

75 YEARS OF THE  
GENOCIDE CONVENTION



REMEMBER THE VICTIMS  
PREVENT GENOCIDE

**Event to mark the 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Convention on the  
Prevention  
and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide and the  
International Day of  
Commemoration and Dignity of the Victims of the Crime of  
Genocide and of  
the Prevention of this Crime**

**FRIDAY, 8 DECEMBER 2023  
11:00AM – 1:00 PM EST**

**TRUSTEESHIP CHAMBER  
UNITED NATIONS HEADQUARTERS**

**CONCEPT NOTE**

***“A Living Force in World Society: The Legacy of the 1948  
Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of  
Genocide”***

**I. BACKGROUND**

By its resolution [69/323](#) of 29 September 2015, the United Nations General Assembly established 9 December as the *International Day of Commemoration and Dignity of the Victims of the Crime of Genocide and of the Prevention of this Crime*. 9 December marks the day in 1948 when the United Nations General Assembly adopted the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide (the Genocide Convention).

Every year, the United Nations Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide organizes events to mark this International Day, honoring the victims of genocide and the anniversary of the adoption of the Convention.

The 1948 Genocide Convention codified for the first time the crime of genocide in international law. Its preamble recognizes that “at all periods of history genocide has inflicted great losses on humanity” and that international cooperation is required to “liberate humankind from such an odious scourge”. To date, 153 States have ratified the Convention. Achieving universal ratification of the Convention remains an important step in advancing genocide prevention. The Genocide Convention includes the obligation not only to punish the crime of genocide but, crucially, to prevent it.

In the 75 years since its adoption, the Genocide Convention has played an important role in the development of international criminal law, in holding perpetrators of this crime accountable and in giving a voice to its many victims.

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The principles set out in the Convention have been utilized by international criminal tribunals to prosecute perpetrators, and the crime of genocide, as set out in the Convention, today forms part of the core crimes for which the International Criminal Court has jurisdiction. The Convention has also supported national jurisdictions to ensure accountability for this crime. At the same time, the prevention obligation of the Convention has provided a framework for promoting early warning and it has spurred national, regional and international mechanisms for prevention.

This year's event to mark the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Genocide Convention will seek to highlight some of the achievements that emanate from the Convention, showcasing its lasting legacy.

The event will also reflect on the challenges that remain. Genocide is still a threat in the world today. Around the world, populations remain at risk of this crime. The need to invest in prevention as envisaged by the Convention drafters 75 years ago remains as relevant as ever. The event, therefore, will also seek to showcase the work of champions of prevention and their tireless efforts to protect populations from the scourge of genocide. The event will build on a series of expert meetings to be convened by the United Nations Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide in the lead up to the 9 December event, which will seek to explore in detail the impact of the Convention in the areas of accountability, protection and prevention.

## II. OBJECTIVE

The event will commemorate the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Genocide Convention by:

- I) Showcasing its legacy and impact at the international, regional and national levels.
- II) Demonstrating its continued relevance as a tool for prevention and punishment of the crime of genocide and showcasing positive examples of champions of prevention working in the fields of prevention, protection and accountability for genocide.

## III. PARTICIPANTS

The event will be open to Member States, UN staff, civil society, media and the public. Permanent Representatives of Member States in regional groups will be invited to speak.

## IV. FORMAT AND AGENDA:

The event will be held in person at the United Nations Headquarters in New York, at the Trusteeship Council Chambers. To participate in person please RSVP [here](#)

It will also be live webcasted on UNTV (<http://webtv.un.org>).

Detailed agenda to follow.