

59. The Special Adviser has participated in various formal and informal discussions in the UN Secretariat, including the Secretary-General’s Policy Committee, the Executive Committee on Peace and Security, interdepartmental task forces related to Cote d’Ivoire and Sudan, and at least one meeting of the Framework Team. He also has copied many of his notes to the Secretary-General to others in the UN system, including the Under Secretary General for Political Affairs, the High Commissioner for Human Rights, the Emergency Relief Coordinator, and the Under Secretary General for Peacekeeping Operations.

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<sup>75</sup> Alexander L. George & Jane E. Holl, *The Warning-Response Problem and Missed Opportunities in Preventive Diplomacy* (Carnegie Commission on Preventing Deadly Conflict, 1997). See also Alexander Austin, *Early Warning and The Field: A Cargo Cult Science?* (Berghof Research Center for Constructive Conflict Management, 2004), p. 12. Available on-line at: <[www.berghof-handbook.net/uploads/download/austin\\_handbook.pdf](http://www.berghof-handbook.net/uploads/download/austin_handbook.pdf)>.

<sup>76</sup> Davies & Gurr, *op. cit.*, p. 11. See also Heinz Krummenacher & Susanne Schmeidl, *Practical Challenges in Predicting Violent Conflict: FAST: An Example of a Comprehensive Early-Warning Methodology*. (Swisspeace, 2001). Available on-line at: <<http://www.swisspeace.org/uploads/FAST/working%20paper%2034.pdf>>

<sup>77</sup> Howard Adelman, “Defining Humanitarian Early Warning.” In Schmeidl & Adelman, *op. cit.*

<sup>78</sup> Netherlands Institute of International Relations (Clingendael), *op. cit.*, p. 6.

60. Despite these efforts, interviews conducted for this report suggest that this third element of the Special Adviser's EW function is in most need of strengthening. The Special Adviser does not appear to have found a firm place in relevant policy deliberations in the Secretariat or in debates among and surrounding UN Security Council members—or generally a level of visibility in the system that would facilitate his EW activities. The perception of the Special Adviser's inadequate integration into policy discussions led more than one respondent to question the utility of investing additional energy in more systematic methods for generating EWs. While complimenting Mr. Méndez's professionalism and dedication, and acknowledging the serious capacity constraints on the office, a number of respondents urged the Special Adviser to be more proactive and entrepreneurial in his approach.

61. Few member state representatives interviewed—among them, officials from eight current members of the UN Security Council—were well acquainted with the Special Adviser and his mandate. Moreover, very few recalled having ever received any written communication from, or having had any informal communication with, the Special Adviser's office. Most of those interviewed were able to cite the Special Adviser's involvement in Darfur, but only in a very general sense.

62. Knowledge of the Special Adviser's mandate appears to be somewhat better within the UN Secretariat, but the need for fuller integration into the Secretariat, which the Akhavan report cited nearly a year ago, continues to be an issue. For example, the Special Adviser's office reported consulting routinely with officials in DPA, OHCHR, OCHA and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations on its activities concerning specific country situations (e.g., country visits), but not receiving reciprocal consultation on other agencies' activities or important policy deliberations. A number of respondents said the Special Adviser is hamstrung by his particular place in the UN bureaucracy, reporting to both the Under Secretary General for Political Affairs and the High Commissioner for Human Rights. Despite the multiple reporting lines, the office operates independently, without the benefit of the greater capacities of DPA, OHCHR, or the Executive Office of the Secretary-General.

### *Alternative options*

63. Representatives of a number of member states expressed support for the idea that the Special Adviser should brief the Security Council regularly on country and/or thematic issues to complement occasional briefings on emergency situations. In addition to raising the Special Adviser's profile, one advantage of this approach would be to de-politicize the act of inviting the Special Adviser to brief the Council on a specific country situation. It was also suggested that some briefings could be less formal consultations with members of the Security Council, as well as with the broader membership. Respondents cited the experience of the Security Council receiving briefings from the High Commissioner for Human Rights and the Emergency Relief Coordinator as being positive and possibly analogous.<sup>79</sup> Two members of the Security Council expressed some initial concerns about inviting the Special Adviser to make regular briefings,

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<sup>79</sup> The Secretary-General's report, *In Larger Freedom* (A/59/2005), urged, "The High Commissioner [for Human Rights] must play a more active role in the deliberations of the Security Council" (para. 144). The Outcome Document of the 2005 World Summit subsequently declared its support for closer cooperation between the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights and "all relevant United Nations bodies, including...the Security Council" (para. 124).

both citing the Special Adviser's role as one of providing advice to the Secretary-General, not directly to the Council.<sup>80</sup> Plus, one UN official worried that if the Special Adviser were scheduled for regular briefings, the Security Council might decide not to receive him on an urgent matter, preferring to defer his appearance to the regular schedule. If the Secretary-General and/or Security Council decide to pursue the idea of regular briefings from the Special Adviser, the procedural mechanism (e.g., under what agenda item) and format would need to be clarified. It appears this could be accomplished by a new Security Council resolution or through an exchange between the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council.<sup>81</sup>

64. In addition to formal briefings, the Special Adviser's office could expand its less formal outreach to members of the Security Council and the broader UN membership. There are clearly several member states that would be pleased to facilitate the Special Adviser's communication by hosting consultations or providing other venues for the Special Adviser to interact with government representatives. Some respondents suggested that the office should designate a staff person (or hire a new staff person) dedicated to conducting outreach and advocacy with member states.

65. With respect to the UN Secretariat, one view holds that the role of a Special Adviser of the Secretary-General should be defined and circumscribed by the Secretary-General. In this view, it is up to the Secretary-General to invite his Special Adviser into appropriate policy discussions. While in keeping with the formal arrangement of the post, this approach is problematic in a perennially crisis driven organization with frequent bureaucratic battles over turf and conflicting priorities. Some have proposed institutional solutions such as incorporating the Special Adviser's office into OHCHR (e.g., by designating the Special Adviser the head of OHCHR's New York office) or the Executive Office of the Secretary-General. Others suggested that what is most crucially needed is for the Secretary-General to make a strong statement that genocide prevention lies at the core of the Organization's work and that the Special Adviser's opinion should be sought on all potentially relevant policy matters. This type of statement would simultaneously promote greater involvement of the Special Adviser in formal Secretariat discussions and provide a strong basis for his refusing to be excluded from any venue.

### **Recommendations**

66. *The Special Adviser should actively seek to become a consistent part of relevant policy discussions in the UN Secretariat, including of the Policy Committee, the Executive Committee on Peace and Security, and the Framework Team.* As the Akhavan report recommended, the surest and most desirable way to facilitate the Special Adviser's integration into relevant policy discussions would be through specific action by the Secretary-General. Short of this, however, there appears to be room for the Special Adviser to become more active in policy decision

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<sup>80</sup> These same two Security Council member state representatives emphasized that the Special Adviser should focus on providing impartial, factual analysis to inform the UN Security Council's political discussions on country situations. They suggested he should take care to avoid betraying any bias, and more broadly should not interpret his role as naming "bad countries."

<sup>81</sup> Rule 39 of the Security Council Rules of Procedure states, "The Security Council may invite members of the Secretariat or other persons, whom it considers competent for the purpose, to supply it with information or to give other assistance in examining matters within its competence." Thus, it seems that the Council could, in a single action, invite the Special Adviser for regular briefings over an indefinite period. It may be prudent to consult the Office of Legal Affairs to resolve any ambiguities definitively.

making on his own initiative. For example, respondents indicated that the Special Adviser's input would be welcome in the both the Secretary-General's Policy Committee and the Framework Team beyond his level of participation to date. In addition to pursuing participation in formal deliberations, the Special Adviser should invest in building relationships with key Secretariat officials so that he can play a greater role in less formal discussions as well.

67. *To be an effective mechanism for EW, the Special Adviser must be able to communicate directly with the Secretary-General.* Many of the Special Adviser's communications stem from his judgment of signs of rapid escalation and/or short-lived windows of opportunity for preventive action (e.g., debate of a draft Security Council resolution). Delaying these communications for even short periods of time can render them moot. Legitimate concerns about policy coordination should be resolved by involving the Special Adviser regularly in Secretariat policy discussions from the earliest stages.

68. *With consent of the Secretary-General, the Special Adviser's office should conduct regular outreach to UN Security Council members and other influential member states.* It is clear that the Special Adviser's sending written communications calling attention to situations of concern is insufficient to influence debate and action by the Security Council. For his EW function to reach its potential, the Special Adviser's interaction with Security Council and other member states must be more frequent and dynamic. Regular outreach should begin even absent a specific crisis situation so that a solid foundation is built. The Special Adviser should seek the Secretary-General's consent and general guidance so he and his staff can represent the Secretary-General's views and interests effectively, but ideally the Special Adviser would have a reasonable degree of autonomy to pursue contacts with member states.

69. *The Special Adviser should forge a strong relationship with the new Human Rights Council (HRC).* The new Council is expected to be much more involved than the old Commission in cases of rapidly developing human rights crises. Part of its mandate from the General Assembly is to "contribute, through dialogue and cooperation, towards the prevention of human rights violations and respond promptly to human rights emergencies."<sup>82</sup> These situations will undoubtedly overlap with those the Special Adviser is involved with. It will be important, therefore, for the Special Adviser to develop strong relations with the HRC. One specific idea would be to add the HRC to the Secretary-General and Security Council as an explicit and key audience for the Special Adviser's EW function. In the short term, attending sessions of the HRC is one important way to for the Special Adviser to raise his profile and explore with delegations the particulars of the most productive formal relationship.

70. Implementing these recommendations would require substantial allocation of new resources. The Special Adviser's part-time status poses a particular challenge to enhancing the office's participation in high-level Secretariat policy discussions and interaction with member states. Making the Special Adviser a full-time position could be expected to have an immediate and significant impact. In addition, increasing the office's professional staff by at least one person would be desirable—for delicate interactions with member states and Secretariat officials, new staff should be either at a relatively high level, or so that the time of current staff could be freer

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<sup>82</sup> A/RES/60/251, para. 5(f).

to engage in more of these activities. Folding the office into an existing UN department could also contribute significantly to freeing time for communication with EW audiences.

## **VI. Additional observations**

### *Managing EW information in the Special Adviser's office*

71. The report to the Commission on Human Rights on implementation of the Secretary-General's five point action plan to prevent genocide declared, "Early warning requires organized information."<sup>83</sup> Yet, the Special Adviser's office has not implemented a strategy for consistently organizing its information on situations of concern. Whether or not the Special Adviser's office decides to use formal analytic models for risk assessment or early warning, the office should take steps to better organize, store and manage information for its EW function. These are issues more closely related to operations and information management than analytic approaches, but are no less important to the office's effectiveness. Though technically separate from his EW function in the Special Adviser's mandate, the Secretary-General also has called on the Special Adviser to "work to enhance the United Nations capacity to analyse and manage information relating to genocide or related crimes."

72. The current practice of the Special Adviser's office, while it does not appear to be atypical among UN and government offices, could be improved. Individual staff members use their own judgment about the best way to flag and store information. For example, staff members report that when reviewing electronic reports, they "cut and paste" relevant information into MS Word documents. Relevant parts of hard copy reports are highlighted and filed. The office does not use any databases, other than for email.

73. These practices have not caused any obvious problems for the office to date. They get high marks for the minimal time and energy required to maintain, but do less well in keeping information in a form that is easily reviewed for patterns or retrieved as back-up for arguments. For example, it is not simple for the office to review the latest relevant information on a particular situation as a basis for discussion about the potential for escalation. Rather, it appears that the office typically decides to take an EW action and then draws on the information to produce the back-up.

74. The Akhavan report recommended that the Special Adviser create an "analytic database" for global monitoring based on multiple indicators of genocide risk. A similar idea dates back at least as far as Benjamin Whitaker's landmark 1985 report on the Genocide Convention, in which he suggested, "Intelligent anticipation of potential cases could be based on a data bank of continuously updated information, which might enable remedial, deterrent or averting measures to be planned ahead."<sup>84</sup>

75. Using databases for EW is frequently equated with relying on rigid, formal models that would automatically generate a warning if certain indicators were present. This need not be the case. Relational databases are flexible, powerful tools for managing information. Using a database to manage EW information does not mean "automatic" EW just as using a database to

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<sup>83</sup> E/CN.4/2006/84, para. 24.

<sup>84</sup> Benjamin Whitaker, *Revised and updated report on the question of the prevention and punishment of the crime of genocide*, E/CN.4/Sub.2/1985/6, para. 79.



maintain one's professional contacts does not lead to automatic phone calls or faxes. It is clear, in any case, that the office does not need a sophisticated database, nor does the staff have much time to input information into a database. The office should at least be able to call up recent information received on a particular situation so individual events can be analyzed in a broader context and information on a series of events over a period of time can be analyzed against a previous period and/or a set of indicators or warnings signs. This could be accomplished with a very simple database—or possibly even a series of spreadsheets.

### *The role of outside supporters*

76. As the Special Adviser has noted, his office counts on strong support from others in the UN system, from member states, and from NGOs and scholars. Scholars should be key partners for his EW function because it demands a breadth of expertise the office cannot aspire to maintain in-house. NGOs can offer information on many situations of interest as well as input to analysis of evolving events. Several NGOs and scholars have already expressed their desire and willingness to contribute to the Special Adviser's operations.<sup>85</sup> Nevertheless, relative to other UN human rights mechanisms, the office receives scant information from NGOs.

77. Calling on outsiders to assist with certain analytic tasks could help relieve some political pressure on the Special Adviser's office. The Special Adviser's interest in any particular situation will inevitably generate a degree of resistance from some member states and/or others in the UN system. Partnering with outsiders can help ensure that analysis is not overly affected by political considerations.<sup>86</sup>

78. Providing outside supporters with a framework for the way the Special Adviser approaches his EW mandate should increase the benefit of external input to the office—not to mention the likelihood that additional outsiders will see a way they can help the office. This could start by the office sharing a basic framework for EW, such as the one suggested in this report, with NGOs and scholars that have already expressed an interest. More detailed guidance for assistance in specific parts of the Special Adviser's EW function could be discussed on a case-by-case basis. A small amount of staff time dedicated to interaction with civil society would be helpful to facilitate these relationships. By themselves, these steps may not immediately multiply the benefit to the office of civil society involvement, but they should be worth the minimal investment required.

### *The value of ongoing evaluation of the Special Adviser's EW*

79. The Special Adviser should institute plans for regular evaluation of his EW function (along with the rest of his mandate). As Walter Dorn has recommended in relation to a UN EW system for armed conflict, "Failures to issue early warnings, which can be expected to be frequent, should be reviewed in order to determine if there are deficiencies in the system, improvements to be made and, more generally, lessons to be learned."<sup>87</sup> In addition, for complex phenomena like genocide and related crimes, "patterns of causal relations may change over time"—e.g., if would be perpetrators learn how to accomplish their ends through different means—necessitating

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<sup>85</sup> For example, the World Federalist Movement and Minority Rights Group are jointly organizing a Genocide Prevention Information Center that is explicitly designed to support the Special Adviser's office.

<sup>86</sup> Mack & Furlong, *op. cit.*; Myint-U & Busch, *op. cit.*

<sup>87</sup> Dorn, 2004, *op. cit.*

modifications to risk assessment and early warning models.<sup>88</sup> Evaluation could take the form of periodic independent studies, such as the one Akhavan completed in late 2005. But the office should also evaluate its EW efforts more regularly and less formally through frequent communication with key EW audiences. This communication should allow the Special Adviser's office to hone its strategy for EW to make it more useful to key constituencies, building stronger relationships with these actors in so doing.

## VII. Summary of recommendations<sup>89</sup>

### *A conceptual framework for early warning*

- A. The Special Adviser should define his EW function as, "The collection, analysis and communication of information about escalatory developments in situations that could potentially lead to genocide, crimes against humanity or massive and serious war crimes, far enough in advance for relevant UN organs to take timely and effective preventive measures." (15-16)
- B. The focus of the Special Adviser's EW function should be expanded slightly to include genocide, massive and serious war crimes, and crimes against humanity—corresponding with the 2005 World Summit's pronouncement of the principles of responsibility to protect. (18-22)
- C. The Special Adviser should focus on EW for immediate and medium-term operational prevention rather than long-term structural prevention. (25)

### *Periodic global risk assessment (to generate a watch list)*

- D. The Special Adviser's office should undertake a global risk assessment annually. (36)
- E. The Special Adviser's risk assessment strategy should include a review of results from existing risk assessments as the basis for a consultative process with a group of advisers—possibly the Secretary-General's Advisory Committee—to identify situations at highest risk of genocide and related crimes over the next year. (37)

### *Ongoing situation monitoring (to generate warnings)*

- F. The Special Adviser's office should refine its preliminary list of warning signs for more effective use as a framework/filter for situation monitoring. (49)
- G. The Special Adviser's office should engage partners to obtain information specifically targeted to EW of genocide and related crimes. (50)
- H. The Special Adviser's office should continue to build a network of experts on specific countries/regions and specific aspects of genocide and related crimes for consultation on situations of concern. (51)
- I. The Special Adviser should initiate an EW communication if:

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<sup>88</sup> Davies & Gurr, *op. cit.*, p. 8.

<sup>89</sup> The numbers in parentheses after each summarized recommendation refers to the paragraphs that contain the full recommendation.

- there are strong indications of escalation toward genocide or related crimes in a situation over the next three months (this is a very rough guideline based on the timeframe most relevant to the Secretary-General and UN Security Council); and,
- there is a reasonable chance that the Special Adviser's communication of EW would reduce the likelihood of such an escalation and low likelihood that this communication would cause the situation to deteriorate. (53-55)

*Communicating EW concerns (to promote preventive action)*

- J. The Special Adviser should actively seek to become a consistent part of relevant policy discussions in the UN Secretariat, including of the Policy Committee, the Executive Committee on Peace and Security, and the Framework Team. (66)
- K. To be an effective mechanism for EW, the Special Adviser must be able to communicate directly with the Secretary-General. (67)
- L. With consent of the Secretary-General, the Special Adviser's office should conduct regular outreach to UN Security Council members and other influential member states. (68)
- M. The Special Adviser should forge a strong relationship with the new Human Rights Council. (69)

*Additional recommendations*

- N. Whether or not the Special Adviser's office decides to use formal analytic models for risk assessment or early warning, the office should take steps to better organize, store and manage information for its EW function. (71)
- O. The Special Adviser's office should provide outside supporters with a framework for the way the office approaches its EW mandate. (78)
- P. The Special Adviser should institute plans for regular evaluation of his EW function (along with the rest of his mandate). (79)

## Appendix A: Illustrative application of Harff's risk assessment model

Developed as an outgrowth of the US-sponsored State Failure Task Force (renamed Political Instability Task Force [PITF]), Harff's risk assessment model demonstrates impressive accuracy in discriminating which situations of state failure (defined as internal wars and/or regime collapse) led to geno-/politicide since 1955. Performance in explaining past events, however, is not equivalent to a model's utility in a particular policy setting. Given that Harff's is the most prominent model designed to assess risk of genocide, it is worth exploring in some detail how outputs from the model might have served the Special Adviser's office over the last few years.

Harff identified six structural risk factors: prior genocide, magnitude of political upheaval (not including prior genocide), exclusionary ideology of ruling elite, autocracy, ethnic minority ruling elite, and low trade openness.<sup>90</sup> She has used these factors to produce watch lists of countries judged to be at greatest risk of geno-/politicide—by using a statistical model or simply counting the number of risk factors each country that met the screening criterion of internal war and/or regime collapse exhibited. Dr. Harff has recommended that the Special Adviser's early warning function could be successfully achieved by adopting this approach for risk assessment in combination with a separate model for monitoring high-risk situations.

Harff published or presented updated analyses using her risk assessment model at periods of roughly 12-18 months between late 2002 and early 2005: in the *American Political Science Review*, at the 2004 Stockholm International Forum, and in *Peace and Conflict 2005*. Table A-1 displays information from these analyses selected for the purpose of this review. There appear to be several limitations of this model for the Special Adviser's purposes:

*Using armed conflict/state failure as a screening criterion:* Because Harff's model originated as part of a larger study of state failure, it “assesses the risk that a country will experience a genocide or politicide, given that it is already experiencing another form of political instability.”<sup>91</sup> In recent analyses, Harff seems to use existence of a major armed conflict as the screening criterion and recommended to the Special Adviser's office to collect data on risk factors “for all states in the world that have ongoing armed conflict.”<sup>92</sup> Limiting genocide risk assessment to states already in crisis seems sensible since virtually all episodes of genocide occur during armed conflict.<sup>93</sup> Yet, according to the PITF Phase IV report, 18 of 39 (46%) geno-/politicides that occurred between 1955-2002 began less than one year after the onset of a state failure event.<sup>94</sup> Thus, the historical record suggests that an annual watch list produced using this

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<sup>90</sup> See Harff, 2003, *op. cit.*, for a fuller description of her methods.

<sup>91</sup> Robert H. Bates, David L. Epstein, Jack A. Goldstone, Ted Robert Gurr, Barbara Harff, Colin H. Kahl, Kristen Knight, Marc A. Levy, Michael Lustik, Monty G. Marshall, Thomas M. Parris, Jay Ulfelder, and Mark R. Woodward. *Political Instability Task Force: Phase IV Findings* (McLean, VA: Science Applications International Corporation, 2003), p. 89.

<sup>92</sup> Harff, 2006, *op. cit.*, p. 4.

<sup>93</sup> Paul Bartrop, The relationship between war and genocide in the twentieth century: a consideration. *Journal of Genocide Research* (2002), 4(4), 519-532. Jack A. Goldstone, Ted Robert Gurr et al. *State Failure Task Force Report: Phase III Findings*. (McLean, VA: Science Applications International Corporation, 2000), p. 47.

<sup>94</sup> The Phase III Task Force report stated, “Although some genocides and politicides occurred the same year as the onset of state failure, most (59 percent) occurred considerably later” (Goldstone, Gurr et al., *op. cit.*, p. 45). The Phase IV report extended the analysis to include episodes through 2002, which added two cases. It also included the

Table A-1  
 Selections from Harff's geno-/politicide risk assessment: 2003-2005

Source (date)	<i>American Political Science Review</i> (published Feb. 2003)	Stockholm International Forum 2004 (conducted Nov. 2003)	<i>Peace and Conflict 2005</i> (conducted Feb. 2005)
Number of states with $\geq 4$ risk factors:	11	9	13
Number of risk factors for selected states:			
Afghanistan	6/6 (Taliban regime) 4/6 (Karzai regime)	3/6	4/7*
Cote d'Ivoire	Not included**	Not included***	2/7
Iraq	6/6	3/6	3/7
Rwanda	5/6	5/6	5/7
Somalia	4/6	4/6	3/7
Sudan	Not included****	5/6*****	6/7
"Watch list" (i.e., states with 4 or more risk factors) (in alphabetical order)	Afghanistan Algeria Burundi D.R. Congo Ethiopia Iraq Myanmar (Burma) Rwanda Sierra Leone Somalia Uganda	Algeria Burundi China D.R. Congo Myanmar (Burma) Rwanda Somalia Sudan Uganda	Afghanistan Algeria Angola Burundi China D.R. Congo Ethiopia Myanmar (Burma) Pakistan Rwanda Sri Lanka Sudan Uganda

\* In her 2005 analysis, Harff included a seventh risk factor: "minorities are targeted for severe political or economic discrimination." However, the table summarizing risk for countries with "serious armed conflicts, regime crises, or high vulnerability" does not display data on this new variable.

\*\* Cote d'Ivoire was excluded because it was not considered to have had a "major armed conflict" in 1995-2000 according to Gurr, Mashall, and Khosla. See *Peace and Conflict 2001*.

\*\*\* Unclear why Cote d'Ivoire was not included. Since only countries with three or more risk factors are included on this list, one can assume that Cote d'Ivoire was absent because it had fewer than three risk factors.

\*\*\*\* Sudan (and Angola) excluded because, according to Harff, they had "ongoing geno-/politicides in 2001." The PITF Phase IV report characterized this geno-/politicide in Sudan as being targeted against "secessionist non-Muslim southerners and Nuba." (p. 99)

\*\*\*\*\* Harff listed "possible target groups" as Southerners and Nuba. No mention of Darfur.

model would miss a significant percentage of future geno-/politicides because of the short span between state failure and genocide onset. For example, had Harff's risk assessment procedures been used to produce a watch list in January 1988, it would not have included Burundi because civil conflict had not yet begun. But according to the PITF, the civil violence and the genocide began in the same month—August 1988. As one government official wrote, after analyzing Harff's risk assessment model and the case of Uzbekistan in 2005, "Although political conflict

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case of Equatorial Guinea between 1969-1979, which had not been included in the Phase III analysis. Equatorial Guinea and Yugoslavia (1998) were both cases of geno-/politicide that began less than one year after onset of state failure.

may be a required condition for a genocide or politicide to actually occur, it is inappropriate to use political conflict as a screening criterion when attempting to forewarn policymakers.”<sup>95</sup>

*Time lag of needed data:* In Harff’s historical analysis, “all model variables are measured one year prior to the onset of geno-/politicide.” Data on these risk factors, however, are rarely available without a considerable time lag. For example, Harff’s most recent published analysis was conducted in February 2005, but the data for this watch list were drawn from 2002 for trade openness and 2003 for other variables. The period for which these data were intended to be used to estimate risk had already passed by the time needed data were available. Harff herself suggests that “the lag structure in the data used to estimate the model” may help explain why politicides in Chile in 1973 and the Philippines in 1972 were misclassified by the model.<sup>96</sup>

Re-estimating Harff’s model using data 2-3 years prior to the beginning of historical genocidal episodes, thereby more accurately reflecting the timeframe in which data are available, could resolve this issue. Members of the PITF reported that they tested their state failure model with data available at different times before onset of an instability event. They found “the same causal pattern emerges” whether they chose one, two or three years prior to onset. The closer to the onset, the more reliable predictions the model made, but the magnitude of improvement was relatively modest (3% more cases identified accurately going from two years prior to one year prior). A similar analysis was not reported for Harff’s geno-/politicide model.

*The possibility of multiple crises in a single state:* Like most analysis of international political behavior, Harff’s model uses the state as the primary level of analysis. This is a limitation, in particular, when considering large, diverse states that could have quite different levels of risk in different parts of the country. In addition, once a state has been identified as being at elevated risk of genocide, in some cases it will not be obvious which group is at risk. For example, according to the Minorities at Risk project, there were eight distinct politically significant minority groups in India and seven in Kenya. Models that rely on state-level data will not provide guidance at this level.

The watch lists Harff produced in the last few years offers a striking illustration of this challenge. The atrocities committed in Darfur, Sudan since 2003 did not receive any mention in Harff’s lists published in 2003 or 2004; the list published in May 2005 did cite “Darfur peoples” as potential victims. The watch list presented at the Stockholm International Forum in January 2004 included Sudan, but it listed Southerners and Nuba as “possible target groups”—there was no reference to Darfur, despite the fact that violent clashes began in that region in early 2003.

*Highly fluid/transitional states:* The cases of Iraq and Afghanistan suggest that structural models are challenged when states undergo significant and rapid transitions. In the 2003 analysis, Harff listed Iraq atop the list of genocide risk with all six risk factors. Updated analyses conducted in November 2003 and February 2005 each counted Iraq as having 3 of 6 risk factors, falling lower on the list of risk than 9 and 13 states respectively. Meanwhile, events in Iraq have borne signs of genocidal violence. Genocide Watch, for example, judged Iraq to be in the stage of genocidal

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<sup>95</sup> Mike Daniels, Assessing the Genocide and Political Mass Murder Framework: The Case of Uzbekistan. *The George Washington International Law Review* (2005), 37, p. 928.

<sup>96</sup> Harff, 2003, *op. cit.*, p. 69.

massacres in 2005. With respect to Afghanistan, Harff noted two separate scores in her early 2003 analysis, finding Afghanistan under the Taliban regime exhibited all six risk factors, while the transitional governing structure in 2002 showed only four risk factors. Together with Harff's discussion about Chile and the Philippines, cited above, these examples suggest that structural models do not perform well when states are in the midst of major political transitions.

### *Comments*

This brief analysis does not suggest that Harff's risk assessment model is fundamentally flawed or lacking in value. Indeed, it remains the most accurate statistical model for estimating risk of genocide and politicide. The limitations discussed above, in part, reflect the inherent challenges of genocide risk assessment.

Even if the practical difficulties focused on above could be resolved, a risk assessment tool like Harff's will predict some "false positives" and some "false negatives." Harff notes that the model failed to predict 9 cases of geno-/politicide, and incorrectly predicted that 25 non-genocidal cases would become genocidal—over a period of nearly five decades. In this same period, Harff's model correctly predicted 26 instances of genocide. Assuming even distribution, this translates to one genocide every five years or so that occurred but was not predicted, and one falsely predicted genocide every other year—almost exactly the same number of genocides that would be predicted.

No risk assessment tool will be perfectly reliable for such complex phenomena as genocide and crimes against humanity, but the review above presents compelling evidence that exclusive reliance on Harff's model—or any other single model—would be unwise at this stage. Revised and/or new models should be tested for their utility to key policy actors as well as their statistical validity and reliability in explaining historical cases. Likewise, other models and approaches—including relying on expert judgment alone and in combination with systematic data—should be tested against one another.

### Appendix B: Review of Methods, System and Tools for Risk Assessment and Early Warning of Potential Relevance to the Office of the Special Adviser

Name (Org)	Brief description	Focus	Description of methods	Resources required/ accessibility	Comments on utility for Special Adviser
<p>genocide/politicide risk assessment model (Barbara Harff)</p> <p>Web site: http://www.cidcm.umd.edu/inscr/genocide/</p> <p>Relevant to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Global risk assessment</li> </ul>	<p>Developed as an outgrowth of the US-sponsored State Failure (renamed Political Instability) Task Force, Harff's risk assessment model identifies six risk factors to explain which situations experiencing internal wars and/or regime collapse led to genocide/politicide in the following year: prior genocide, magnitude of political upheaval (not including prior genocide), exclusionary ideology of ruling elite, autocracy, ethnic minority ruling elite, and low trade openness.</p>	<p>genocide and politicide defined as "<i>the promotion, execution, and/or implied consent of sustained policies by governing elites or their agents—or, in the case of civil war, either of the contending authorities—that are intended to destroy, in whole or part, a communal, political, or politicized ethnic group.</i>" In genocides the victimized groups are defined by their perpetrators primarily in terms of their communal characteristics. In politicides, in contrast, groups are defined primarily in terms of their political opposition to the regime and dominant groups."</p>	<p>Dr. Harff recommends collecting updated data annually on the six risk factors for all states that have ongoing armed conflict and simply counting how many risk factors each state exhibits. She suggests close monitoring of states with four or more risk factors.</p> <p>Data on four of the six risk factors are regularly updated for other purposes and available publicly. Data on exclusionary ideology and elite ethnicity would require coding to update this analysis by Dr. Harff or someone else trained in the procedure.</p> <p>Harff has produced updated analyses periodically.</p>	<p>If Harff does not update the analysis, it would require coding data for two variables on all states with ongoing armed conflict. This would be best accomplished by an external researcher, not the Special Adviser's office. Harff described the cost of this as "modest."</p> <p>Once all data are available, a list of high, medium and low-risk cases could be produced, according to Harff, "by any one person familiar with basic social science statistical packages with a few days' effort."</p>	<p>See Appendix A.</p>
<p>Eight stages of genocide (Genocide Watch)</p> <p>Web site: http://www.genocidewatch.org/8stages2006.htm</p> <p>Relevant to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Global risk assessment</li> <li>▪ Ongoing situation monitoring</li> </ul>	<p>This framework is based on the contention that "genocide is a process that develops in eight stages that are predictable but not inexorable." It is intended to facilitate early warning and help policymakers design policies that can counter progress toward genocide at each stage. Genocide Watch produces periodic alerts on country situations (called Watches, Warnings, and Emergencies), some but not all of which connect analysis of events with the eight-stage framework.</p> <p>The latest review by Genocide Watch of selected states according to the eight stages was conducted in 2005. Genocide Watch does not prepare regular updated analyses, though others could easily adopt the model.</p>	<p>The eight-stage model refers explicitly only to genocide, but developer said that warning signs do not differ for other types of mass violence. Genocide Watch alerts refer to both genocide and politicide, and the organization's mission statement says it addresses "political mass murder, ethnic cleansing, and other genocide-like crimes" in addition to genocide per se.</p>	<p>According to this model, the eight stages of genocide are: classification, symbolization, dehumanization, organization, polarization, preparation, extermination, and denial. The developer has defined each stage briefly and provided illustrations of events that are indicative. Analysts judge the stage of a specific situation through review of media reports and other information on events without a formal methodology. The developer recommends warning of situations that reach the third stage (dehumanization) since the first two stages are nearly universal.</p>	<p>The resources required for an update could vary widely depending how thoroughly country information is reviewed. The model itself does not provide guidance on this question.</p>	<p>The utility of this model for EW is called into question by the large number of situations that Genocide Watch classifies as being at very late stages (e.g., more than a dozen at stage 7 in 2005). Nonetheless, recent reviews of situations by this framework could be a useful addition to a review of multiple watch lists.</p> <p>The Special Adviser</p>



Name (Org)	Brief description	Focus	Description of methods	Resources required/ accessibility	Comments on utility for Special Adviser
					<p>should also consider including specific signs from the eight stages model in his framework for ongoing situation monitoring.</p> <p>No empirical validation has been published to date—the developer is intending to write up the model with evidence from several case studies.</p>
<p>Genocide Alerts (US Holocaust Memorial Museum Committee on Conscience)</p> <p>Web site: <a href="http://www.ushmm.org/conscience/">http://www.ushmm.org/conscience/</a></p> <p>Relevant to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Global risk assessment</li> </ul>	<p>The Committee on Conscience issues periodic Genocide Alerts at three levels: Watch (a serious potential for the eruption of mass violence that would be within the Committee's mandate), Warnings (organized violence is underway that threatens to become genocide or related crimes against humanity) and Emergencies (acts of genocide or related crimes against humanity are occurring or immediately threatened). Alerts include a summary of the Committee's concerns, background on the situation and links to relevant news stories and internal and external resources.</p> <p>Currently, three situations are under genocide alerts: Sudan (Darfur), Sudan (South/Nuba Mountains), and Chechnya.</p>	<p>"acts of genocide or related crimes against humanity," using the definition in the Genocide Convention</p>	<p>Staff makes recommendations to the Committee, which makes final decisions. There is no formal methodology or vetting procedure for selecting situations. Staff reports that selection of situations is largely based on internal capacity/expertise and judgment of what value they can add to other efforts given that situations selected for alerts are also focus of other Committee activities (e.g., public events at the Museum).</p>	<p>The Committee issues public alerts for its own purposes, so there would be no cost in reviewing its results.</p> <p>Current activities are accomplished with partial effort of a staff of about 3-4.</p>	<p>There is near perfect overlap in the kinds of acts that the Committee is mandated to alert people to ("acts of genocide or related crimes against humanity") with the Special Adviser's EW function. The Committee's selection of cases, however, is influenced by factors irrelevant to the Special Adviser or the UN. Thus, the Special Adviser's office should seriously look at any situation on the Committee's list, while the Special Adviser's watch list should generally be more inclusive.</p>
<p>Conflict Assessment System Tool (CAST)/Failed States Index (Fund for Peace)</p>	<p>"CAST is a flexible model that has the capability to employ a four-step trend-line analysis, consisting of (1) rating 12 social, economic, and political/military indicators; (2) assessing the capabilities of five core state institutions considered essential for sustaining security; (3) identifying idiosyncratic factors and surprises; and (4) placing countries on a conflict map</p>	<p>Literature refers to "internal conflicts" and has been used to develop a Failed States Index. Developers say they intentionally eschew a precise</p>	<p>"The CAST software indexed and scanned tens of thousands of open-source articles and reports using Boolean logic. The data are electronically gathered using Thomson Dialog, a powerful data-collection system that includes international and local media reports and</p>	<p>The Failed States Index is updated annually and published in <i>Foreign Policy</i> magazine.</p> <p>Obtaining tailored analysis or data would</p>	<p>Though not specifically related to risk of genocide, analyses using CAST should be useful for the Special Adviser's risk assessments</p>

Name (Org)	Brief description	Focus	Description of methods	Resources required/ accessibility	Comments on utility for Special Adviser
<p>Web site: <a href="http://www.fundforpeace.org/">http://www.fundforpeace.org/</a></p> <p>Relevant to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Ongoing situation monitoring</li> </ul>	<p>that shows the risk history of countries being analyzed. For the Failed States Index, FFP focused solely on the first step, which provides snapshots of state vulnerability or risk of violence during a window in time." (<a href="http://www.fundforpeace.org/programs/fsi/fsifaq.php">http://www.fundforpeace.org/programs/fsi/fsifaq.php</a>)</p> <p>Summary scores on the 12 indicators for most countries are available to the public. The data used to compute the scores on each indicator are not public, and the CAST software is copyrighted.</p>	<p>definition of what CAST provides warning of because of differences in ability of states to manage conflict peacefully.</p>	<p>other public documents, including U.S. State Department reports, independent studies, and even corporate financial filings. The data used in each index are collected from May to December of the preceding year. The software calculates the number of positive and negative 'hits' for the 12 indicators. Internal and external experts then review the scores as well as the articles themselves, when necessary, to confirm the scores and ensure accuracy." (<a href="http://www.fundforpeace.org/programs/fsi/fsifaq.php">http://www.fundforpeace.org/programs/fsi/fsifaq.php</a>)</p>	<p>require discussion with Fund for Peace.</p>	<p>The Failed States Index, using the first stage of the CAST methodology, produces state rankings on twelve indicators of instability. It is reasonable to presume that most of the states at high risk of genocide will fall in the top tier of this overall ranking and among the highest ranked on indicators of "group grievance" and "human rights."</p> <p>Fund for Peace researchers expressed willingness to explore with the Special Adviser's office the conduct of analysis tailored to his EW mandate.</p>
<p>CrisisWatch (International Crisis Group)</p> <p>Web site: <a href="http://www.crisisgroup.org/">http://www.crisisgroup.org/</a></p> <p>Relevant to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Global risk assessment</li> <li>▪ Ongoing situation monitoring</li> </ul>	<p>"CrisisWatch is a 12-page monthly bulletin designed to provide busy readers in the policy community, media, business and interested general public with a succinct regular update on the state of play in all the most significant situations of conflict or potential conflict around the world. Published at the beginning of each calendar month, CrisisWatch: summarises briefly developments during the previous month in some 70 situations of current or potential conflict, listed alphabetically by region, providing references and links to more detailed information sources (all references mentioned are hyperlinked in the electronic version of this bulletin); assesses whether the overall situation in each case has, during the previous month, significantly deteriorated, significantly improved, or on balance remained more or less unchanged; alerts readers to situations where, in the coming month, there is a particular risk of new or significantly escalated conflict, or a particular conflict resolution opportunity (noting that in some instances there may in fact be both); and summarises Crisis Group reports and briefing papers</p>	<p>Deadly conflict (no specific operational definition).</p>	<p>There is no quantitative methodology. Each month, the research team prepares a draft based on (1) open source news reporting and (2) materials from the field situations that ICG covers. ICG covers in the field about 50 of the 70 situations covered in CrisisWatch. Then it goes through a couple of drafts, goes out to field analysts and consultants and is finally approved by the president. The up/down arrows are an indication of ICG's best judgment of the situations over the last month. It does not compare across situations, but across time within situations. The bombs/doves are assessments of specific opportunities or risks in the next month—not just general, but linked to specific events.</p>	<p>CrisisWatch is free and publicly available.</p> <p>A research team of 4 devotes about 4-5 days/month to produce CrisisWatch along with input from a larger group of ICG field analysts and consultants.</p>	<p>CrisisWatch is widely used by UN officials and governments. Its value is based on the combination of its simplicity/accessibility and most importantly, the great respect assigned to ICG and its expert analysts.</p> <p>The timeframe for CrisisWatch—one-month—makes it less useful for longer-term risk assessment, but potentially helpful for ongoing situation monitoring.</p> <p>There has not been a systematic evaluation</p>

Name (Org)	Brief description	Focus	Description of methods	Resources required/ accessibility	Comments on utility for Special Adviser
	<p>that have been published in the last month. CrisisWatch is compiled by Crisis Group's Brussels Research Unit, drawing on multiple sources including the resources of our more than 110 staff members across five continents, who already report on some 50 of the situations listed in CrisisWatch." (<a href="http://www.crisisgroup.org/">http://www.crisisgroup.org/</a>)</p>				<p>of the accuracy of CrisisWatch's forecasts.</p>
<p>genocide "indicators" (Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination [CERD])</p> <p>Web site: <a href="http://www.ohchr.org/english/bodies/cerd/">http://www.ohchr.org/english/bodies/cerd/</a></p> <p>Relevant to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Global risk assessment</li> </ul>	<p>In March 2005, CERD declared "its determination to provide the Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide with timely and relevant information on laws, policies and practices that may indicate systematic or systemic discrimination based on race, colour, descent, or national or ethnic origin which may potentially result in violent conflict and genocide." In August 2005, CERD published fifteen indicators to "serve as a tool for the Committee when examining the situation in a State party under one of its procedures to assess the existence of factors known to be important components of situations leading to conflict and genocide," and a "subset of general indicators" for supplemental consideration. The Committee decided, "If one or more of the [fifteen] indicators are present, this should be clearly stated in the concluding observations or decision, and the Committee shall recommend that the State party within a fixed deadline report to the Committee under the follow-up procedure as to what it intends to do to ameliorate the situation."</p>	<p>"genocide or violence against identifiable racial, ethnic or religious groups"</p>	<p>CERD is composed of 18 experts acting in their personal capacities. The Committee reviews periodic reports from states parties and individual communications for states that have consented to this procedure.</p>		<p>The Special Adviser should consider including on his watch list any state about which CERD has communicated specific concern based on its genocide indicators.</p> <p>The CERD indicators are "intend[ed] to strengthen the capacity of the Committee to detect and prevent at the earliest possible stage developments in racial discrimination that may lead to violent conflict and genocide." This may be relevant to the Special Adviser's office, but will not necessarily contribute a great deal to the kind of EW most in demand by the Secretary-General and UN Security Council.</p>
<p>check list for root causes of conflict/early warning indicators (European Commission)</p> <p>Web site: <a href="http://ec.europa.eu">http://ec.europa.eu</a></p>	<p>The EU Commission assesses risk of "outbreak, continuation or re-emergence of conflict" based on a "check list for root causes of conflict/early warning indicators" every six months. This analysis contributes to the EU's designation of a confidential watch list.</p> <p>The EU may be willing to share certain results from its analysis with the Special Adviser's office.</p>	<p>Officially, the analysis relates to violent conflict. Unofficially, it aims to anticipate a broader set of political crises.</p>	<p>Based on a structured survey of desk officers and delegations in 134 places around the world and quantitative indicators from extant data. The Country Conflict Assessment survey probes views in eight areas corresponding to the EU Commission Check list for root causes of conflict: legitimacy, rule of law, fundamental rights, civil society and</p>	<p>Substantial resources went into development of current practices, including a software developer, statistical consultant, and a team of researchers.</p> <p>Carrying out this type of</p>	<p>If the EU would be willing to share them with the Special Adviser's office, the results of the EU analysis are worth looking at for Special Adviser's global risk assessment. By</p>

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<p>u/comm/external_relations/cfsp/cpc m/cp/list.htm</p> <p>Relevant to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Global risk assessment</li> </ul>			<p>media, inter-ethnic issues, economic performance, socio-economic/regional equality, and security/stability. Staff use cluster analysis to identify "families of risk." These results are discussed with country/area experts and used as basis for identification of watch list, which is promulgated every six months.</p>	<p>system requires substantial resources for survey of desk officers plus significant statistical expertise for cluster analysis.</p>	<p>combining quantitative and qualitative data, according to developer, these methods can neutralize bias of individual country experts and reduce "group think."</p> <p>An EU official expressed willingness to explore using methods and systems developed in EU Commission to estimate risk of genocide (e.g., by including additional indicators, re-weighting certain indicators). This seems worth exploring, but requires fairly sophisticated statistical expertise and is not a perfect fit with the Special Adviser's office currently. The Special Adviser's office should consider providing some guidance/input to further development by the EU Commission, perhaps in collaboration with interested genocide scholars. This would be a natural project for an EU Genocide Prevention Center, if one is created.</p>
<p>Political Instability Task Force (US government)</p>	<p>"The Political Instability Task Force (PITF) is a panel of scholars and methodologists that was originally formed in 1994 at the request of senior policymakers</p>	<p>Revolutionary wars, ethnic wars, adverse regime changes, and</p>	<p>"The modeling process starts with Task Force members suggesting candidate explanatory variables on the basis of</p>	<p>Involved very large investment in development; more than</p>	<p>The results of the PITF should contribute to the</p>

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<p>sponsored)</p> <p>Web site: <a href="http://globalpolicy.gmu.edu/pitf/">http://globalpolicy.gmu.edu/pitf/</a></p> <p>Relevant to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Global risk assessment</li> </ul>	<p>in the United States Government...Its original, assigned task was to assess and explain the vulnerability of states around the world to political instability and state failure. Over the eleven-year course of its work, the Task Force has broadened its attention from the kind of extreme state failure that befell Somalia and the former Zaire in the early 1990s to include onsets of general political instability defined by outbreaks of revolutionary or ethnic war, adverse regime change, and genocide... Even as the scope of the panel's research program has grown, however, the central objective has remained the same: using open-source data, the Task Force seeks to develop statistical models that can accurately assess countries' prospects for major political change and can identify key risk factors of interest to US policymakers." (<a href="http://globalpolicy.gmu.edu/pitf/">http://globalpolicy.gmu.edu/pitf/</a>)</p> <p>The PITF has released reports publicly roughly every two years, but the time lag between completion and release was more than two years for the most recent comprehensive report.</p>	<p>genocides and politicides</p>	<p>theory and the availability of relevant data. Once those data have been collected, single-variable tests are used to identify factors that more powerfully distinguish impending cases of political instability or state failure from non-cases. Variables that show promise in the single variable tests are tested in multivariate logistic regression models. A final multivariate model is selected primarily based on its retrospective accuracy, with a cut point chosen that roughly equalizes the rate of false alarms and missed cases of instability." (Phase IV report, p. 10)</p> <p>Statistical techniques used include logistic regression models, classification and regression trees, and neural networks. In most cases, the PITF "compares conditions in 'problem' countries shortly before the onset of instability with conditions in a randomly selected set of 'control' countries matched by year and region that did not experience instability in the preceding or ensuing several years." (Phase IV report, p. 10)</p>	<p>a dozen expert consultants plus a research, analysis and data management team.</p> <p>Some of the PITF's updated analyses are free and publicly available.</p>	<p>Special Adviser's risk assessment.</p> <p>The time lag between measurement and public reporting reduces the value (e.g., the Phase IV report, released in 2006, uses data from 2002 for the most part).</p>
<p>Minorities at Risk (MAR) (University of Maryland)</p> <p>Web site: <a href="http://www.cidcm.umd.edu/inscr/mar/">http://www.cidcm.umd.edu/inscr/mar/</a></p> <p>Relevant to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Global risk assessment</li> </ul>	<p>MAR "monitors and analyzes the status and conflicts of politically-active communal groups in all countries with a current population of at least 500,000. The project is designed to provide information in a standardized format that aids comparative research and contributes to the understanding of conflicts involving relevant groups. Selected project materials on more than 284 groups (the MAR database and codebook as well as detailed historical chronologies) are available" on its web site (<a href="http://www.cidcm.umd.edu/inscr/mar/">http://www.cidcm.umd.edu/inscr/mar/</a>).</p> <p>The web site includes a page on "Hot Spots," which identifies groups "that are engaged in the most mobilization and those that are subject to the highest forms of discrimination and repression for the 2003 time period." This is broken down further into political discrimination, repression, protests, and rebellions. For each group, a narrative risk assessment and analytic summary is available.</p>	<p>Ethno-political rebellion</p>	<p>MAR is based on a theoretical model that posits that likelihood of ethno-political rebellion is a joint function of collective incentives, capacity for joint action, and external opportunities. Based on analysis of data from the 1980s and early 1990s, researchers built a structural model on eight indicators across these three categories. A Risk Index is computed by summing standardized scores on each indicator.</p>	<p>Data and analytic summaries are freely available from the project web site.</p>	<p>Results from MAR should be reviewed as part of the Special Adviser's risk assessment since genocide is sometimes a response to an ethno-political rebellion (e.g., as in Darfur).</p> <p>The time lag between analyses and availability of data reduces MAR's utility in a policy setting.</p>

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<p>Conflict Analysis Framework (World Bank Conflict Prevention and Reconstruction Unit)</p> <p>Web site: <a href="http://www.worldbank.org/conflict">www.worldbank.org/conflict</a></p> <p>Relevant to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Ongoing situation monitoring</li> </ul>	<p>“The Conflict Prevention and Reconstruction Unit has developed a Conflict Analysis Framework (CAF) to enhance conflict sensitivity and conflict prevention potential of World Bank assistance. The CAF analyzes key factors influencing conflict, focusing on six areas: social and ethnic relations; governance and political institutions; human rights and security; economic structure and performance; environment and natural resources; and external factors.</p> <p>“Working through the CAF will help operational teams identify and analyze the key factors that impact conflict and their links with poverty, to determine how they best can be addressed through World Bank assistance.” (<a href="http://worldbank.org/">http://worldbank.org/</a>)</p>	<p>Violent conflict</p>	<p>First step is risk screening process based on eight indicators for which data is publicly available. (Reportedly this requires just an hour or so desk study.) If further analysis is indicated, the CAF calls for a survey of variables demonstrated or hypothesized to be associated with violent conflict, drawn largely from the Bank’s research on these issues. This is an intensive process led by Bank country teams.</p>	<p>CAF analyses are carried out by Bank country teams with assistance from two staff from headquarters.</p>	<p>Results of Bank conflict analyses could be a useful input for the Special Adviser’s ongoing situation analysis. The CAF questions/indicators are still subject to revision, and Bank staff expressed willingness to consider refining data collection on issues of particular interest to the SA.</p> <p>Depending on the political context of the particular country, it may be tricky for the Bank to transmit information to the SA. For now, it seems that the Bank will conduct conflict analyses in relatively few states.</p>
<p>Conflict Early Warning and Response Mechanism (CEWARN) (IGAD)</p> <p>Web site: <a href="http://www.cewarn.org/">http://www.cewarn.org/</a></p> <p>Relevant to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Ongoing situation monitoring</li> </ul>	<p>“The Conflict Early Warning and Response Mechanism (CEWARN) in the IGAD region provides unique early warning information on cross-border pastoral conflicts currently in Ethiopia, Kenya and Uganda. CEWARN monitors violent incidents such as organized cattle raiding.”</p> <p>Functions are listed as: “To collect information and data using specific indicators and standardized reporting (setting standards and developing common practices for collecting, reporting and documenting). To analyze and verify information and recognition of crisis development. To promote the exchange of and collaboration among member states on early warning and response. To establish and manage databases on information for early warning and response including information sharing with other organizations. To formulate best/worst and most likely case scenarios and response options. To communicate recommendations on policy and response options to decision-makers through</p>	<p>“armed violent conflicts” stemming from “cross-border pastoral conflicts”</p>	<p>Field monitors complete incident reports (who did what to whom) and situation reports (baseline and twice a year, assessing aggravating and mitigating factors). Indicators were selected by IGAD officials, research institutes and scholars from the region. Situation reports trace trends in violent incidents and quantitative scores on conflict indicators.</p>	<p>The first two years cost roughly 200,000 USD.</p>	<p>CEWARN’s restricted geographic coverage (Ethiopia, Kenya, Uganda, Sudan) and limitation to cross-border pastoral conflicts means its reports will only rarely be directly relevant to the early warning Special Adviser’s mandate.</p> <p>Adapting CEWARN methods for the Special Adviser’s mandate would require large resource expenditure to assemble a global network of field</p>

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	CEWERUs."				monitors. More realistic would be to seek cooperation with CEWARN to obtain relevant information/ analyses.
<p>OSCE Conflict Prevention Centre</p> <p>Web site: <a href="http://www.osce.org/cpc/">http://www.osce.org/cpc/</a></p> <p>Relevant to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Global risk assessment</li> <li>▪ Ongoing situation monitoring</li> </ul>	<p>"The Conflict Prevention Centre (CPC) supports the Chairman-in-Office and other OSCE bodies in the fields of early warning, conflict prevention, crisis management and post-conflict rehabilitation. It plays a key role in supporting OSCE field operations." The CPC provides early warning and preventive recommendations to the Secretary-General, Chairmanship and participating states. The CPC's EW is focused mostly on situations where OSCE has a field presence</p>	Violent conflict	<p>The CPC receives information through three main pathways: biweekly reports from OSCE field missions, dialogue with participating states, and the Situation Room, which monitors open sources and dispatches from OSCE field missions around the clock. Its early warning is very operationally focused (e.g., in relation to staffing OSCE field missions). No systematic methodology or indicators are used.</p>	<p>Difficult to estimate since OSCE's EW is closely related to its operational activities. About a third of the 700-800 people in the OSCE Secretariat contribute in some way to EW, but by no means are dedicated to this function.</p>	<p>OSCE's CPC could be a source of information for the Special Adviser's events monitoring. In addition, the CPC Director and the Special Adviser appear to have analogous relationships—at least formally—with the organization's Secretary-General and member states. It could be useful to discuss strategies for communicating early warnings to these audiences.</p>
<p>genocide/politicide early warning model (accelerators, de-accelerators and triggers) (Barbara Harff)</p> <p>Web site:</p> <p>Relevant to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Ongoing situation monitoring</li> </ul>	<p>A sequential model designed "to bridge the gap between identifying risks [through structural models] and pinpointing the likely onset of an episode." The model includes 10 accelerator variables, operationalized as event categories (condensing roughly 70 specific kinds of events). Also includes de-accelerators (variables thought to decrease likelihood of onset) and triggers. The model looks for increases or decreases in these variables.</p> <p>Harff has suggested a somewhat simplified version of the model for the Special Adviser's office containing roughly 6-8 event categories.</p>	Genocide and politicide (defined in same way as in Harff's structural risk model)	<p>Harff recommends tracking weekly changes in all events by coding data from news sources into categories, developing graphs that show ebbs and flows of events, and developing narratives for the Special Adviser to accompany graphs.</p>	<p>Harff estimates that "one full-time person could be tasked with monitoring up to a dozen countries."</p>	<p>The indicators in this model are based on theory and have only been tested for validity in a small number of cases. The Special Adviser should consider including any of these indicators not already included in its framework for situation analysis. However, absent strong evidence that formalizing this event analysis generates more accurate and useful warnings, the Special Adviser's less formal approach seems reasonable.</p>

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<p>FAST (Swisspeace)</p> <p>Web site: <a href="http://www.swisspeace.org/fast/">http://www.swisspeace.org/fast/</a></p> <p>Relevant to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Global risk assessment</li> <li>▪ Ongoing situation monitoring</li> </ul>	<p>"FAST International is an independent early warning program covering 20 countries/regions in Africa, Europe and Asia. The objective of FAST International is the early recognition of impending or potential crisis situations in order to prevent violent conflict. FAST International aims at enhancing political decision makers' and their staff's ability to identify critical developments in a timely manner so that coherent political strategies can be formulated to either prevent or limit destructive effects of violent conflicts or identify windows of opportunity for peacebuilding." (<a href="http://www.swisspeace.org/fast/">http://www.swisspeace.org/fast/</a>)</p> <p>FAST produces Analytic Frameworks (updated quarterly), Updates (produced every six months), and Country Risk Profiles. FAST also produces some tailored reports for specific users. FAST currently covers 24 countries or sub-state regions (8 each in Africa, Europe and Asia).</p>	<p>Violent conflict</p>	<p>"The centerpiece of FAST's methodology is based on a collection of single cooperative and conflictive events. These events are collected by local staff and entered into a web-based software tool through a coding scheme called IDEA (Integrated Data for Event Analysis), which is based on the WEIS (World Interaction Survey) coding scheme. For each country/region monitored, unique sets of data are collected by FAST's own Local Information Networks (LINs)...The quantitative empirical analysis is based on composed indicators, developed within the IDEA Framework."</p>	<p>Roughly 40,000-65,000 USD to develop a pilot including network of stringers in field and coordinator to provide events data.</p> <p>Some FAST products are publicly available; others are only for clients.</p>	<p>The publicly available FAST products could be useful sources of information and analysis for the office.</p> <p>No compelling evidence to support investment required to adapt FAST's methods for ongoing use by the office. It would seem also to go against instruction to collect existing information.</p>
<p>West Africa Early Warning and Response Network (WARN) (West Africa Network for Peacebuilding (WANEP) (in consultation/with support from ECOWAS))</p> <p>Web site: <a href="http://www.wanep.org">www.wanep.org</a></p> <p>Relevant to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Ongoing situation monitoring</li> </ul>	<p>"WARN's overall objective is to institutionalize a culture of prevention in West Africa through an appropriate and effective early warning and early response mechanism." Its specific objectives include developing "community, national and sub-regional capacities/structures for early detection, early warning and early response through training, data base development, and technical assistance;" and "identify[ing] and monitor[ing] major context specific conflict and peace indicators and analyz[ing] them for preventive purposes."</p> <p>The project is being carried out in close collaboration with ECOWAS. WANEP maintains a Liaison Office at the ECOWAS Secretariat and participates in daily security briefings and other discussions.</p>	<p>Human security</p>	<p>In the process of indicator selection. Moving towards a database approach. Expect will be collecting information from NGO and government partners in 12 ECOWAS countries on weekly basis and reporting monthly. Expect that reports will be shared openly since they will rely on open source information. Expect significant progress by end of 2006.</p> <p>WANEP currently produces periodic country analyses akin to ICG reports.</p>		<p>There is a sense that anything specific to genocide would be difficult for ECOWAS states to accept. But some of the data collected is likely to be useful. Would be good to engage WANEP/ECOWAS while indicator selection process is still ongoing.</p>
<p>Continental Early Warning System (CEWS) (African Union)</p> <p>Web site: <a href="http://www.africa-union.org">www.africa-union.org</a></p> <p>Relevant to:</p>	<p>CEWS stems from a protocol adopted in 2003 and is still in the developmental stage. It consists of an Observation and Monitoring Center, charged with analyzing trends based on indicators, and regional EW systems being developed by the African Regional Economic Commissions.</p>	<p>Violent conflict</p>	<p>Hoping to have indicators selected by early 2007. Conceiving of using both structural and incident analysis to build a vulnerability index. How this index will be used has not been established yet. Most data will be from open sources. AU has many field mission offices and will be using these offices as points of data collection and for situational analyses.</p>	<p>Three staff on EW. Seven desk officers for country situations.</p>	<p>The AU is an important partner for multiple purposes, so it makes sense for the office to discuss EW methods as well while they are still in development.</p>



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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Global risk assessment</li> <li>▪ Ongoing situation monitoring</li> </ul>			<p>Will probably produce a revision every four months or so and as needed for escalating crises.</p>		
<p>Draft EW methodology (OCHA EW Unit)</p> <p>Web site: <a href="http://ochaonline.un.org/webpage.asp?Page=966">http://ochaonline.un.org/webpage.asp?Page=966</a></p> <p>Relevant to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Global risk assessment</li> <li>▪ Ongoing situation monitoring</li> </ul>	<p>OCHA's EW Unit "works closely with humanitarian partners to seek ways to predict and avert crises and to ensure that OCHA and the broader humanitarian system is better prepared to respond to them." The three main steps are snapshot analysis, in-depth analysis (if necessary), and OCHA Minimum Preparedness Actions.</p> <p>Regular EW products include: EW News Flash, IASC EW-Early Action Report, EW Flash Alerts, EW Analytical Report, and EW Fact Sheet.</p> <p>Methodology is still in development. Aiming to finalize and initiate new system within a year or so.</p>	<p>Humanitarian crises</p>	<p>The snapshot analysis asks 22 questions across four sectors (social, economic, political, environmental) to determine if a state faces an emerging crisis or deterioration of an existing crisis. If an emerging crisis is indicated, in-depth analysis is undertaken to develop projections, scenarios and trends. It includes questions in 13 sub-sectors in the same four sectors. Information is to be collected from field offices on quarterly basis. The timeframe of snapshot analysis is the next four months. For in-depth analysis, asks about possibility of crisis in next six months or next year.</p> <p>Analyses to be fed into inter-agency planning for preparedness and response. Uses color-coded risk levels based on in-depth analysis, which correspond to action objectives.</p>	<p>OCHA's EW Unit consists of 3 humanitarian officers.</p>	<p>Special Adviser should discuss with OCHA questions in in-depth analysis most relevant to his mandate while the methods are still in draft to ensure most important data are collected. Quarterly reporting from OHCA field offices could help Special Adviser with ongoing situation monitoring. Field assessments of risk over next year should be reviewed for Special Adviser's periodic risk assessment.</p>
<p>Psychological Roots of Genocide (Woolf and Hulsizer)</p> <p>Web site: N/A</p> <p>Relevant to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Ongoing situation monitoring</li> </ul>	<p>The authors describe "seven basic stages that exist on the path to mass violence and genocide," including levels of violence and parallel processes. (p. 114) The levels of violence are: 1) hate crimes and institutionalized violence; 2) loss of opportunity and privilege; 3) loss of civil rights; 4) isolation; 5) loss of human rights; 6) loss of existence; and 7) denial. The parallel processes are: 1) culture of violence and ideology of supremacy; 2) stigmatization; 3) dehumanization; 4) moral disengagement; 5) moral exclusion; 6) impunity; 7) perpetuation of violence. According to the authors, the model "highlights risk factors associated with the potential for genocidal action as well as other forms of mass violence and provides information relative to strategies aimed at prevention and intervention." (p. 125)</p>	<p>Genocide and other forms of mass violence</p>	<p>The authors do not elaborate practically on how the model could or should be used beyond saying it "is not a mathematical formulation for the prediction of genocide."</p>		<p>This is a conceptual, not a practical model. The Special Adviser might review it to see if the authors' model is useful for the office's analysis of ongoing situations.</p> <p>Described in Linda Woolf &amp; Michael Hulsizer. Psychological roots of genocide: risk, prevention, and intervention. <i>Journal of Genocide Research</i> (2005), 7: 101-128</p>

## **Appendix C: List of respondents**

### Government representatives:

1. Diane Bell, Foreign and Commonwealth Office, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
2. Donald Braum, Department of State, United States of America
3. Cheng Lie, Permanent Mission of China to the United Nations
4. John Cockell, Department of Foreign Affairs, Canada
5. James P. Finkel, Special Assistant to the Director of CIA for War Crime and Related Issues, United States of America
6. David Gordon, National Intelligence Council, United States of America
7. Heidi Hulan, Permanent Mission of Canada to the United Nations
8. Kenneth L. Knight, National Intelligence Council, United States of America
9. Jurg Lauber, Permanent Mission of Switzerland to the United Nations
10. Augustine Mahiga, Permanent Representative of the United Republic of Tanzania to the United Nations
11. Jerzy Makarowski, Permanent Mission of Sweden to the United Nations
12. Joe Morosco, National Intelligence Council, United States of America
13. Michael Mlynar, Permanent Mission of Slovakia to the United Nations
14. Oswaldo de Rivero, Permanent Representative of Peru to the United Nations
15. Diane Sheard, Foreign and Commonwealth Office, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
16. Dan Silvey, Department for International Development, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
17. Abdullah Eid Salman al-Sulaiti, Permanent Mission of Qatar to the United Nations
18. Maria Zabolotskaya, Permanent Mission of the Russian Federation to the United Nations

### UN officials:

19. Louise Agersnap, Framework Team Secretariat, UN Interdepartmental Framework for Coordination on Early Warning and Preventive Action
20. Gianluca Buono, UNICEF
21. Michele Griffin, Department of Political Affairs
22. Craig Mokhiber, Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
23. Giorgia Passarelli, Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights

24. Robert Orr, Assistant Secretary-General for Strategic Planning and Policy Coordination, Executive Office of the Secretary-General
25. Michael Pan, Executive Office of the Secretary-General
26. Andrés Salazar, Office of the Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on the Prevention of Genocide
27. Megan Scott, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
28. Ekkehard Strauss, Office of the Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on the Prevention of Genocide

Other intergovernmental organizations

29. Charles Mwaura, African Union Commission
30. Andrea Ricci, European Commission
31. Shonali Sardesai, World Bank
32. Per Egil Wam, World Bank
33. Lamberto Zannier, OSCE Conflict Prevention Centre

Non-governmental organizations/scholars:

34. Payam Akhavan, McGill University
35. Pauline Baker, Fund for Peace
36. Andrea Bartoli, Columbia University
37. Dorina Bekoe, United States Institute of Peace
38. David Carment, Carleton University (Canada)
39. Lee Feinstein, Council on Foreign Relations (US)
40. Jerry Fowler, US Holocaust Memorial Museum
41. Nick Grono, International Crisis Group
42. Ted Robert Gurr, University of Maryland
43. Gerd Hagemeyer-Gaverus, SIPRI
44. David Hamburg, Advisory Committee to the UN Secretary-General on Genocide Prevention
45. Barbara Harff, Clark University
46. Krista Hendry, Fund for Peace
47. Henry Huttenbach, City University of New York/International Academy of Genocide Prevention
48. Bruce Jones, Center for International Cooperation, New York University
49. Heinz Kruppenacher, Swisspeace

50. Matthew Levinger, US Holocaust Memorial Museum
51. Marc Levy, Columbia University
52. Patrick Meier, Tufts University
53. Thant Myint-U, International Peace Academy
54. Ted Perlmutter, College of William and Mary
55. Greg Stanton, Genocide Watch
56. Benjamin Valentino, Dartmouth College
57. Joanna Weschler, Security Council Report
58. Takwa Zebulon, West Africa Network for Peacebuilding (WANEP)